



# The Alabama Gazette

ALABAMA'S FREE Press



TAKE ONE!

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## PIKE ROAD SCHOOL FEATURE STORIES DRAW EXTREME INTEREST!



The Alabama Gazette experienced record readership as well as staff appearances on local talk radio for the May, 2016 Issue! (Remember The Alabama Gazette is a FREE newspaper.)

Approximately 30,000 hits on our website. [www.alabamagazette.com](http://www.alabamagazette.com)

Print copies flew off the shelves. The tally of people who either read some of our articles on-line, in the print edition and/or heard at least some of Bill Rice's comments on the radio has to exceed 50,000 people.

See additional commentary including Bill Rice's critique of the "Pike Road Way" beginning on page 11A.

### Why are Pike Road School public servants still ignoring The Alabama Gazette?

Why are the Pike Road Board of Education and Superintendent Dr. Suzanne Freeman not answering many of our questions? One can only speculate. Common sense says these "public servants" might have something to hide. Or perhaps they simply cannot come up with good answers to hard questions.

We think these individuals simply decided to "blow off" this paper and its reporter, Bill Rice. They must believe the public won't care if they do or don't answer questions from The Alabama Gazette.

Nor do they anticipate that bigger news organizations might ask them any hard questions, or do any of their own digging.

We pose this question: If in America we celebrate the freedom of the press, does this even matter if public officials with great power can simply ignore reporters with no fear of any adverse consequences?

Perhaps this question could be used as a topic for a future PRS social studies project. Maybe the student who takes on this assignment will even attempt to interview Dr. Freeman or Ray Hawthorne, Jr. Good luck, young man.

We do believe these officials may have underestimated the level of interest in our reporting.

Bill has also appeared on three local talk radio programs. One appearance was for two hours, the others one hour. We don't know how many people heard him on these programs.

We don't think every one of these people dismissed his reporting as biased, unconvincing, or unfair.

It was also his reporting that probably prompted the Advertiser to run two stories on Pike Road School and Dr. Freeman. While this treatment of PRS was much softer than our own, it did include several of the same troubling characterizations outlined in our journalistic effort.

How our reporting, Rice's radio appearances and the Advertiser's contributions may have affected the Pike Road School "brand" is hard to gauge.

We guess time will tell.

A great theologian and educator, J. Gresham Machen, said long ago, "If you give the bureaucrats the children, you may as well give them everything else as well." He was speaking of the moral and intellectual decline as the federal government continued to reach for more and more control of American education and everything else.

## How Do You 'Conquer A Culture?' Focus On a Nation's Children...

Story on page 3



'We have staked the whole of all our political institutions upon the capacity of mankind for self-government, upon the capacity of each and all of us to govern ourselves, to control ourselves, to sustain ourselves according to the Ten Commandments of GOD.'

James Madison, 4th U. S. President

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

2 Chronicles 7:14

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June 19, 2016 Happy Father's Day

See story on page 9B

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

# ROBSERVATIONS...

by Robert Tate

## THE CONSUMER DOES HAVE RIGHTS

There is an old adage that says, "The customer is always right." I will be one of the first ones to say that is total nonsense. On paper, that sounds like a socially righteous attitude to take, but reality tells me something totally different. When a passenger intentionally urinates on the floor of the airplane because he won't be served more alcohol, when a passenger drops the tray table while we are taxiing into our gate in Denver and he starts snorting cocaine, when a passenger fondles a flight attendant, lights up a cigarette in the bathroom, performs a solo sex act in front of a flight attendant, or takes off her shirt so she can shave her armpits, I will have to strongly disagree with the customer always being "right". For what it is worth, all of the above have either happened on one of my flights or the flight of a friend of mine.

Ignoring these egregious acts, I do however, believe the customer does have rights when purchasing products. As a consumer, we do wield an incredible amount of power when dealing with corporations. As long as you are being honest and refuse to take their almost always immediate "no" for an answer, you can usually get things to move in your direction. You may not get everything you want but you will likely get some satisfaction. Words of advice; don't start cursing, yelling and threatening. That is the quickest way to shut down any positive help. Rather, gather your facts, construct a cogent argument, present that

argument and hang on for the ride. In this Robservation, I would like to discuss just three instances where I followed this recipe and won the day. Here goes.

**MY WIFE'S NEW VW CC.** Back in March, I bought my wife a new car. Her 2005 New Beetle was getting a little roached and I decided she needed an updated vehicle. As she said, she wanted a "grown up car." I am not going to go into all the particulars here but the day after we bought the car, I was driving it to get the new tags when I noticed, shall I say, a "mechanical defect." I immediately went to the Jack Ingram dealership and talked to the salesman who sold me the car. Discussions went back and forth as to whether what I was experiencing was normal or not. Since I drive nothing but Volkswagens, I knew this was not a normal thing. We went out to the lot and climbed into a similar car and it did not do what my car was doing. In fact, no other car did.

It was decided that I would bring the car in to be fixed. Okay. The next week I took it in and the problem was supposedly fixed but it was not. A VW quality assurance guy happened to be in town that day and told the staff at Jack Ingram that the mechanical noise we heard was in fact normal and according to the warranty, there was nothing more they could do. Can you say, "Wrong answer?" Not only that, when the car was returned other serious issues had appeared on the cars surface while in their care. Over several days of conversation and text messages with the salesman and some supervisors, we again discussed our options.

Remember, this car was in my possession for about 15 hours when all this began. People who know me generally say that I am a pretty nice guy who rarely gets angry. I told my salesman to please not mistake my "niceness for weakness." That would be a mistake of epic proportions. Now this is where the story takes a positive turn. Folks ask me why I only drive VWs. Well, I love the brand. Not only that, in the 20 years I have lived in Montgomery, I have purchased six cars from Jack Ingram VW. Why? Because they have always treated me with respect and of course they sell Volkswagens. Although my primary car buying days are pretty much over, as long as I live here in Montgomery, I will probably buy from the Ingrams again. When Mr. Ingram heard of what was happening, he took it upon himself to contact VW of America to get things straightened out. In fact, a Southeast Regional VW manager called me one morning and said that he had been doing his job for years and NEVER had a dealership owner call him and put the screws to him. He said that was a

testimony to the respect Mr. Ingram had for me as a valued customer. Well, back at you Mr. Ingram, the respect I have had for you over the years is now into the next galaxy.

Midway through this entire process, I was asked what could be done in order to make everything right. Easy, at that point I said I wanted a new car. Anything less than that would be met with some level of defiance. I was willing to take my wife's Beetle back, walk out the door and head across the street to the BMW dealership. (Maybe not a VW but at least still German). No need, Jack Ingram Motors came through. You know what? They didn't have to but they did and except for the different VIN, nobody would know my wife is an identical CC. Both parties had reasons to settle this issue and we did. In fact, in this situation, everybody walked away as winners. As for me, again I cannot say enough good about Jack Ingram Motors. Lifetime customer? You betcha!!

**2. SANITARY WIPES.** Two year ago, my wife bought some of those "disposable" sanitary wipes that are supposed to dissolve in water. Well after about a month, our toilets got severely clogged. We have been in this house for 20 years now and never before had this happened. We called a plumber and he did his voodoo with this attachment "thing" that had a camera on it. Sure enough, it looked like little elves had built a white paper wall in our pipes. He took pics, unclogged it and wrote in his report that these wipes were 100% responsible for the clog.

Before I contacted the company that manufactured the wipes, I went online and researched how many complaints existed concerning these wipes as well as all the cities around the country that are asking people not to use the wipes because of the clogging issue. I cited these reports and detailed our experiences to include the batch number of the wipes, the manufacturing date and all relevant data I could find on the package. I also took two wipes and placed them in jar full of water for a day or two and noticed that they did indeed dissolve. Bad news, however, is that except for when water is running through the pipes, they are almost completely dry, thus they do not dissolve. I finally contacted the company by phone and told them what had happened. They were initially aloof and said their product could not harm or clog pipes. Okay, hold onto that thought. I told them there was a package heading their way with a plumber's report, plumber's bill, photographs, case studies, etc. I was going to overnight it via FedEx and would be calling at the end of the week.

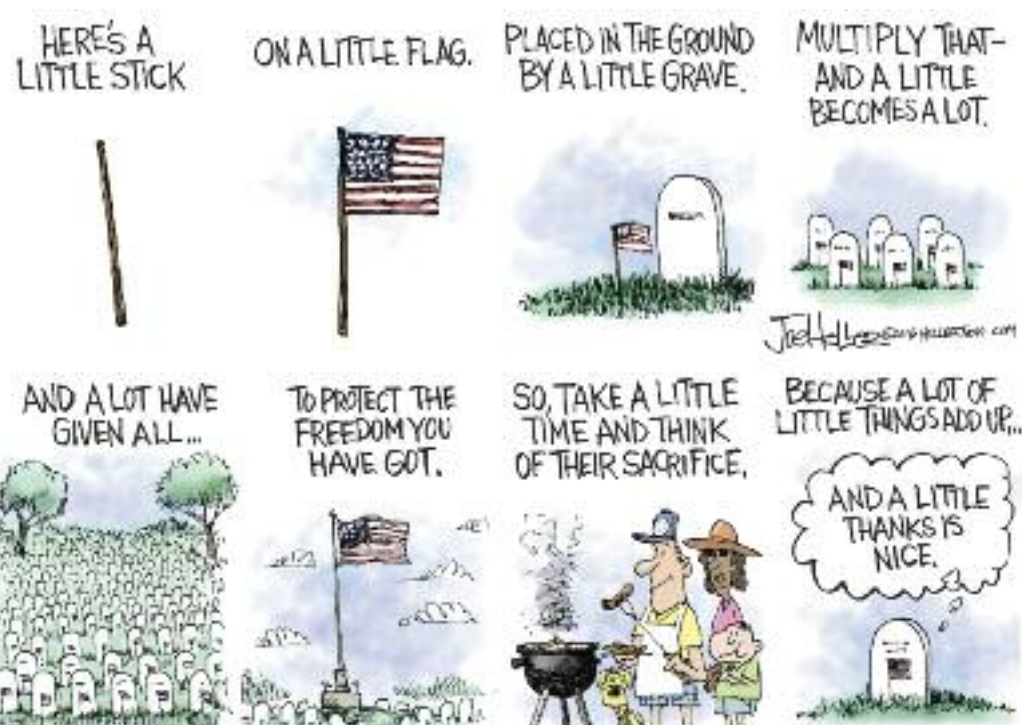
When I called back the next time they told me they were sending me a check for the value of the plumber's bill plus a Visa cash card for \$50 (which I did not ask for). All I said was they should pay the bill from my plumber. They asked that I not say their name in any official way and I will respect that.

**3. CAR ACCIDENT.** Back in December 2012, my wife and I were rear-ended over in Atlanta. We were sitting still but ended up sandwiched between two cars. A busted knee for my wife and four broken ribs for me, my poor VW Jetta, however, got the worst of it. Unfortunately for us, the car was new enough that my insurance company would not consider totaling it although it suffered closed to \$10,000 in damage. When I picked up the car from the repair shop in Atlanta in the freezing cold I noticed a couple of things wrong. I told the shop I was going home and I would do a closer look the next day. When I did, I noticed close to 20 errors with my car. Paint, chips, door and trunk alignments, headlight alignments, rattles, noises, you name it. Long story short, EVERY time something came up with that car related to the accident, I took it back to a local repair shop and had it fixed courtesy of my insurance company. I refused to accept those imperfections because their job was to make it as it was before the accident. Yeah, the value of the car was never the same and I eventually traded it in for another VW Jetta. That aspect of the situation was outside my control, but forcing the insurance company to uphold their end of the contract was something I could and did control. You do not have to accept shoddy work.

Okay folks, here is the bottom line here. If you purchase something or are rendered a service of some kind, as the consumer, yes you can complain and if done properly, you can very likely get the results you are looking for. I think you will find that most corporations are actually more interested in making their customers happy than in hosing them over. Like I said in the beginning of this Robservation, just be honest and sincere, knowing that you do have rights and that it is okay to exercise them. Most times you do not have to take their "No" for your answer or as we used to say in the Air Force, you don't have to eat the poop sandwich they just served you.



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*Memorial Day has past but we at the Alabama Gazette think that the sacrifices of our men and women that protect our country should never be forgotten and that this one day is NOT the only time we should think of them!*

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# The Education Station...

By *Bobbie Ames*

## How Do You 'Conquer A Culture?' Focus On a Nation's Children...

...and introduce secular  
sex education

**Patrick J. Buchanan**, author of *The Death of the West*, wrote about, exposing the De-Christianizing of America.

*"In the Great War of 1914-1918, Catholic France fought Catholic Austria and Protestant Germany fought Protestant England. Nine million Christian soldiers marched to their deaths. Yet, only Orthodox Russia succumbed to a Communist revolution, and that was more coup d'etat than mass conversion. A prominent Italian communist disciple of Marx, Antonio Gramsci, concluded that two thousand years of Christianity had made the soul of man impenetrable to Marxism. Before the West could be conquered for Communism, its faith must be uprooted. But how could it be achieved?"*

Marx's disciples were everywhere and had varying ideas for spreading Communism. One was the Hungarian, George Lukacs, who was recognized as a Marxist theorist to rival Marx himself. Intent on overturning the values of a Christian culture, he instituted a radical sex education program in Hungarian schools. Children were brainwashed, instructed in "free love" and in the "irrelevance of religion." Monogamy was treated as "outmoded." Licentiousness was promoted among women to further destroy the core institution of Christianity.

**Antonio Gramsci**, whom scholars have declared to be the most outstanding Marxist of the 20th Century, fled to Russia after Mussolini's march on Rome in 1922. He carefully observed the Russian people, and came to the conclusion that Leninism had failed. While the people had obediently complied with the political power, in their hearts they were not committed to Communism. Their homeland, their old faith, and their Mother Russia, still had their hearts. Observing all of this, Gramsci concluded that the only things holding these people back from Communism was their Christian faith. After all, the world had been saturated with Christianity for 2,000 years, and many people had zeal for the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Gramsci concluded that Christianity must be destroyed across the West, yes, Marxists **MUST** de-Christianize the West. He returned to his homeland, Italy, hoping to lead the Communist forces there, but he was imprisoned by Mussolini. While in prison he devised a plan and wrote about it in his *Prison Notebooks*. It actually was a blueprint for the destruction of Western Civilization. The cultural revolution, that this writer has witnessed over a lifetime, could have come right from Gramsci's notebook.

**Gramsci's idea was NOT to seize military power in the nation initially. Instead, he believed that the culture could be destroyed from within, and then the nation would "fall into the Communists' laps like ripened fruit."** To change the culture, he saw it as a long path ahead, through the institutions of the culture: the arts, theater, schools, colleges, seminaries, newspapers and magazines. One by one, each one would be a target to be politicized into an agency of revolution. Over time, with the new education model for children, he saw them educated to understand, and then to welcome the revolution.

Gramsci urged his fellow Communists to find Western intellectuals who shared his contempt for Christianity, and to share a zeal to transform education in the West. Lenin failed after 70 years of terror. His regime did ultimately collapse, without the destruction of Christianity. Gramsci and his fellow Communists set up **The Frankfort School in Moscow** to promote his theories. A director named Max Horkheimer, began retraining Communists in western cultural terms, to infiltrate the institutions: the family, the schools, the church, the public squares. The old military battlefield manuals were discarded and new action manuals were developed to undermine the institutions. America was certainly to be a prime target, as well as other Western nations.

Victory was assured if Biblical Christianity could be stamped out. Yes, it would be non-violent hopefully, and would require time, patience and determination. They were confident that the institutions mentioned would be captured by their trained allies and agents of the revolution.

**In the 1990's, The Frankfort School came to America. With the help from Columbia University, they were welcomed into New York City. They were very proud of their goal, to undermine the culture of the country that had given them refuge. One particular book published by the Frankfort School, *The Authoritarian Personality*, placed its emphasis on Cultural Determination. Targeted is the patriarchal family and the culture's middle class.**

If we can fast forward from the beginning of this new revolution, we will focus on The Culture War with respect to the children. The sexual revolution is destroying the children and their future. Statistics on divorce, out of wedlock births, abortions, single parent homes, child abuse, violent crimes, drug use, teen suicide, promiscuity, falling tests scores, all paint a picture of tragedy for this generation of American children. Gramsci's revolution continues today in America's institutions, and throughout the West.

As an example of one of the most destructive movements in America is the matter of distorted Human Sexuality.

To assist a ministry in combating this distortion, I was hired by **Protect America's Children**, founded by Anita Bryant in Miami, Florida. In 1980, it was moved to Selma, Alabama, where Anita placed her children in our Christian school. I worked full time in the ministry, whose sole aim was to protect America's children from sexual and other abuses.

**The most notable authority of Human Sexuality was Dr. Melvin Anchell, M. D., a brilliant physician who had a long and successful career in psychoanalysis and general medicine. He had written five books on the subjects relating to sexuality, sex education, and pornography. Acclaimed by the National Association of Psychoanalysis and The American Boards, he has been generous in testifying in court, and speaking over the nation and abroad. Dr. Anchell graciously served as a consultant to Protect America's Children with great generosity and commitment to America's children and to many families suffering abuse. He had great favor with his testimonies, and it was clearly the Grace of God coming through his testimony in court, and in his writing.**

His 1991 book, published by The Hoffman Center for the Family is titled, *What's Wrong With Sex Education*. He looks at his subject from a professional medical standpoint, and speaks from this podium. He sees no conflict between this position and his deep faith in the Scriptures of his Jewish heritage.

Discussing Sex Education, Dr. Anchell is clear about the "harm these classes cause the students and society."

**He states three truths that are inherent and apply to all people throughout the world.**

1. The first established truth is that sex is an intimate affair. Two people in love seek privacy. Hopefully, there is a marriage between one man and one woman, as God created it to be.

Dr. Anchell condemns modern sex education in schools. He writes, "students are desensitized to the intimate nature of physical sex. In any classroom discussion of sexuality, students must openly discuss their most intimate sexual feelings, and at the same time, become involved with similar sexual thoughts of their fellow classmates."

2. The second psychoanalytic fact is that in humans, the sexual instinct is composed of two currents: an affectionate current and a physical current. The affectionate (love) current is as important, if not more so, than the physical component.

For human sexuality to be fulfilling, these two components must come together. The Creator intended this for marriage. In school classrooms, the physical is emphasized, while the affectionate needs of everyone are damned by what Dr. Anchell called "faint praise."

He further notes that the very teaching of sex education in the classroom "publicly coarsens and severely diminishes the affectionate nature and privacy essential."

3. The third basic fact that he deals with is the normal progression of development before the child reaches adulthood. That normal progression should not be interfered with. **Planned Parenthood** is a chief proponent of radical sex education programs, and Dr. Anchell states that they are "not in accord with normal growth processes of sexual development. Their proposed programs make it virtually impossible for the students to grow into sexually mature adults." **He documents in his books the reasons he believes that today's Planned Parenthood programs cause irreparable harm to students. To fully expose Planned Parenthood's agenda and what their teaching manuals contain, is too shockingly obscene to put in this article, but is well documented.**

Many respected psychologists whom Dr. Anchell knew and quoted, were in agreement with his positions. They agreed that sexual preoccupation in the lives of your children will cause sexual difficulties in adulthood.

In reviewing things of importance in the life of a 6-12 year old, Dr. Anchell makes an interesting observation. "The educability of children is not all that is at stake when latency is disturbed by classroom sex interferences. For example during latency, some redirected sexual energy is used for development of compassion. Compassion is essential for the control of cruelty in the human personality. Compassion is one of the elements that separates man from beast."

The sex indoctrination hampers achieving self-government at all age levels. The teaching hampers social, cultural, and personal achievement.

For those of us who are Bible-based in our world and life view, our concerns for our children involve chastity, abstinence, virginity, all as a sacred trust awaiting marriage. This is a covenant between one man and one woman, hopefully, for a life-time commitment.

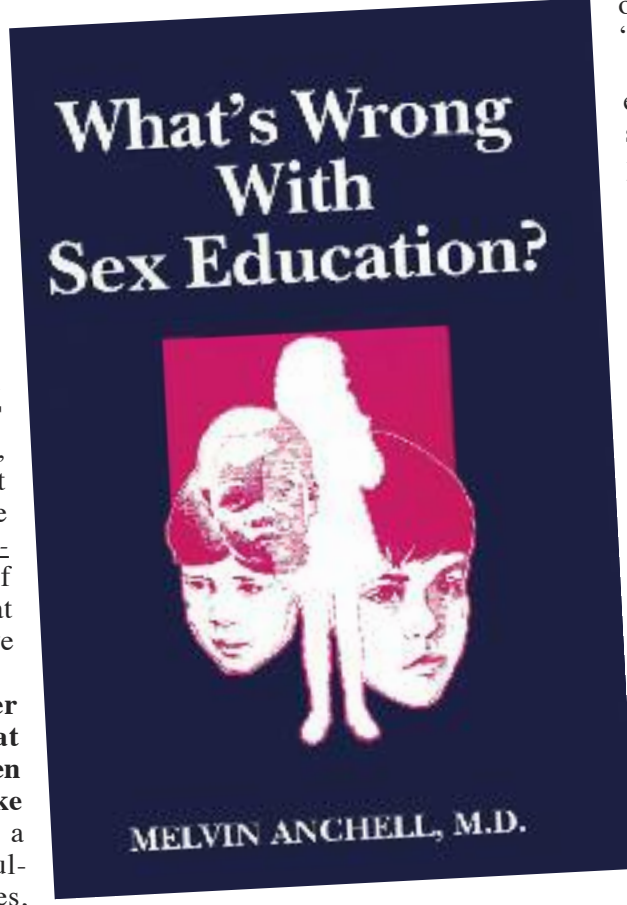
**A great theologian and educator, J. Gresham Machen, said long ago, "If you give the bureaucrats the children, you may as well give them everything else as well."** He was speaking of the moral and intellectual decline as the federal government continued to reach for more and more control of American education and everything else. Look at the grave injustice to children, parents, and the future of Liberty in our nation. **By facing this truth of what has transpired and what is happening now, perhaps many more people will wake up to the dangers and make their convictions heard, to rescue our children from this tragedy.**

Recommended reading:

*The Closing of the American Mind* by Allan Bloom, published by Simon and Schuster.

*The Death of the West* by Patrick J. Buchanan, published by Thomas Dunne Books; St. Martin Press.

*What's Wrong With Sex Education?* by Melvin Anchell, M.D., published by The Hoffman Center for the Family.



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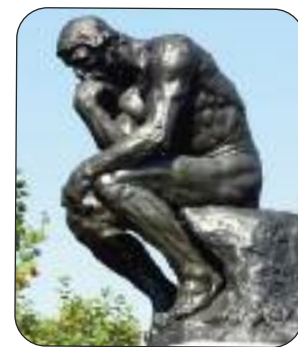
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*The views of this editorial are not the express views of The Alabama Gazette.*

John Sophocleus

# THINK



## High Plains Grifter: the Hubbard story...

I suspect readers are more familiar with Clint Eastwood's 1973 movie than my play on the word **grifter** which entered our lexicon a century ago as slang for *swindler*. Many dictionaries speculate it evolved from the word graft. The film was staged on the shores of Mono Lake, destroyed by the insatiable growth of LA much like the cancerous growth observed on the Plains of Dixie, the fastest growing city in Alabama as the current epicenter of State corruption and largess mostly driven by government (mis)allocation to higher education.

A stranger (played by Eastwood) rides into the small town of Lago, making a profound first impression by easily killing three provocateurs who drew their pistols on him prefacing a spree of rape, murder and further destruction as townspeople are willing to allow anything to secure their short-run economic well being. About to expose the largess the town enjoys, a federal Marshall was very publicly whipped to death in the middle of town by outlaws as the "God fearing" folks [Think: all those in the Hubbard congregation who continue their blind eyes to evidence more interested in securing their largess.] looked on in tacit approval. Three arrested and convicted outlaws are later released from prison triggering widespread fear in the townspeople anxious of their revenge efforts certain to follow.

The Sheriff [Think: *I believe in Mike Hubbard* ads.] offers Eastwood the job of defending Lago from the recently released outlaws. He refuses. In greedy desperation, the Sheriff offers Eastwood, "anything he wants," who learns the source of their fear - i.e., some of the townspeople were complicit in the murder. After discovering the town's greatest source of income was illegal, they hired the outlaws to kill the Marshall, then double-crossed the murderers [Think: pandering rhetoric on sanctity of life to cloak political avarice.] by turning them in.



www.al.com Mike Hubbard

Eastwood appears to take great pleasure in exploiting the deal (evicts all the town's hotel guests for his solitude, enjoys the hotel owner's wife sexually [Think: Rebekah Mason] then dismantles the hotel's barn lumber to build picnic tables to welcome back the outlaws, appoints a new sheriff and mayor [Think: another Hubbard sycophant.] provides a poor Indian and his children a huge bounty of supplies 'compliments' of the town shopkeeper giving them the bum's rush, etc.) belittling their inability to stand sentries/defensive measures on their own. One of the more noteworthy parts of the film is when he requires every building in town painted blood red prompting the Preacher to reply, "Surely you don't mean the church too!" Eastwood retorts, "I mean *especially* the church," mounting his horse to ride out of town, pausing to rename "Lago" on the town sign in red with the more apropos nomenclature "Hell" - I've oft thought a hyphen applicable to convey a 'gnawing Hell.'

As the outlaws blaze a destructive path on their return to Lago, Eastwood badgers them with dynamite and long distance rifle shots increasing wonder about their stealthy attacker(s) identity. Upon returning to Lago, Eastwood surveys the town painted red, spineless townsmen atop roofs with rifles, picnic tables adorned with food and drink, and a big "WELCOME" banner salutation to greet the outlaws who eventually arrive and quickly overwhelm the pusillanimous resistance. Several of the crooked town leaders [Think: corrupt commissioners who name boulevards after grifters, winning awards for being the most urban friendly in the State as they ignore and endanger the poor/mostly black citizens in rural areas in the county.] who orchestrated double-crossing the outlaws are shot. At the end of the day the town is conflagrated with the remaining terrified townspeople cowering in the saloon. Eastwood returns to finally kill the outlaws and leaves in the morning evoking an eerie spirit the Marshall's soul [Think: Buddy Mitchell] may now rest in peace.

Our high plains grifter, Speaker Hubbard finally goes to trial this month if his attorneys' most recent last gasp appeal effort to block justice an opportunity to decide on the 23 felony charges fails again. No matter the jury determination, it will be a victory for the charges to actually be adjudicated in Judge Jacob Walker's Lee County Circuit Court - we're indeed blessed to have men of his character and integrity serving our State and county. Hubbard's ascent to power as this pollutant made his way to AU provides a template for all grifters seeking an effective path to control our State's 'graftmaster' type machines.

Much ink has been spilled citing the anti-corruption laws Hubbard passed (he now asserts are unconstitutional) are now being used to discipline him. In fact much of his charges (some may morph into federal charges for Hubbard and other 'public servants') were serious ethics violations long before Hubbard took the Speakers' gavel. Perhaps reporters emphasize this non-issue irony because they're more uncomfortable crafting words which convey how vulgar the Hubbard machine hubris has been these past years. More courageous reporters like Bill Britt on *'The Voice of Alabama Politics'* has not shied away from pointing this out commenting, "Hubbard has been the overlord of an orgy of greed and corruption like we have never seen."

Hubbard enjoyed national attention promoting himself as mastermind of the GOP takeover of all branches of government in our State as voters allowed this corrupt Party back in Alabama without firing a shot instead of replacing the almost as corrupt modern Democratic Party. In his "Storming the Statehouse" rhetoric Hubbard crowned the legislature had been controlled by Democrats for 136 years (since Reconstruction) claiming **HE** was largely responsible for the Heart of Dixie changing. The more robust explanation is 'New South' Alabama has a tradition of being as stupid as other States these past several score, 'progressing' into the same backward result we've observed instead of standing for freedom and independence. Soon after reestablishing Republicanism 136 years later, 'storming the jailhouse' was no surprise to those who know the history proffering 23 felony indictments determined by a grand jury specifically naming the 'mastermind' of the storm and implicating many of his minions. To those who've read the e-mails submitted to the court, it provides a clear diary of the 'graftmaster' Republican machine on how Alabama returned to a single-party "orgy of greed and corruption" which even makes the modern Democrats blush approaching the theft and hegemony of the Republican occupation days.

Joe Miller (*New Republic* - May 16, 2016) wrote, "With his slick hair, pudgy belly, and car salesman's smile, Hubbard looks every bit the Southern

politician, a role for which he has been well-groomed. Born and raised in the Mayberry-esque town of Hartwell, Georgia, he was senior class president, the Georgia representative in a national high school civics competition in Washington D.C., and state champion of a "Voice of Democracy" speech contest (in which he beat future Christian Coalition leader Ralph Reed). But he cut his teeth as a campaigner in Southeastern Conference football, first as a journalism scholarship student at the University of Georgia, where he helped lead the public relations push for Hershel Walker's 1982 Heisman Trophy. Then, as a flak for the Auburn University athletic department, he did the same for Bo Jackson in 1985."

This grifter would find the 'loveliest village on the plains' an easy mark - esp. as the 'old guard' who cared more about their integrity, university and quality of life over fat paychecks which saddle students with crushing debt was disappearing from faculty and administration. Corrupt public servants like Trustee Bobby Lowder look for loyal grifters to groom into successful fellow kleptocrats. Hubbard leaves AU to start his media company (Auburn Network) awarded broadcast authority on all Tiger sports events redistributing millions to him instead of the University. The story goes on to attribute quarterback Patrick Nix suggesting our high plains grifter contact a friend named Bob Riley (running for 3rd Congressional District) who may benefit from Hubbard's experience. Grifter Hubbard seemed to have found a kindred spirit in Riley.

Miller cited, "It was the first time I had ever seen anyone wear cowboy boots with a suit and actually pull it off," from the mastermind's 2012 book, *Storming the Statehouse: The Campaign that Liberated Alabama from 136 Years of Democrat Rule*. Illustrating Hubbard's natural proclivity for political ruthlessness Miller further quoted, "I found myself energized by the hand-to-hand combat style of the campaign and the excitement." Riley invited Hubbard to Washington for his swearing-in. "Watching my new friend taking his oath touched me deeply, and it unlocked a door in the back of my mind," Hubbard wrote. "As I walked among the U.S. Capitol, the Supreme Court, the Library of Congress, and other symbols of our nation's power ... I began to ask myself if public service might be in my future." Transition from 'jock sniffer/athlete wannabe' to power hungry political sycophant appeared to be easy after the tutelage of public servants like trustee Lowder. While Hubbard is my peer in age, I'd be insulted for anyone I hold in high regard to think him my equal in character, integrity and intelligence. I thank God for His Spirit being so strong in me to NOT accept Mr. Riley's invite and offers in my prayerful efforts to leave this world with my soul intact.

In 1998, Hubbard won a seat in the Alabama House representing Auburn and much of Lee County removing another traditional Democrat to be replaced by a typical big government Republican. Riley joined Hubbard's efforts in 'liberation' of Montgomery after winning the 2002 gubernatorial race to immediately propose the huge Amendment One tax explosion which voters wisely rejected (allowed on a GENERAL election ballot) 2 to 1. The State is indebted to John Rice (who appeared deathly ill to me at the time) who led the 'retail political' fight and Libertarian Mark Bodenhausen who spearheaded the fight on the internet for getting voters informed and to the polls to beat the liberators. Little surprise Riley inserted Hubbard to lead the State's GOP, obtaining a RNC seat plugging into the DC Republicrat establishment network up to the White House.

The grifter could now groom connections local to national more effectively redistributing significant dollars in his favour while laying on the usual rhetoric of ethical and limited government. Federal prosecutors successful conviction of high profile Democrats (e.g., Gov. Siegelman, State legislators, top Party officials, Mayor Langford, etc.) made Hubbard's rhetoric all the more believable, it seems clear now he didn't think the rules would be applied to him. Perhaps Hubbard really believed his own 'liberation' grandiloquence when voters were simply going back to the same old corruption unable to understand the duopoly result which keeps flip-flopping back and forth between the Blue tic/Red tic sucking them into increasingly poorer health.

In the 2010 cycle, Hubbard recruited candidates in districts across the State, raised money, and provided staff support for them. Touting his 'Republican Handshake with Alabama,' platform proved an effective siren song chorus for the easily duped big government conservatives; long on pro-life, reduced spending, block immigration, anti-plaintiff, strongest ethics in the nation, etc. rhetoric while short on accomplishments. All Hubbard candidates won, prompting even more modern Democrats to join the newly liberated Statehouse, giving big government Republicans a super-majority on Goat Hill.

Hubbard was quickly installed as Speaker for 'lame duck' Gov. Riley to call a rare special session in December to ram through their first 'single-party' salvo of the usual Republican playbook to redistribute to special interests at the expense of the general welfare of Alabama citizens. The most noteworthy quote, "This place used to be run by lobbyists," Hubbard declared to the press after the session ended. "Now, it is run by lawmakers, and that's how it ought to be," included in Miller's piece was profound. Hubbard was well on his way toward the more vulgar "Graftmaster" result he worked so hard to accomplish - reduce the drain from 'middle man' lobbyists and get a bigger cut of the largess more quickly and directly.

Hubbard's 'Judas rhetoric' as liberator for improved government feigning concern for the oppressed was easy to see through. When the *O-A News*, first reported Hubbard used Party funds for transactions with Craftmaster Printers (he owned) the usual hubris in reply asserted it was much ado about nothing; Miller cited the local paper's quote, "Out of about 80 candidates, you have only two using Craftmaster," he said. "Is this really a story?" Audit of State Party accounts would discover Hubbard purchased over \$1 mil. in transactions with Craftmaster out of funds under his control, mostly via Marketing Solutions of Florida, part of the grifter network Hubbard groomed over the years. This political direct mail vendor worked for Republican campaigns across the country (including Romney 2012) run by Brett Buerck, who fled Ohio in the early 2000s in the wake of a scandal which cost Larry Householder his position as Speaker of the House according to Miller. Leave it to Alabama to follow Hubbard-Riley machine grifters to become as backwardly corrupt as Ohio and Chicago-style politics.

Party audit findings triggered the attention of Alabama's AG office. Our white collar crime division, supervised by the recently acquired Matt Hart (federal DA prosecutor who won high profile cases including Gov. Siegelman and Birmingham Mayor Langford) would ultimately work with Van Davis to get the 23 felony indictments against Hubbard. Hart was so effective at bringing justice to these political prostitutes, Miller noted, "Harper's and the Huffington Post accused him of being a henchman in a Karl Rove-driven conspiracy to destroy the Democratic Party in Alabama, a notion that Hubbard lampooned

*continued on next page.*





## Inside the Statehouse with Steve Flowers

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



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

While observing the legislature the other day, I fondly remembered a very eventful day as a youth. As a teenager, I grew up working at the Capitol as a Page in the House and Senate.

Albert Brewer had been elected to the House from Morgan County in his late 20's and became Speaker in only his second term. He would eventually let me sit beside him in the Speaker's box and tell me why certain bills were assigned to the proper committee and the probable fate of the proposed legislation.

Brewer ran for lieutenant governor and won in 1966. At that time, the lieutenant governor not only presided over the Senate, he controlled it with help from Governor George Wallace. Brewer took me with him over to the Senate and made me head of the Senate Pages. Brewer confided in me and made me somewhat of an aide de camp at age 15.

I had also become acquainted with our young, fiery, dynamic governor, George Wallace, who will go down in history as probably Alabama's greatest politician. Wallace had a remarkable ability for remembering people's names.

On this particular day, I was roaming around the Capitol with one of my Page buddies from Anniston when Wallace bounced out of his office and asked if I and my friend wanted to have lunch with him. He was swarmed by people as he ate his lunch in the old cafeteria in the basement of the Capitol. Wallace's practice was to campaign in barber shops and beauty parlors all over the state. He asked me about every barber in Pike County by name and then turned to my friend and asked him about every barber in Anniston by name. It was amazing. He also had a habit of eating a hamburger steak every meal. It is not uncommon for folks to put ketchup on hamburger steak, but I watched in amazement when he poured ketchup all over his black-eyed peas, turnip greens and cornbread

too. He put ketchup on everything he ate. Heinz missed a good chance by not using him in a commercial.

I was on cloud nine after getting to have lunch with the Governor of Alabama. I bragged to every state senator and then meandered out to the rotunda where the legendary Miss Mittie sat on her bench knitting. She knew where every state senator and representative was at all times. We had become friends and she trusted me. As the lieutenant governor's aide and head senate page, I needed to ask her where senators were from time to time. I proudly told Miss Mittie that I had eaten lunch with the Governor. Without missing a beat she said, "I guess that little sawed off so and so put ketchup on everything he ate." The old lady not only knew where everybody was, she knew how the governor ate his food. This also told me she did not like Wallace.

The Senate was debating a bill that was important to Gov. Brewer and Wallace. A decision had to be made whether to break for supper. I had gotten to know the Senators pretty well. One was the most powerful member of the Senate, Joe Goodwyn from Montgomery. Old Joe had a serious drinking problem. Most nights he headed to his favorite spot, the Sahara Restaurant, for dinner and libations.

Gov. Brewer called the restaurant and old Joe headed back to the Capitol. Since Joe had been told his vote was urgent, he drove his Buick up the Capitol steps and made it almost to the Jefferson Davis star. His car's transmission was on the second step. Minutes before we heard the news of old Joe's spectacular arrival, I ambled out to ask Miss Mittie if she knew where Sen. Goodwyn was. She said, "Somebody parked in his parking place and he had to park on the Capitol steps." It was obvious to me that she did not like Wallace, but she liked old Joe Goodwyn.

June 8, 2016

## High Plains Grifter

from page 4A

throughout his memoir of the 2010 GOP takeover. But now it was Hubbard's turn to cry foul."

Going back to his same "Storming the Statehouse" rhetoric, Hubbard simply asserted his felony charges are a result of standing up to Barack Obama - I wonder if Obama even knows a small time grifter like Hubbard? BHO had much bigger graft to accomplish further weighing-down the productive members of our nation - it is not like the Republican 'liberators' have done much to stop the economic harm of Democrats. In fact Hubbard, Riley, et al have shown little concern for those harmed, made homeless, etc. - it is all about being the recipient from those lives damaged. Furthermore, Obama's DoJ said Siegelman did not get sentenced long enough for the crimes they committed; I pray the DoJ thinks similarly on weak sentences public servants like Messrs. Bentley, Hubbard, Lowder, Riley, et al may earn.

Craftmaster/RSLC collusion was one of the more visible tips of the iceberg field which may sink this rat-laden ship of swindlers. Riley registered as a lobbyist months after his second gubernatorial term ended where the e-mails get more revealing. Hubbard complains doing his job of traveling the State, meeting legislators and constituents, etc. doesn't help him make money as if his public service pay along with the existing redistributions from crony connections were not enough. This from a man who's intellect and business acumen suggests in the competitive world he applauds, his highest valued use may be a radio DJ. Hubbard has never shown me he possesses the candor or work ethic to accomplish what I did in the 'real world' at Ford Motor Company. It appears Riley was speaking from experience bemoaning 14 years on a government payroll when he told Hubbard you can be rich or be governor, not both.

Scams to get Hubbard his cut of the largess went into overdrive. It is easy to be a successful grifter in our political system (even for dullard public servants like Hubbard, Lowder and Riley) if no Davis & Hart types are willing and able to discipline them. One of the more notable in the e-mail evidence is Hubbard's job as "economic development consultant" for the Southeast Alabama Gas District (SEAGD) at \$12k/mo; because Hubbard's skills as an economist are so valuable. Before executing the contract, SEAGD requested clearance from our State's feckless ethics commission who approved it provided Hubbard not represent himself as Speaker in his 'consulting' work. The most notable quote Miller included in his piece giving Hubbard's text from one of his monthly reports to SEAGD was exchange with an executive from South Korea-based Hankook Tire, looking to build a facility in the United States: "Mr. Kim believes that my role in government would mean a great deal and put Alabama at the top of the list if I were to visit." I wonder how much those who lost their jobs in Lee County would have to pay the 'great liberator' each month to undo the harm Republicrat trade policy imposed on our tire plant? That's the sort of economics you're more likely to get an answer from the Speaker if he thinks you're willing

and able to pay his monthly fee.

As the 'orgy of greed and corruption' unfolded; the grand jury investigation of "Sheriff approved" Hubbard provided more charges to consider. The Speaker landed a \$5k/mo payoff from American Pharmacy Cooperative, Inc. allegedly giving APCI monopoly power over our State's multi-million-dollar prescription drug Medicaid program, currently underfunded by about \$85 mil. to be in jeopardy of losing matching funds. Hopefully these wrongdoings (Rep. Wren has already pled guilty on) will find interest with federal prosecutors after the 23 State felonies are decided. Edgenuity, gave Hubbard a consulting contract for \$7.5k/mo - which could evolve into NCAA violations. A cup manufacturer started paying Hubbard \$10k/mo for his consulting skills in spite of admitting ignorance on the economics of the plastic cup business in his own e-mail text. You get the idea... Miller and others estimate Hubbard receiving over \$400k/yr from 'consulting' contracts of this sort.

I suspect readers are wondering why Speaker Hubbard has not followed Rep. Wren's path of the penitent thief and also plead guilty to save his soul and jail time.

First, a grifter of this sort doesn't get to this point if (s)he has any regard for righteousness and their soul. Some of readers may have also heard rumors of a last minute deal - I'm not buying and will indeed look foolish if he does so between my typing this and making it into print. Hubbard is 'cool in the courtroom' for several reasons. First, he's rational to think they get at least one of their minions on the jury to hang it or better still a not guilty result as Rep. Moore received where the evidence to support the charge was indisputable - i.e., jury nullification of the law.

Second, public servants in his position can get a better payoff from the minions he'll protect by not giving evidence/testimony for the few years he may serve if sentenced.

Finally, I don't think he really cares what the jury decides because he'll abuse the system to reverse any just outcome the judge has worked so hard and patiently to provide in the appellate process. Sad how few seem to understand the role Chief Justice plays in appeal and impeachment procedure - it is a shame Roy Moore doesn't have the legal/political skills to shepherd our State toward righteousness and help remove these pollutants instead of his poorly reasoned legal arguments which make him easy to remove when the 'liberators' want him out of the way. Fodder for a future column on yet another duel of wits between unarmed opponents.

*Postscript: enjoyed my first SCV meeting with the Tallasse Guards at their new headquarters - great job gentlemen! Keep up the wonderful renovation effort. Easy to see why the Guards are one of the biggest Camps in the nation and growing. The talk on Gen. Price was outstanding and the view from the back porch is picture perfect. No, I didn't ask their thoughts on being 'liberated' by the Republicans after 136 years... Deo Vindice*

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# Woods & Waters with Steve

Steve Long



## TURKEYS FUTURE DEPENDS ON A GOOD HATCH



*A great day in South Dakota, Dan Schofield, Terry Sieveke, Steve Long and Hunter Smith on a recent hunt in South Dakota*

I gotta tell ya, folks, I just got my final turkey hunting fix for the year up in lovely South Dakota! Dan Schofield, Hunter Smith, and myself had 8 tags between the three of us, and in 5 days managed to tag out! The weather was phenomenal; pretty every single day. I've been making this trip each May for 23 years now, and even compared to every other time I've been chasing down those Merriam's Thunder Chickens, this year stands as one of the best. Those birds never disappoint!

Of course, good turkey hunting requires something that we don't always take into consideration; good nesting by hens! Every year, we hunters decrease the turkey population, which seems pretty obvious, but leads to more questions about how turkeys reproduce. I recently came across a great article from Jimmy Stafford of NWTF, and I want to share some of these insights with you.

First and foremost, there's an order to the process. Hens have to be bred first before they nest. As it turns out, research suggests that the hen's physical condition has quite a bit to do with when that biological clock kicks in for breeding. If she's not in good enough health, the hen's nesting period will be pushed back later and later, creating complications down the road. What that means for us is that anything we can do to improve the turkey's habitat will also improve nesting.

Once a nesting site is chosen, the hen will lay her eggs over the course of a few days, until she reaches her compliment of roughly 9 to 13 eggs. She won't hang around the nest unless she's laying an egg. After that, the incubation period begins, where for roughly the next 4 weeks, the hen will stay on the nest, day and night, to keep those eggs nice and warm. She might take a brief break during the day to go get a quick meal, but that's about it. This puts the hen at great risk, as predators such as coyotes won't turn their noses up at a shot for an easy meal.

Hen nesting site choice is something of a mystery, but we do have a few clues as to general preferences. For starters, the nest needs to be fairly close to a good brood habitat, where the poults can be raised properly. Proper brood habitat is usually an open space, such as a road shoulder or a food plot. Hens also like a nest site with some good lateral cover, with light cover overhead to help hide the nest from potential predators. Lastly, hens also like having a good field of vision so they can spot predators before it's too late while still keeping the majority of their body hidden behind vegetation and brush.

The biggest problem facing eggs and poults, however, is predation. Skunks, bobcats, foxes, dogs, hogs, raccoons, crows, and even a few snakes will all make a snack out of a turkey egg. Even after hatching, a young poult is still easy prey for other birds, such as hawks and owls.

Various studies place 10 to 40 percent of nests having a successful hatch. After that, poults have a 75 percent mortality rate in the first 4 weeks. The odds are pretty long on turkey survival to begin with, but even so, population numbers seem to be keeping up with intense predation, regular hunting, and other occurrences.

The best thing we, as hunters and outdoorsmen, can do is keep educating ourselves and keep working on providing proper habitat for the wildlife we look after. The hunting season for turkey is over, sure, but the work we put into it is only just getting started. So get out there, throw in some work on that property, and get ready for next year so you can get 'em!



*Carrying a good old Bama Gobbler out of the woods.*

## Kritter Korner

### THE RACCOON

This month we are going to try to help you understand one of the most intelligent animals in the US. **The raccoon.**

The **Raccoon** (*Procyon lotor*) is native to North and South America having a range that extends from Southern Canada to the northern reaches of Argentina.



Raccoons have feral populations in Europe, especially Germany, where they escaped from fur farms and were set loose to be hunted for sport during the time of World War II. The raccoon gets its name from the Algonquin word *arakun* which means "one who scratches with his hands." They are plantigrade animals, walking on the entirety of their foot - heel

to toe. Bears and humans do this as well.

They are probably the most recognized animal in the United States. Their distinctive black masks and ringed tails make them easy to identify. There are 6 species of raccoon, but there are not many traits that differentiate them. Raccoons are generally 2 ½ feet long from nose tip to tail tip. Their average weight range is 12 - 16 pounds, with raccoons in colder territories weighing considerably more. The largest raccoon on record weighed over 60 lbs. Raccoons can live for 15 years, but most only live to be 5 or 6 in captivity a raccoon can live up to 20 years old. The oldest recorded raccoon was 22 years. Adult raccoons don't have many predators, except man. Humans hunt them for fur and meat and many are run-over or killed off as pests.

They are amazingly adaptable and have probably benefited more from the presence of humans than not. Although they prefer wooded territory close to water, raccoons have no problem surviving in urban environments and as human populations have spread into less hospitable territories, raccoon populations have spread with them. Raccoons nest in tree hollows or empty underground dens but are equally at home in abandoned cars, sewers or your chimney. They are generalists, rapidly adapting to ever changing environments and food sources.

Raccoons are highly intelligent and have a manual dexterity that comes close to that of apes. Their long delicate fingers easily open clam shells, trash cans and doors. They are true omnivores and are opportunistic in their diet. They will eat fruit, insects, berries, nuts, eggs, small rodents, grapes, corn, crabs, crayfish and anything edible you may have left in the backyard. It was once thought that raccoons washed their food. They do not. Raccoons have a highly sensitive sense of touch which water helps to enhance. Even when water is unavailable, raccoons will use the same motions while they manipulate their food or objects they are

interested in. This tactile experience gives the raccoon a better sense of what it will be eating. It is as if they "see" with their hands.

Kits (usually 3 - 6 of them) are born 2 months after mating. They are weaned by 8 weeks, and soon after will go on foraging trips with their mother. She will teach them how to climb, swim and find food. This is the only time you will typically see groups of raccoons together. Be cautious about approaching them. Females will be extremely aggressive and ferocious if they feel their young are threatened. A mother raccoon is like a Grizzly bear with cubs. Many raccoon kits will "winter over" with their mothers and not leave until spring.

They do not hibernate they go through a period of decreased activity in the winter which is referred to as a daily Torpor, but they will feed heavily in the fall, storing extra fat so they can stay in their burrows through the worst parts of winter. Raccoons are generally nocturnal, but are seen more frequently during the day foraging for food, mother raccoons are seen a lot during the day with her babies. This is called a Nursery. Should you find a baby raccoon secure it right where it is for about an hour, then return and see if its still there, normally mother raccoons will return and get their baby they are extremely maternal. Should you come back and the baby is still there locate a Wildlife Rehabilitation Center and let them take care of the animals. They are trained to care for wildlife.

The raccoon's scientific name, *Procyon lotor*, means "washer dog" although it is a closer relative to the bear family and the Ringtail Lemurs and Coati mundis.

Population densities of raccoons in urban areas are 20 times higher than for raccoons in rural environments.

Raccoons have a large array of vocalizations. They purr, whistle, growl, hiss, scream and even whinny.

They have been kept as pets (President Coolidge and his wife had one named Rebecca), and while young, seem happy to be in human company. As they mature, especially during mating season, they can become increasingly destructive and aggressive.

A raccoon's hands are so nimble they can unlatch a shoe, unlatch a cage and deftly retrieve small coins from pockets, if they watch you assemble something they can disassemble it backwards.

They are excellent climbers; they can climb head upwards, down wards side ways. A raccoon can do 360 degrees. An avid climber.

Raccoons are called Boars and Sows. Their babies are called "Kits".

A raccoon can remember a task it was taught 3 years after.



**Ron VanHerwyn**



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

# TO THE BLUE FOREVER

*Fleeting Time Has Borne Them Far  
From The Hallowed Halls of Lanier*

## Sidney Lanier 60th Reunion - Class of '56

We entered the "hallowed halls" of Lanier in September, 1953 with some trepidation. The massive structure looked more like a college than a high school. There were approximately 2,000 of us milling around, trying to find the right place to be. We had come from smaller junior high schools which served certain sections of Montgomery. But this? This was out of our comfort zone. This was an amalgamation of all sections of Montgomery; Baldwin area, Cloverdale area, Capitol Heights area, Dalraida, Chisholm, Highland Gardens, West End, Ridgecrest, Snowdown, Hope Hull, Pike Road. What an order. How would we get along with these people?

As the school year progressed, we felt more comfortable with the diversity of students. Oh, there may have been a fight or two between guys from Capitol Heights and from Cloverdale. But, the pugilists soon became friends. It was really quite nice to make friends with people from all walks of life. Many became life long friends; me and Bobby Jolly, Donald Harbin and Bud Meads, Sid Dawkins and Frank Myers, Wink Conner and Dudley Calhoun, just to name a few. We would have never known each other but for Lanier.

The beautiful campus of Lanier High School that we see today received its first graduating class in 1929. The original building cost more than one million dollars. Remember that's 1929 dollars. It was so well constructed that it would take nearly 100 million dollars to duplicate today. The building is obviously impressive, but the heart of Lanier beat through the halls, the classrooms, the athletic fields, the drill fields, the various clubs and societies that built Lanier's reputation. It was said during the thirties, forties, fifties and sixties that a high school degree from Lanier was equivalent to the first two years of college. Few students were turned down for entrance into college.

It is difficult to describe how we felt about "Dear Old Lanier." There is a mystical reverence that the graduates seemed to have experienced at the "Court Street College." That is why so many still gather for the reunions over the years.

The 60th reunion of the graduating class of 1956 was held on Saturday, April 23, 2016. Over 100 members of the class began trickling into town on Friday to participate in small groups of parties. Most waited until Saturday night to really celebrate the occasion. A dinner party was held at the Montgomery Country Club which lasted until the last dancer was still perpendicular to the floor. The food was fabulous, the mingling of near 80 year olds was sophomoric, as it should have been. There were a few adult beverages consumed. Surprisingly there were some tee-totalers that were having just as good of a time.

For about four hours these old guys and gals felt like they were back in high school at the Sidney

Lanier gym at their graduation dance. Nobody got out of hand, nobody passed out from the "serious" dancing. Everybody was rich and famous for a brief moment in time. Jane Turner and "Bootsie" Thorington were voted best dancing couple as they made an effort to duplicate the old "P. C. Bop." In speaking with "Bootsie" a few days later, he vociferously complained of his legs being so sore that he could hardly get out of bed. This was probably a common problem with a lot of the "cool cats" that tried to turn back to yesteryear.

**The 60th reunion of Lanier was a huge success thanks to those on the planning committee and to those who came from far and wide to once again celebrate an occasion that few have experienced; Sidney Lanier High School.**



Jane Turner Ham (RT) The Homecoming Queen in 1955 gives a little love to Joe Guy, a highly successful contractor in Atlanta. Joe's date to the reunion, Mary Copeland, is likewise impressed.



Lanier Homecoming Committee; Jane Turner Ham, Jo Screws McGowin, Betsy Vaughan Arnold, Frances Ann Bishop, Sonya Neal Murphree, Lynn Hobbie Andrews, Joy Patterson Stallings



State Champion Golf Team!  
Bill Hinds, Joe Mussafer, Gordon Gill, George Buchannen, Dickie Ball, Maurice Mussafer and Jack Thorington.



Jane Turner as it is announced that she had been selected Homecoming Queen



Sydna Roton as it is announced that she would be the Senior Attendant



Sports Editor,  
Ed Jones

*Together  
Again  
After Sixty Years!*



Judy Patterson and  
Mark Grable



Rita Ogle Summers and  
Carolyn Cooper Williams



Bill and Carey Hinds



Betty Rosa Hicks



Dick Ball



Rita Ogle, Jo Screws  
and DOG



Captain and quarterback, Bobby Spann, fights for yardage as fullback Billy Ellisor makes a crushing block.



Bud Meads is determined to score.

Lanier was undefeated in the 1955 season, beating Selma, Alex City, Tuscaloosa, Dothan, Ensley, West End, Phenix City, Murphy and Tallassee. A 12-12 tie with Ramsey prevented the Poets from winning the state championship.



# Bench - Bar & Beyond

By Judge Dale Segrest

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

## Judge Philip Dale Segrest

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## A STORY ABOUT SCHOOLS

Public education was and is the great American dream. Nevertheless, since the 1950s, we have seen a broad-based movement toward the privatization of education. It is against this background that I tell my story. Stephen Covey who wrote *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* suggested that one of those habits is "keeping the main thing the main thing." For public education, excellent, effective education is the main thing.

I was born in rural Macon County and attended Shorter High School, a public school for grades one through twelve. There were fewer than 100 students in all 12 grades. There were 9 members of my 1960 graduating class. I used to say that there were 5 basketball players and four cheerleaders, but that may not be politically correct!

Mrs. Steele Bibb, a Huntingdon College graduate, was our principal. Four members of my graduating class, including Betty Menefee, who would later become my wife, signed up to attend Huntingdon. When I almost backed out because of fear of the tuition (they were charging almost \$1000 a year!), I was recruited by Coach Neal Posey. I suspect that he knew that I could not play basketball that well, but also knew my ACT score. In the background, Mrs. Bibb knew I liked basketball, and probably "recruited" Neal Posey. Shorter High School provided excellent education. An amazing percentage of graduates attended college. But soon after my graduation, the case of Lee v. Macon made Macon County the battleground between the politics of Gov. George Wallace and the power of Judge Frank Johnson, neither of whom was an educator.

I had a good academic record at Huntingdon. I also served as president of the Student Government Association five years after John Ed Matheson, and five years before Jeff sessions. Admission to the University of Alabama Law School was easy. I was one of the first Huntingdon graduates to attend law school, although there have been many since. The education that the Shorter school provided passed every test.

I returned to Montgomery to practice law. I moved back to Macon County in 1970, in the opposite direction from the "white flight" that was generally occurring, but continued practicing law in Montgomery. The public school system in Macon County was not the same. Our children, Philip and Mike, attended Montgomery Academy.

My brother Wade had graduated from Shorter High School in 1956. He attended Troy State Teachers College and got a degree in education. In 1960, he was hired to teach at the newly formed Montgomery Academy, a private school with emphasis on college preparation. Wade taught mathematics. He continued pursuing his education and got a Master's degree in education at the University of Alabama.

After teaching at the Montgomery Academy for a number of years and serving as an interim headmaster, he was appointed Headmaster at the Montgomery Academy. He was influential in hiring Mrs. Duke and Mrs. Jolly. Mrs. Duke and Mrs. Jolly had taught both of us at Shorter High School. They taught at the Montgomery Academy for several years.

My son, Philip, graduated from the Montgomery Academy in 1985, in a class of 40. He was one of the National Merit finalists in that class. A very bright black student from Macon County was also in that class and several others were enrolled at the Academy. In 1986 we moved to Tallahassee and Mike completed his education in the public school. Philip now practices intellectual property law in Chicago, and Mike practices law with me in Tallahassee. This is my story about schools.

Without question, much social progress was made by the changes in public education that have occurred since 1960. But something very important was lost. The loss partially defeated the purposes of the intended changes. Government did not keep the main thing the main thing. Everyone would have been better off if it had.

Today is a new day. We must find ways to rehabilitate the dream of excellence in public education. Privatized education can never reach the talented intellects that are mired in poverty and other disadvantages. Excellent, effective, free public education is still the great equalizer. But the education system (like the army?) must offer the opportunity to everyone to be all that they can be. "No child held back" is just as important as "no child left behind." We can only renew the dream of excellent universal public education by keeping the main thing the main thing.



## THE MINIMUM WAGE

By John Martin

Once again, there is a lot of noise being made across the country to raise the minimum wage in a make-believe effort to help the poor workers at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder. And once again, if any of this crap should ever become law, it will have the exact, opposite effect its promoters are touting.

What are our so-called "leaders" thinking? What is going through the minds of these people? Do they honestly believe they are helping anybody? Is it going to help workers pull themselves up to higher levels?

The notorious Franklin D. Roosevelt, the 20th century's most dishonorable American "President" is the culprit we can blame for initiating an artificial wage in our country. He first tried it in 1933, during his first year in office. Fortunately, the Supreme Court soon struck it down. But in 1938, he and Congress finally managed to push it through. Since then, it has mushroomed from a modest twenty five cents an hour to the current \$7.15.

Over the years, teenagers, unskilled, and inexperienced people have found that gaining initial employment and learning experience has become more and more difficult. There was once a time when any teenager who wanted work could find it readily. They earned money by bagging groceries, shining shoes, delivering papers, mowing lawns, becoming helpers at various companies, and even driving school buses. This "menial" employment provided a valuable work ethic that is lacking in many people today. The minimum wage, along with various licensure and insurance mandates, has now put an end to much of it.

How does a minimum wage help America's economy? Who could possibly benefit from depriving employers and employees of their right to decide among themselves what wages they should earn? The answer is absolutely nobody. There are no benefits whatsoever. A person's wage has to be earned—not coerced.

**But artificial wages have costs—heavy costs:**

1. They force the prices of practically everything upward, usually more than the mandated increases the workers get.
2. The higher labor costs and prices make American products less competitive on world markets, thus increasing our trade deficit.
3. These same costs accelerate the movement of American manufacturers

to other countries where labor is cheaper.

4. Although a few might benefit from the forced increase, many others will lose their jobs. Many employers will replace workers with robots and other automation.
5. Some companies that are operating on the edge of solvency will be unable to absorb the extra costs and will be forced to close. All of their employees will lose their jobs.
6. Unemployment will rise. As a result, people who have been earning their own livings will be forced to accept government handouts to survive.
7. We will be forced into higher income tax brackets with no increase in buying power.
8. And yes, the hassles of government enforcement agents sticking their noses into private businesses have their costs—both in money and harassment.

As soon as an increase takes place, unemployment rises, productivity diminishes, and dependency on government rises. Fewer people can support themselves, and more are enslaved by the government. Some of the unemployed will be forced into criminal activities and black markets—just to survive and feed their families. What kind of "do-gooder" does it take to support a policy like that?

Minimum wage laws can even be racist. As an example from the very beginning in 1933, according to the Mackinac Center for Public Policy, FDR's little scheme caused 500,000 low-skilled black people to lose their jobs. Nobel Prize-winning economist Milton Friedman said the minimum wage was an adverse "anti-negro law." In apartheid South Africa, unions pushed for minimum wages so low-skilled black workers could not compete for jobs with their only trump card—their willingness to work for lower wages.

Right now unemployment is fairly low. This is largely due to the time span that has passed since the minimum wage was last jacked up. Nevertheless, a sizable number of people at the bottom are suffering from chronic unemployment.

There is no such thing as an "unfair" wage. When a worker accepts a job, he accepts the salary that it pays. If he feels that the salary is too low, he can refuse to accept the job, or quit it. No worker has a right to force someone to pay a higher wage than he is willing to pay. Likewise, no employer has a right to force anyone to work for a wage that is unacceptable. And finally, no government or other third party has a right to interfere.

America is supposed to be a free country—one where everybody can buy and sell goods and services in a free market.

Everybody who prefers freedom over slavery should demand a REPEAL of the minimum wage, not an increase.

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

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## WHAT IS THE EFFECT OF DIVORCE ON ESTATE PLANNING?



There are various issues relative to estate planning and divorce. There are instances where an ex-spouse may continue to be entitled to your assets, times when they are automatically disqualified from assets and/or disqualified from acting as a fiduciary and then there are changes in the law. Finally, there may be times that you may wish for your ex-spouse to inherit from you even though by law that might be successfully challenged.

**Ronald A. Holtsford**

With your Last Will and Testament, upon divorce your former spouse is considered by law to have predeceased you. While that makes things convenient for you immediately following a divorce, it is wise anytime you have a major life change to have a new Will done. You may have named your ex-spouse to act as your Personal Representative or as a Trustee, so you will want to name another individual to act as your Personal Representative and name a successor as well.

However, I have had clients who have either maintained a close relationship with their ex-spouse or have minor children together and really want their ex-spouse to have a least a portion of their assets upon death. The language needs to be specific that it is the intent of the testator or testatrix that they want their former spouse to have something from their estate, if that is what they desire. With a legal presumption that a former spouse has predeceased you, a legal challenge by successor beneficiaries would probably be successful. And in the throws of the emotional turmoil of a divorce if the other spouse decides to kill you thinking they will ensure inheritance, one spouse that kills another (besides going to jail) is also precluded from inheritance.

What about the other major components of a legal estate plan? If your former spouse is named as your agent under your Power of Attorney (financial or health) then their power as agent is automatically revoked or if they are named as proxy under your Advance Directive (Living Will) then that power is also revoked. After all if the Advance Directive kicks in due to a medical condition the ex-spouse might be saying, "Let them go, they always said they weren't afraid to die @".

With a Trust it can be more complicated as to what form of Trust exists but it should definitely be addressed during the divorce.

Historically, insurance accounts that name the former spouse as a beneficiary remains as is and has been consistently upheld by the Alabama courts. I have always counseled my clients on the effect of these policies. However, a change

to the law as of 01 September 2015 now aligns itself more with the effect of former spouses and Wills. If you have a life insurance policy naming your spouse as beneficiary and later are divorced then the spouse automatically loses that benefit, and that is probably what you would want.

However you must consider who your successor beneficiary(ies) is/ are and whether they can outright take upon your death, i.e. they cannot if they are under age 19 and whether you really wanted your former spouse to remain as a beneficiary. I think this will be interesting for the courts since it is a contractual obligation and I believe that insurance companies will want to otherwise pay to a former spouse that remains as beneficiary unless directed otherwise by the court.

While most real property deeds include spouses "with rights of survivorship", a divorce that does not address the title to real property would continue to have both former spouses on the deed but as "tenants in common" which means no rights of survivorship and could eventually mean upon the death of a spouse that a former spouse and a new spouse could have a 50/50 share of the real property. I'm sure that would not be good.

If you are unfortunately staring down a divorce make sure that in addition to your assets that your estate plan and insurances are considered and that you speak with attorneys proficient in those areas. As always if you do not have an attorney, ask a trusted friend or family member or contact the Alabama State Bar, Lawyer Referral service.

*This article is informative only and not meant to be all inclusive. Additionally this article does not serve as legal advice to the reader and does not constitute an attorney-client relationship. The reader should seek counsel from their attorney should any questions exist.*

*"No representation is made that the quality of legal services performed is greater than the quality of legal services performed by other lawyers."*

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## Christian Principles and Our Political Differences

**Marcia Chambliss**

If there's a possibility of a bright spot in the current presidential election campaign as well as the ongoing circus known as Alabama politics, it's learning that it has been far easier to wean myself from the 24/7 news cycle and political commentary than I thought possible.

By no means have I shut down access to all news sources or turned a blind eye to the current issues that tremendously impact our communities, state, and nation, but I am attempting moderation to maintain a degree of sanity.

That effort recently led me to a short book I had purchased a few months ago but had put aside for later reading. The book delves into the Christian topic of grace and truth, and in an ironic twist for someone hoping for a respite from politics, the author discusses political grace and truth towards the end of the book.

In *The Grace and Truth Paradox* by Randy Alcorn, the author explores his perspective that conservatives often place value on truth (morals) while liberals tend to focus on grace (compassion). Both are necessary components in a civilized society, particularly to those of faith, but are not an end in and of themselves.

If those on both sides of the political aisle, myself included, are truly honest with ourselves, perhaps we can see that an emphasis on one element without the other puts us on a direct collision course resulting in the animosity and resentment that is increasingly prevalent in our nation today. For those who identify as Christian conservatives, the truth and grace paradox should be of major importance in how we also respond to political issues.

**Conservatives and liberals are now screaming so loudly at each other that no one cares to listen.** Worse, we are continuing at breakneck speed down a path of financial and cultural destruction because we allow those politically responsible for the damage to further divide us racially, socially, and economically while our war of words escalates across all manner of communication.

Extending political grace doesn't mean we ignore public corruption, give our elected representation a pass for harmful or overreaching legislation, or reward poor public service by continually re-electing that person(s) to office. It doesn't mean that we no longer stand firm for values and principles that strengthen our families and our communities. Political grace also should not equate as tolerance for anything and everything that makes someone "happy" if it is in direct contradiction of moral standards. Truth protects us, our children, and our society

from harmful consequences and it is our duty as citizens to defend and protect those who are the most vulnerable.

By the same measure, those of us who stand for political truth must acknowledge and hold accountable those on "our side" who attempt to exploit conservative values for political gain. We must fully educate ourselves on issues so that we are not easily misled by campaign rhetoric distorting voting records and be willing to challenge candidates and public officials when facts are manipulated to serve the purpose of obtaining elected office. But all levels of accountability need to be addressed with a dose of grace to encourage civil discussion rather than stoking the fires of anger. I've personally experienced my share of anger with politicians and know firsthand just how difficult it is to extend that grace with someone I oppose politically. It's a matter in which I must hold myself accountable before pointing my finger elsewhere.

Alcorn's thoughts regarding political truth and grace are best expressed in this excerpt:

*"Why should we have to choose between conservatism's emphasis on truth and liberalism's emphasis on grace? Why can't we oppose injustice to minorities and to the unborn? Why can't we oppose greedy ruination of the environment and anti-industry New Age environmentalism? Why can't we affirm the biblical right to the ownership of property and emphasize God's call to voluntarily share wealth with the needy? Why can't we uphold God's condemnation of sexual immorality, including homosexual practices, and reach out in love and compassion to those trapped in destructive lifestyles and dying from AIDS?"*

So much will happen politically in our state and nation in the weeks and months to come – I imagine there will be ample opportunities for us to apply the principles of truth and grace in how we react to all of it.

Alcorn, Randy. *The Grace and Truth Paradox*. Sisters: Multnomah, 2003. Print.

Marcia Chambliss serves on the leadership team of Smart Girl Politics, an online community for conservative women. She can be reached at: [Marcia@sgpaction.com](mailto:Marcia@sgpaction.com). Her views do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Smart Girl Politics.

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**Oswaldo Chavez,**  
MS, LMFT-S, LPC-S, NCC  
Clinical Counselor, Non-profit organization.

# Family Therapy

## Motivating Yourself to Change

What makes us motivated to make changes in our lives? Alfred Adler, the father of the Individual Psychology Model, believed that people make choices which bring about pleasure. In other words, find meaning in life. Do you ever feel like you're stuck and things will never change? That's true if you never take any action or are too scared to change. We often complain about our circumstance but do nothing to make it better.

There are those who believe whatever we speak we will receive. I, too, believe in this as I have seen it happen both with clients and in my personal life.

Whatever I believe to be true, will be true. There were many times in my younger years that I believed that I deserved a life of poverty and struggle, which was a very normal experience throughout my childhood and adolescent years. That's all I knew. This negative belief carried over into my early adult years, but the turning point in my life was when I saw myself and I said, "I'm tired of getting the leftovers of everything in life." I told myself that God did not bring me into this world just to be miserable, poor and lonely. I learned from my mother that God had

more in store for all of us, but first I had to believe. I had to speak it. I had to act like it and live like it for the change to occur. This did not just happen by me complaining to God, although I am sure He wondered why I whined so much about my life. I started using affirmations. "I am going to be in a good man. I am going to have a good relationship. I am going to have a family. I am going to find a better job. I am going to work on my student loans. I am going to pursue a career that will make a difference in others. I am going to have a better home to stay in that has central air conditioning." I began acting as though those things were coming my way. I started to prepare for them. By that I mean I did not just talk, I acted. I started paying my student loans. I started building myself up by the choices I made. I started looking for a relationship that was healthy and not toxic. I started working on my Masters. I started looking for a place to live that was livable and had air conditioning. I started to look for a job that had better pay and opportunity for growth. I remember praying daily that God would give me all that my heart desired, that which was right and just in the eyes of God. I would affirm, "God, I know that You will give me a family to love and respect. God, I know that you are preparing my future dream job." Sometimes it felt like those things were too far to see come to existence, but I continued to have faith in the things that are unseen.

In counseling, I often see clients that are beat down from life and only know what they have experienced and do not see anything in their future. While the counseling process proceeds, I provide tools to the client about how to have a positive mindset. I begin exploring the client's history to find things that can help support or foster change. For example, if I see that the Jane Doe has a spiritual belief, I may ask the her to pray as if she already has those things for which she is seeking. If she does not have a spiritual belief, I may ask her to start planning for the good things to come. I might ask Jane Doe to imagine what her future would look like if it had improved. More often than not, I start seeing the layers of negativity and the burden of life fall off her shoulders. It is when Jane decides to remove these layers and change her internal dialogue that true change can occur.

### Defining Motivation

Webster's Dictionary defines motivation as a force or influence that causes someone to do something.

**Motivation can also be defined in the following ways:**

- An internal or external drive that prompts a person to change
- The ability to initiate and persist toward a chosen goal or objective

- Being able to pursue change in the face of obstacles
- The determination to resist ingrained learned and unhealthy patterns and habits
- Doing everything you can to make the changes you want in your life

### Prochaska's six stages of change:

#### Stage #1: Pre-Contemplation

People at this stage may be aware of the costs of unhealthy behaviors or situations. Characteristics of this stage are a lack of interest in change, and having no plan or intention to change. We might describe this person as unaware.

#### Stage #2: Contemplation

People in the contemplation stage have become aware of problems associated with their behavior. However, they are ambivalent about whether or not it is worthwhile to change. Characteristics of this stage are: exploring the potential to change; desiring change but lacking the confidence and commitment to change behavior; and having the intention to change at some unspecified time in the future. We might describe this person as aware and open to change.

#### Stage #3: Preparation

At this stage people accept responsibility to change their behavior. They evaluate and select techniques for behavioral change. Characteristics of this stage include: developing a plan to make the needed changes; building confidence and commitment to change; and having the intention to change within one month. We might describe this person as willing to change and anticipating the benefits of change.

#### Stage #4: Action

At this stage people engage in self-directed behavioral change efforts while gaining new insights and developing new skills. Although these change efforts are self-directed, outside help may be sought. Characteristics of this stage include: consciously choosing new behavior; learning to overcome the tendencies toward unwanted behavior; and engaging in change actions for less than six months. We might describe this person as enthusiastically embracing change and gaining momentum.

#### Stage #5: Maintenance

People in the maintenance stage have mastered the ability to sustain new behavior with minimal effort. They have established new behavioral patterns and self-control. We might describe this person as persevering and consolidating their change efforts. They are integrating change into the way they live their life.

#### Stage #6: Termination

At the termination stage people have adopted a new self-image consistent with desired behavior and lifestyle. They do not react to temptation in any situation. Characteristics of this stage include: confidence; enjoying self-control; and appreciation of a healthier and happier life

### Food For Thought

Motivation to change can be very difficult and many times seem as though it has been unsuccessful; however, change does not happen overnight. It takes numerous setbacks often to motivate us to make a lasting change. We often learn unhealthy patterns that at one time in our life's were helpful for us to survive but have becomes obsolete. We desire a better life and that is where motivation to change occurs. Do not give up! When you want to change something in your life that is unhealthy or no longer helping you grow, continue pushing forward.

*Hector Oswaldo Chavez, MS, is a Marriage and Family Therapist, Professional Counselor, and Substance Abuse Counselor. He serves on multiple boards and has worked in a variety of clinical settings such as with the Army, Navy, Hospital Inpatient and Outpatient, Community Mental Health, and Private Practice. His professional views may not necessarily reflect the views of other mental health or medical professionals. If you have any personal or family concerns about the topic discussed, please seek professional assistance.*



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## Pike Road News

# ONE PIKE ROAD RESIDENT'S CRITIQUE OF 'THE PIKE ROAD WAY'

COMMENTARY  
By BILL RICE, JR.

### 'Please describe what you have done to investigate The Pike Road Way.'

This question is (or was) listed on the Pike Road School website ([www.pikeroadschools.org](http://www.pikeroadschools.org)). Any parent of a Pike Road School (PRS) student who is interested in becoming an officer in the PTSA is asked to answer the above question as part of his or her application process.

In this writing, I construct this essay as if I were a prospective PTSA officer. As Pike Road parents, we are part of a growing group who no longer believes the "Pike Road Way" offers the best educational model for our children.

What have I done to investigate the Pike Road Way? *A lot.* Indeed, the 8-page package of stories published in the May edition of *The Gazette* might fairly be labeled as an investigation of "The Pike Road Way."

### The Pike Road Way is The Suzanne Freeman Way

Based on my extensive research, I have concluded that "The Pike Road Way" is, in fact, "The Suzanne Freeman Way." Per Dr. Freeman and per language on the PRS website, the short answer to this question is simple: The PRW "is how we do things at Pike Road School."

**The way PRS does things is, in a word, different. In two words: "Profoundly different."** The "profoundly different" characterization is taken directly from an article I found on Dr. Freeman that includes the headline, "The Architect of a 'Profoundly Different' School System."

The list of examples of the innovations or "profoundly different" changes intended to produce "transformational change" that have been implemented at PRS is lengthy.

As my research failed to find even one public school system in Alabama that has, or is, implementing all of these "profound" changes, **the "different" modifier appears to apply. The allegation that an educational experiment is being conducted at PRS, and that students are being treated as "guinea pigs" is, in my opinion, apropos.**

### A partial list of PRW 'reforms'

**The list of education "reforms" being tried at Pike Road School includes no grades, no GPAs, no tests, no (or very rare) homework assignments for students, no (traditional) school desks, no text books, no (near-term) deadlines for assignments or projects, the (exclusive to the U.S.) use of the "FreshGrade" assessment software to replace traditional report cards and student transcripts.**

It also includes **unprecedented** (in Alabama public schools) **reliance on "project based learning"** for students to "demonstrate mastery" of state-mandated standards, as well as unprecedented **reliance on "collaborative learning"** where students often work in small groups to demonstrate mastery of curricula concepts.

Other features include the absence of a single book in the school's library. (Since the publication of our May edition, a few books have been placed in the library). **In upper grades almost all schoolwork and projects are conducted via laptop computers.** The school does not publish honor rolls or have an Honor Society. The high school will not name valedictorians and salutatorians, among other unique differences.

My research also reveals that an effort has been made to "transform" the "culture of education" in part by **an effort to eliminate descriptive terms used in education for hundreds of years.**

At Pike Road School, "teachers" are referred to as "lead learners." "Students" are "learners." The eighth grade is "Community Eight." Classrooms are "learning spaces."

So the "PRW" includes all of the "profoundly different" reforms referenced above (plus more not listed). As far as I can tell, **everything that is different than "traditional education" at PRS was introduced at Dr. Freeman's direction.**

Returning to my conclusion that the PRW is in fact "The Suzanne Freeman Way." Am I wrong? If any reader believes I am in fact wrong, please cite one of the reforms mentioned above that were NOT implemented at Dr. Freeman's behest.

Again: The Pike Road Way is the Suzanne Freeman Way.

**So Dr. Freeman passionately believes in non-traditional education. What's wrong with this?** In one sense, nothing. The school board, using its best judgment, hired Dr. Freeman and in effect gave her the keys to the car that is Pike Road Schools.

"We are putting our full trust in you, Dr. Freeman. The direction you want to take our schools, and the methods you think are best to mold our children, are fine with us. We supported you 100 percent the day we hired you, and we still support you 100 percent today."

This made-up quote is me paraphrasing the statement board president **Ray Hawthorne, Jr.** emailed *The Gazette* on May 28th (see full statement on Page 13A).

**I understand that, on occasion, leaders are sometimes hired in the business world (and**

probably some school systems) **with the understanding these leaders will implement dramatic or even "radical" changes.**

Those who do not "get on board with the program" should not be surprised when they are dismissed (or purged) from the organization. To not allow a "change leader" to install his or her own team "of true believers" could reduce the probability of ultimate success in realizing a different (and superior) vision for how things ought to be.

Once a board has hired a "trailblazer" of change, its members should get out of the way and let this leader do his or her thing. A corporate board or a school board that "meddles" in the day-to-day operations of its CEO is counter-productive ... or so one management argument goes.

**The board of education at Pike Road School has clearly adopted such a hands-off philosophy.** Indeed, I am not aware of one superintendent recommendation presented by Dr. Freeman that the board has not approved unanimously.

If there is a board that has succeeded in its goal to not "meddle" this one is surely it. If there is a school board member who is eager to share concerns, or views his job description as including a willingness to share contrarian opinions, he or she is clearly not on the Pike Road School Board.

**One wonders if a trained poodle could not serve the role these members have embraced:** "Regarding Dr. Freeman's recommendation, please bark once for 'yes.' "... Ruff!"

Yes, implementing profound change is certainly a prerogative of management in any organization. But should there not be caveats?

### Show me the data, please

First among such qualifiers might be the dictum that **change should NOT be implemented simply for change's sake.** When embarking on a program of profound change, it should be the responsibility (indeed, the duty) of change proponents to clearly outline the changes that will be initiated.

Proponents of change should, if at all possible, provide data and/or empirical studies to support their belief that any innovations will be an improvement over the status quo.

**In the case of the PRW, such citations of "proof" have never been presented.** I've asked to see such data. At this writing, no examples have been offered.

I pursued many lines of inquiry in my *Alabama Gazette* investigative piece. One of these was the possibility that the full scope of transformational changes planned for PRS was not fully disclosed prior to the start of the school year.

**"They gave us the lollipop before they gave us the shot"** is the conclusion of the 8th grade student whose essay on the PRW ultimately motivated me to do my own investigation.

My reporting leads me to conclude that at least some parents (maybe many more) were unaware of the full extent of changes in store for their children.

### In defense of 'change,' the vague variety

Even if "full disclosures" were made about the true nature of PRW reforms, such disclosures probably came too late for those parents who may be skeptics to make alternative plans for their children's education.

Here I'm reminded of a Congressional leader's well-publicized quote about a recent controversial international trade treaty. "I guess we'll have to wait until the treaty is passed to see what's in it," she said (paraphrasing). I think the same argument has been made about the seemingly concealed details of ObamaCare.

It seems to this writer that one could substitute "The Pike Road Way" into the above quote and have an apt description of at least some parents' experiences.

In an earlier interview with Dr. Freeman, I asked questions along these lines.

**Ryan Kendall**, the school's IT director, was also present. He volunteered to me that in 11 neighborhood meetings held prior to the start of the school year, all of the changes that would be implemented as part of the PRW were clearly spelled out.

Indeed, they were highlighted in fliers or handouts distributed to parents. On two occasions, I asked Mr. Kendall if he could provide me a copy of this handout. I still have not received this flier.

**If the 15 or so unique components of the PRW were spelled out in a community referendum, I wonder if a majority would vote: "Yes. This is exactly what our children need, and this is what we as Pike Road parents want and demand."**

Maybe the voters of Pike Road would have voted "yes" in such a referendum. Maybe, after one year of the PRW, they would still vote "yes." This is obviously the opinion of school board president Ray Hawthorne, Jr. who writes in his statement to us that **the "overwhelming majority" of parents support Dr. Freeman and the PRW.**

### Progressive reforms in a conservative community

Such community sentiment, if it exists, surprises me. **Pike Road, I feel comfortable saying, is a conservative community.**

**Conservatives believe customs become**

**tradition for a reason and should not be lightly discarded.** On a daily basis, conservatives fight "progressive reforms" they believe to be misguided, reforms they believe would make things worse, not better, if put into practice.

**But yet the people of Pike Road seem to be avid supporters of an education reform that would be described by many skeptics as "radical" in the extreme.** Such a program is clearly a departure from centuries of American educational tradition.

If one breaks the component of the PRW into individual parts what are we left with? **I believe you are left with a program that essentially rejects the major tenants of the traditional American education system,** a system that helped make America the greatest nation on the earth.

Those of us who still defend traditional education believe that **adults, not school children, understand what is best for children, what children should be required to learn and how they should be taught. The PRW disagrees with this assumption.**

### A quick primer on 'Schlechty'

Proponents of the Schlechty philosophy believe students should be viewed just like "consumers" are viewed in the marketplace. As the consumer ultimately decides in the marketplace, so too should the consumer of education (students) have full "ownership" of his "learning."

It is the job of teachers to "design" or "facilitate" projects that are most likely to engage students. Deep engagement produces superior learning. **The key departure from traditional education is that the student reveals his own interests and learns at his own pace.**

No one who supports quality education would deny that student "engagement" is important to learning. It always has been and always will be. But letting 10-year-olds dictate to teachers how they are to be taught probably strikes many people as an odd notion.

Some might also question whether teachers actually have the time or wisdom to "design" X number of projects, each project tailored to the perceived interests of 130 or so students.

**Conservatives also generally believe in a meritocracy.** Those who work hardest or display superior intellect are rewarded for their efforts. People (including students) should strive to excel and separate themselves from their peers.

**The PRW, in my opinion anyway, also rejects this notion.** For example, the PRW adamantly rejects traditional grades. **This is why grades, GPAs, report cards, and honor rolls are taboo at PRS.** This also explains why FreshGrade – a software system that assigns colored dots to student evaluations – is used at PRS.

### Participation trophies for everyone ...

The thought is that children should not be differentiated in any way by measurements such as grades. My guess is that the "overwhelming majority" of Pike Road parents shake their heads in derision when passing judgment on a similar progressive reform.

This is the effort advanced by some sociological "experts" to eliminate the practice of keeping score at sporting events. Such "score-keeping" could damage the self-esteem of participants, proponents of this change argue.

**The practice of identifying "winners" and "losers" is wrong. From this progressive avenue of reform emerged the growing prevalence of the "participation trophy."**

**In eschewing grades – which do differentiate students by their academic performance – the Pike Road Way celebrates the proverbial participation trophy.**

**In contrast, defenders of traditional education believe that the presence of grades (and hard deadlines) helps motivate students to achieve superior or satisfactory results.**

I can only speak for myself in saying that tests and grades certainly motivated this former student. I didn't necessarily enjoy studying for tests or being forced to meet instructor deadlines, but I did.

I'll say this though: when a teacher returned our (graded) tests I was always curious to see if I beat Candy, or Scott or Jaime. These were a few of the top students in my school and, yes, I was competing with them.

Such competition – along with the knowledge that my work product would be graded – actually made me a better student. Similarly, receiving a poor grade usually ticked me off and lit a fire under my lazy butt.

I do not think students have changed much since my school days. The best ones still want to compete.

**Parents who enthusiastically endorse the Pike Road Way – parents whose educational experiences must have mirrored my own – for some reason now reject such measurements as archaic, and certainly unsuitable for their own children.**

**I also note that those who might question the wisdom of such reforms are often labeled or dismissed as resisters or opponents of change.**

For the purposes of this essay, I'm simply acting like a resident of the state of Missouri. **Before I can lend my support to your radical changes, you are going to have to "show me" some convincing evidence.**



## Being ‘for’ the PRW actually means you are against these things ...

I could go down the list of changes that are now ingrained in the PRW. However, I would flip these arguments on their head.

**When a father says he is “for” the PRW, is he not also saying that he is “against” about 15 elements of traditional education? Do an “overwhelming majority” of Pike Road parents really subscribe to a statement such as the following:**

**“I am against grades, tests, desks, text books, lectures, taking notes, project deadlines and honor societies. I am against students doing their own work. I believe students can be better evaluated working in small groups through collaborative learning. I also want my child to learn via projects that their lead learners will design for them,” etc.**

Couldn’t one also add this statement of belief about the PRW?

**“I reject the way I myself learned, the way my parents learned and their parents before them learned. I now enthusiastically say, “Yes. Yes. Yes!” to the Pike Road Way. I will not be a part of the non-enlightened among us who resist change.”**

I’m sorry, but I really don’t get it ... Then again, maybe I do.

## Why residents may have bought into the PRW ...

**In politics “change” sells;** the vaguer the definition of change the better. Academic buzzwords such as “technology” clearly resonate with the masses. The world is rapidly changing, so brother, you better start changing too. The old ways no longer work, etc.

**And then there is this: Most people are afraid to challenge “experts.”**

**If an alleged expert tells us that the PRW will better prepare our children for the “real world,” we nod in agreement and say, “great.” We don’t ask, “Well, how exactly?”**

In the real world people work in groups, PRW enthusiasts tell us. Well ... Since the days of Adam Smith, “division of labor” has been acknowledged as a superior way of organizing production lines, or delivering services.

Big projects are organized into small projects. Employee A works on micro project B. But at the end of the day, isn’t Employee A responsible for his or her own work? Don’t we all work within our own little spheres? Haven’t we always done this? Haven’t we always been “graded” by our superiors, or even “the market?”

I’ll cite myself as an example here. I received some help with last month’s edition, but I probably performed 93 percent of the work myself.

It’s possible one could even cite my own example as evidence of the superiority of the PRW.

I was certainly thoroughly “engaged” in my work. I was also definitely “passionate” (a favorite PRW buzzword) about my “project.” The quality of the education current and future PRS students receive is all that might be at stake. Heck, the future of an entire town might hang in the balance. So, yes, I was definitely passionate about a topic I view as very important.

This project, as far as I know, did take place in “the real world.” I was engaged. I was passionate, and I did learn a great deal

**But here’s the thing. I exerted all of this energy and yet my formal education is as far removed from the PRW as I am from the moon. As it turns out, I did not need the PRW to display these traits. My own education (dated as some believe it is) prepared me just fine for this project. I do NOT feel that my education has handicapped me as I paddle through the currents of a rapidly-changing world.**

## Has traditional education been that bad?

My wife asked a great question as we discussed this very topic. **“Didn’t the people who created all of our great inventions and all the developments that have made our world such a rapidly-changing place, learn the old way?”**

Nail meet head, I thought immediately. “Good one, honey.”

**Did Steven Jobs go through 12 grades of school with only project-based learning, never once taking a test or opening a textbook? How about Henry Ford? Einstein? George Washington?** The developers who created all of the subdivisions in Pike Road? I’m a history buff. Since the invention of, say, the printing press, **I’d argue that the world has ALWAYS been experiencing rapid change.**

A final thought on the alleged merits of “collaborative learning.” **How many readers have ever served on a committee? In your experience, does everyone equally contribute to the committee’s projects, or do one or two people usually end up doing all the work?**

## But we must prepare our children for ‘the real world’

I mention the “real world” argument because it came up often in my research for my earlier story. Indeed, this argument is cited as one of the reasons educators feel they must transform the way we’ve been doing things in the classroom (or in PRW parlance, “learning spaces”).

In working on the May edition, I interviewed a PRS parent who went through Dr. Freeman’s training to be a school board member (he was not selected). This parent, an avid supporter of the PRW, spoke at length about how the old ways of learning no longer work for many of today’s students and

don’t gibe with the way things are done in the real world.

On what evidence though? **Under the “old way” of teaching (think back as far as the creation of the Socratic method), students were encouraged to ask questions and to challenge the premise of any speaker’s argument.**

**As far as I can tell, none of Pike Road’s town or educational leaders ever questioned Dr. Freeman’s implied premise that education has to be radically different to reach today’s generation of students.**

In interviewing teachers and parents in Trussville, I asked at least two of them what their advice would be to parents who might be concerned about the reforms being instituted at PRS.

Both gave essentially the same answer: Do your own research, they said. As a parent you are the person ultimately responsible for your children’s education, I was told. Also: **don’t automatically accept that just because someone might be deemed an expert, “or has a PhD after her name,” that her program is the right program for your child.**

I encountered the “yield to experts” frame of mind on a recent appearance on Kevin Elkins’ radio show. A caller opined that everything being done at Pike Road School is being implemented by, yes, “experts.” I should not question such people, he said quite heatedly.

Most callers, as well as the host, seemed to be befuddled by the PRW and offered their own critiques. On the “no tests” component of the PRW, **one man commented that it was silly for students not to be tested.** Simply taking tests helps students learn how to do better on future tests, he said. And these students will have to take tests in the future (such as the ACT and SAT).

## Another ‘red flag?’

Not only are many people afraid to challenge or even question perceived experts, **I also believe at least some people who are critics of the PRW are afraid to share their concerns in any public or conspicuous way.**

In the case of teachers, some are afraid of losing their job or of incurring the wrath of “true believers.”

**I know I’ve never worked on a story where so many people were so afraid to talk.** Or a story where so many interview subjects were uncomfortable with me attaching their names to their quotes or concerns.

**To me, the fact so many people fear possible retaliation for simply stating an opinion is in itself a giant red flag that all might not be well at PRS.**

**Alas, the board does not share my thoughts or concerns.** If this body did, they would commission their own independent investigation in an effort to discover the truth.

I don’t think board members or PRW supporters think I made up every allegation or quote we published in our May package of articles. **If the board and other town leaders believe my reporting was in fact accurate, why do none of these allegations bother them?**

## They can’t handle the truth?

The answer I’ve come up with actually leaves me depressed. **In my opinion, they simply don’t want to know. They don’t want to find out if what I’m writing about is true. A real investigation might reveal even more disconcerting allegations and testimonials. Then they would be forced to act, and perhaps admit that they handed the keys to Pike Road School to the wrong person.**

The fact some people might not want to read an assessment that may conflict with their own views is not surprising. I’d actually be surprised (but impressed) if the majority of PRW’s most enthusiastic boosters even bothered to read this critique.

**To be candid, this essay was written with one target audience in mind - Pike Road residents who might still be trying to reach a conclusion on the merits or demerits of the PRW.**

If enough readers in this group conclude my arguments are convincing, perhaps the change that has been implemented can itself be changed. The sooner the better, as far as I’m concerned.

**One point made by defenders of the PRW is that my previous articles focused primarily on the upper grades of this school.** Complaints about the lower grades have been much lower (a point made in at least two places in the May edition). This, I think, is true, although I have heard complaints from lower grade parents as well.

Still, I place less weight on the reviews of parents of children in grades, say, K-4. **Do children aged 5 to 10 really have the experience to compare if one way of teaching is superior to another way?** These are bright, sweet kids. They have no doubt made lots of friends and probably do enjoy going to school and working on fun projects.

And it’s probably too soon to use standardized test scores to judge the merits or demerits of the PRW. A fair evaluation – preferably comparing students from schools with similar parental demographics – might take years to assess. Because any empirical comparison from standardized test results are to be determined, **parents are essentially being asked to take a leap of faith and hope or trust that the PRW is right for their children.**

Some parents have seen enough and have already withdrawn their children. I don’t know the true number because Dr. Freeman, for some reason, refuses to provide it. I do assume that if this figure was only a “handful” she would have quickly released this information to this reporter.

## A ‘Medieval plague’ sweeps through PRS

I noted that *The Advertiser* followed our expose with its own story, written by Josh Moon. Judging

from a few Facebook posts I read, the *Advertiser*’s article was celebrated by at least a few adults or teachers who thought my own treatment of the school’s first year to be unfair or biased.

Still, Mr. Moon’s article did seem to confirm that the rosy picture some might have had of PRW might not have been accurate. **Buried in the story was an eye-opening description of the first semester of PRS. According to “teachers” the first semester at PRS was akin to a “medieval plague” that swept through the school.**

Moon’s description made me recall the analogy that popped into my mind early in the Pike Road school term. Every night my wife shared stories that seemed like battle reports to me. She even seemed shell-shocked. **“Man, this is the maiden voyage of the Titanic,” I thought. Grand expectations, expansive hype, disaster ahead.**

## Other concerns also exist

*The Advertiser*’s article also mentioned the obvious over-crowding at the school. However, the article made no effort to identify the person most responsible for this “medieval plague” atmosphere in the school, or the person who was most responsible for creating the plans for the school (which clearly did not anticipate enrollment growth).

**As a reporter, I’m also sensitive to the charge that I might be picking on Dr. Freeman unfairly.**

I don’t know if my interactions with Dr. Freeman meet this description or not. **I will say I quickly became exasperated with her evasive answers to my questions and her failure to answer any of my follow-up questions or provide two documents I repeatedly requested.** I also know Dr. Freeman is paid a lot of money to answer tough questions.

## The bullying allegation

**To me, one of the most disturbing allegations my reporting uncovered is the charge that Dr. Freeman and principal Angela Lang routinely bully or harass faculty members who she seems to have targeted for some reason.**

In recent years, the effort to squelch bullying in the schoolhouse has become a noble national crusade. **I thought – naively as it turns out – that a story presenting allegations a superintendent (with obvious power over subordinates) might herself be a bully might make some waves. Nope. The Pike Road school board doesn’t seem to care.**

As *Gazette* readers learned in May, these allegations are not new to Dr. Freeman. At least three Trussville teachers, and one former Trussville PTA member, said such complaints among faculty were common in Trussville.

I did learn that the **Alabama Education Association** is aware that many such complaints have been made to the organization’s field reps. *al.com*’s John Archibald in a July 2012 column on the “Trussville Circus” quoted an AEA rep as saying schools in Trussville were “a disaster” and resembled “Peyton’s Place.”

The spokesperson for the AEA admitted to me she was surprised Dr. Freeman was hired in Pike Road, precisely because of such allegations. A state school board member expressed the same surprise.

So where is the AEA or the State Board of Education? **Wasn’t the AEA created to protect its members from unfair harassment and intimidation tactics?** If any AEA or Department of Education investigator needs the names of former (and maybe a few current) teachers to talk to, I can give them about eight.

## The market will ultimately vote on the PRW ...

I do believe, and have written in several columns, that any community will ultimately prosper or decline according to community perception of its schools.

I also believe the market will ultimately determine if the PRW is a positive or a negative for Pike Road.

**If real estate agents (or local real estate developers) start to call Mayor Stone and town council members and report that home sales are declining, that asking prices are being reduced, and that prospective buyers are backing out of purchases, change might occur.**

**Karen Porter**, an employee of the State Department of Education who was quoted in Josh Moon’s *Advertiser* article on PRS, **says our family should be “commended” if we happen to reach the conclusion that the PRW is not for our children.** The absence of “structure” in such a system might not be best for all children, she admitted.

Ms. Porter is an enthusiastic supporter of the PRW and Dr. Freeman. Who knows? Maybe she will make us a highball offer if we have to sell our house and buy a less expensive one in Montgomery to pay for private school.

## Is the future of PRS really bright?

*The Advertiser* article appeared under the headline: “Pike Road School’s first year: a rocky start, brighter future.” I agree with the “rocky start” part, but if I was writing that headline I would have added a question mark after the words “brighter future.”

**Under the status quo PRW, I actually predict a darker future for Pike Road Schools and thus the Town of Pike Road.** Per my study of school systems and even economic systems, **once such systems start to go bad, a cascade effect kicks in.**

**Departures of the best and brightest students, lead to more student departures. The departure of popular, talented and independent-thinking teachers ultimately damages a school’s “brand.” The teacher turnover that happened in Trussville Schools under Dr. Freeman’s leadership is already, I believe, taking place at Pike Road.**

**Of the 56 members of the original faculty**



hired by Dr. Freeman last spring, at least 11 (roughly 20 percent) are no longer faculty members. Nine of the original faculty members were terminated at Dr. Freeman's recommendation. I've been told at least two teachers have also resigned and accepted other teaching positions. There will probably be more teachers who leave voluntarily for other positions.

My wife, anticipating her dismissal, recently interviewed for a teaching position in Prattville. So did a friend and colleague of hers from the PRS faculty. This friend said that in her interview, a questioner asked her "What's going on at Pike Road School? You are the fourth Pike Road teacher we have interviewed today."

Some, perhaps even most teachers at Pike Road School might be happy where they are. However, I believe many are not.

While the number of faculty who depart for whatever reason can be quantified, the number of potentially outstanding teachers who have decided to not seek employment at PRS cannot. I have also heard second-hand that at least a few prospective faculty members have already reached this decision.

**In my view, the school will suffer from the absence of independent-thinking, veteran teachers. Students, I believe, will also miss popular teachers (such as my wife) who have been dismissed (maybe "purged?").**

**The possibility also exists that students will be taught by at least some teachers who (secretly) may be miserable.**

According to three of my Trussville sources, such a reality existed in their schools. "Students have to sense that their teachers are not happy," said one veteran teacher, adding, "This is not the best environment for learning."

### 'Weird' or enlightened change – this is the question

**The future of PRS might be determined by which perception of the school resonates the most with community members, as well as with those who are considering moving to Pike Road.**

Supporters believe that the unique elements of the PRW serve as a magnet for parents and students. Others believe the opposite.

A friend and former colleague called me after my recent appearance on Mark Montiel's radio show. He said that he had covered several events at PRS. **He told me he found the specifics of the program he observed to be "weird."**

Again, it will be interesting to observe what community perception prevails. And, fair or unfair, perception is reality.

It's possible my reporting and writings could help save the Pike Road School System from itself. This is certainly my hope.

**When the history of Pike Road is written, the "dirty laundry" my reporting exposed about the system's first year won't amount to a hill of beans. That is if City Fathers choose to abandon their "experiment," the sooner the better.**

I also believe the information presented in our May edition was going to come out eventually. "Whispers" that all might not be well with PRS certainly existed before I began my investigative piece. It's possible my reporting simply expedited an inevitable debate.

**I don't discount the possibility an "about face" scenario could occur.** I write above about the market deciding and the battle of perceptions, but there are two other scenarios that could develop.

**Scenario 1:** Dr. Freeman could retire, something she apparently was thinking about, according to a recent article in *The Montgomery Advertiser*. Financially, she is surely well positioned to retire.

**Scenario 2:** What happened in Trussville could also happen in Pike Road, perhaps more rapidly than people think possible.

In Trussville, Dr. Freeman had just re-upped her new contract (boosting her pay from \$202,000 to \$214,000) when concerned parents began flooding school board members with "scores" of complaints. This was clearly a board, like the Pike Road board, that had always enthusiastically supported Dr. Freeman. **And yet these board members voted unanimously to terminate her contract. Democracy in action can sometimes be harsh.**

In my opinion, **either of these two scenarios would benefit the students of PRS.** Dr. Freeman's supporters talk about her "great heart for children." Whether true or not, this oft-repeated description is probably irrelevant.

What is relevant is whether Dr. Freeman's **teaching philosophies (the PRW), a management style that seems to target "threats," dubious planning abilities and her aversion to being forthcoming and open to community questions** are, in fact, best for the 1,142 children who attend Pike Road School (with more coming next year).

Dr. Freeman's intentions may be genuine and are no doubt viewed as noble by advocates of "transformational" education reform. However, at least some Pike Road residents **believe her radical, unproven approach to education will not serve students (our children) well in the long run.**

Furthermore, Dr. Freeman's personal history tells us she's always been a polarizing figure as a superintendent, a label I think already applies in Pike Road.

**If her experiences in Cullman and Trussville are guides, it's virtually certain she will become an even more controversial figure as her tenure in Pike Road continues. Is this the type of educational leader a "vast majority" of Pike Road residents will continue to support?**

Perhaps, but I doubt it. **I believe the "culture"**

**that exists at PRS, and the sycophant board that allegedly sets policy will collapse under the weight of its own arrogance and misguided assumptions.**

**It's also possible community members finally say, "enough."** We have now seen ample evidence. Your hypothesis was wrong. Our "profoundly different school system" is not superior to a traditional school system. The experiment that is being conducted on our children must cease.

I appreciate the opportunity to present my personal views on the specific components of The Pike Road Way. **With all due respect to those who may disagree, I can only conclude that "The Pike Road Way" is the Wrong Way.**

## Board president Ray Hawthorne, Jr.'s statement

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**Board President Ray Hawthorne, Jr.**

Mr. Rice,

Thank you for your interest in the Pike Road Schools and your in-depth exploration of "The Pike Road Way." **It has been an excellent year!**

As with any start-up school there have been expected bumps in the road, but (we) have stayed focus and continued to strive for excellence. We experienced a mass influx of students in our first year and were tasked with finding creative ways to use space. I believe we were successful.

We were also able to overcome a lack of funding (due to the number of students enrolled) with strategic planning and budgeting. I have visited the school on numerous occasions, both announced and unannounced, with Dr. Freeman and without, to observe teachers, classes and exhibitions, etc. The learning taking place was excellent. With the new modular classrooms and the new up-and-coming campus, I believe we are addressing the "space" issue head-on and looking into the future in anticipation of school growth. **Our future is bright.**

**Along with the Mayor, Town Council and citizens themselves, the Pike Road Board of Education has been an integral piece in the formation of PRS.** Dr. Freeman helped train the 10 finalists that applied for a position on the board. She facilitated the discussion during the training concerning issues such as starting a new school system, the role of board members, roles of administration, teachers, etc., and the importance of community involvement. The training was informative and insightful.

**As a board, our job is to look at the big picture.** The Superintendent handles the day-to-day business of the school and makes recommendations to the board for approval (i.e. vendor contracts, funding decisions, personnel, etc).

Former State Superintendent, Dr. Ed Richardson created and led a committee to review all applications submitted for the position of Superintendent, contact references, vet candidates, etc. The board then had an opportunity to review the applications and select the top three candidates to interview.

**As far as our selection of Dr. Freeman as Superintendent, we couldn't be more satisfied with her, and an overwhelming majority of parents and the community who know what is really going on at the school as a whole agree. She has been a blessing to the Town of Pike Road and all of our children. She was hired due to her extraordinary love for children and her outstanding qualifications.** We were all aware of her time at Trussville and the circumstances surrounding her departure.

**We are not trying to be "different" just for the sake of being different. We are looking at learning with a new approach that we all embrace – the Mayor, the Town Council, our parents, our learners, our head learners, our citizens – the Family that is the Town of Pike Road.** With continued hard work and prayer, PRS will continue to excel and "create a culture of intellectual curiosity where all students have ownership over their learning and are inspired to think, innovate, and create."

Thank you for taking the time to explore "The Pike Road Way." God Bless.

kindest Regards  
Raymond J. (Ray) Hawthorne, Jr  
Pike Road Board of Education President

*A few questions were answered ... 25 days after we first asked for responses*

## Questions the Alabama Gazette submitted Ray Hawthorne, president of PRS BoE

*Editor's note: The following questions were emailed to Pike Road Schools Board of Education President Ray Hawthorne, Jr. on either May 2nd or May 24th.*

*Approximately 20 questions were sent to Mr.*

*Hawthorne on the earlier date. Although Mr. Hawthorne told Bill Rice he would answer all of these questions, ultimately he simply drafted a statement (see this page) that addresses only a small number of our questions.*

*"NA" = No answer or not answered. We received the statement Friday, May 27th. For space reasons, we have deleted some questions.*

*We didn't know if Mr. Hawthorne would answer any questions. One purpose in sending board members such questions was to at least make the school system's policy makers aware of some of the allegations our reporting had uncovered. In short, we thought they might want to know some of these things.*

*Although few questions were answered, simply reading the questions might help readers form certain opinions about this board, as well as obtain a clearer picture of the lines of inquiry we pursued in our investigation.*

*- Bill Rice, Jr., June 1*

**1.** Does the Pike Road School Board have a policy to either deny or ignore reporters' interview requests? I asked this question to Board President Ray Hawthorne, Jr. at the board's last meeting. His answer: "No."

**2.** On May 2 or May 3, I also emailed Dr. Freeman several (follow-up) questions. **I also requested at least two documents (a copy of Dr. Freeman's employment contract, and a copy of the flier which was distributed to parents at the community meetings she attended prior to the start of this school term. As of this date (three weeks later), I have also not received any answers to these questions, nor have I received the two documents I requested. 1) Can you provide a copy of Dr. Freeman's contract? Is three weeks not enough time to comply with a reporter's request? NA.**

**3.** How has the first school year of Pike Road Schools gone in your opinion? **See statement.**

**4.** Have you personally received any complaints from parents, teachers, employees, former employees, volunteers or others? How many complaints (best estimate)? **NA.**

**5.** Can you characterize the nature of any such complaints or concerns, if you are aware of any? **NA.**

**6.** Are you aware that Dr. Freeman was let go from her previous position in Trussville? **See statement.** Did you ask Dr. Freeman about the circumstances of her departure from Trussville in her job interview? **See statement.** If so, what satisfied you enough about her answer to hire her? **NA.**

**7.** How was Dr. Freeman's tenure in Trussville and Cullman vetted? **See statement.** Did you/have you read the two columns that **al.com columnist John Archibald** wrote about Freeman and the "Trussville Circus"? **Have you read the al.com story which mentioned that "more than 500" concerned parents in Trussville cheered the announcement that her contract would be terminated? Do such columns and stories qualify as potential "red flags" about a prospective superintendent? NA.**

**8.** Did you know Dr. Freeman personally (in her role as a consultant for the school system and Town of Pike Road) before she was hired? Can you describe the role she played in your "training"? **See statement.**

**9.** What role did Dr. Freeman play in the design of the school campus? At the completion of the first school term, how would you evaluate her ability or performance as a planner? **NA.**

**10.** What was the main reason(s) Dr. Freeman was selected as superintendent? **See statement.** Did she fully outline the "transformational" changes she planned for PRS? **NA.** Did you express any reservations about any of these proposed innovations? **NA.**

**11.** Do you agree that it seems at least unique that the consultant who was hired to help start a school system and who "trained" you as a school board member was subsequently hired to lead said system? **NA.**

**12.** What is your philosophy of a school board member's role or function? **See statement.** Do you view a school board akin to a corporate board of trustees, a body that only sets the long-term vision and approves certain financial or capital decisions but has little if any involvement in day-to-day governance or administration? **See statement.**

**13.** **Have you, as a school board member, ever voted against a proposal or agenda item presented by Dr. Freeman?** Can you provide examples of this? Has every school board vote been unanimous? Can you think of any examples where Dr. Freeman proposed a policy and the board rejected her proposal? **NA.**

**14.** Have you visited the school and observed students and teachers? Was Dr. Freeman in your presence on any of these tours? Have you personally monitored any teachers providing instruction? **See statement.**

**Are you aware of the allegation that many school "tours" are "staged" or highly controlled by Dr. Freeman?** For example, that said tours seldom include any if much time in the upper grades. **NA.**

**15.** In your opinion, is the school system suffering from a lack of funding? **NA.**

**16.** Is the school facility already too small to accommodate the number of students who are enrolled? **NA/or See statement.** If so, do you believe the school should have been designed in a manner to predict and expect student growth (such as Park Road Crossing High School was)? **NA.**

*Continued on page 12B.*



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# Community Lifestyles

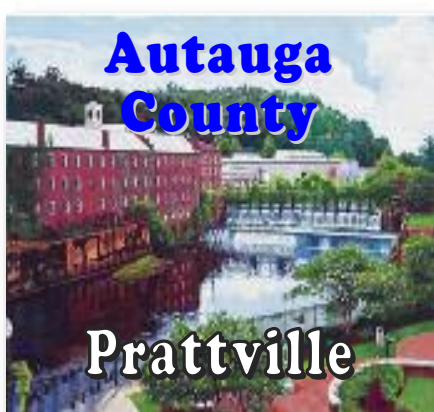
We are proud to announce that The Alabama Gazette is also being delivered in parts of Crenshaw, Butler, Pike and Lee Counties. If you cannot find the Gazette in your area, please check out our website: [www.alabamagazette.com](http://www.alabamagazette.com)



**Montgomery County**

**Montgomery**

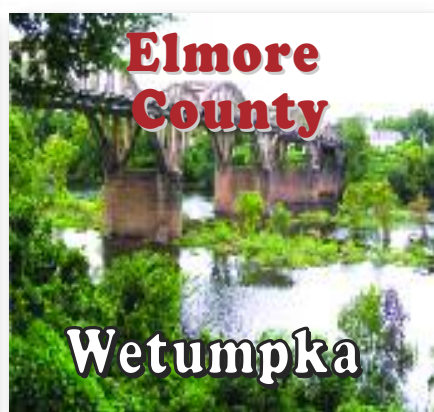
**Cities, Towns and Communities:**  
Pike Road, Cecil, Mathews, Pine Level, Grady, Ramer, Lapine, Snowdown, Pintlala, Hope Hull and Catoma



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**Prattville**

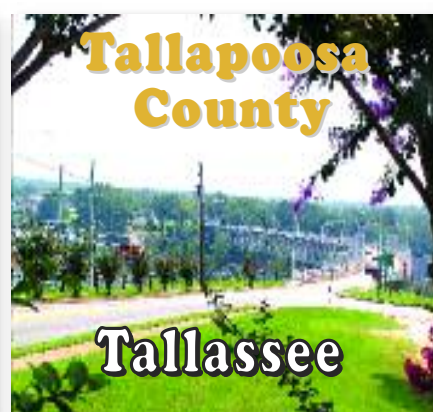
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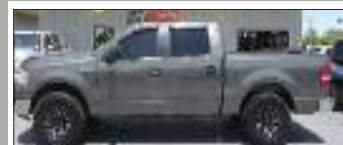
**2012 FORD FOCUS SE**  
red, charcoal interior, power seats, windows, locks, tilt, cruise, wheels, bluetooth



**2004 TOYOTA TACOMA SR5**  
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**2007 HUMMER H3**  
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**2008 FORD F150**  
ONE OWNER, grey, grey interior, power windows, locks, tilt, cruise, aftermarket wheels and tires



**2007 FORD F150 FX4**  
4x4, ONE OWNER, crew cab, blue, charcoal interior, Husky liners, cd player, power seat



**2007 CHEVY SILVERADO**  
Dark Blue, charcoal interior, crew cab, power seat, windows, locks, tilt, cruise



**2004 FORD F350**  
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**2007 CHEVY SILVERADO**  
Z71, 4X4, CREWCAB, silver, charcoal interior, power seat, windows, locks, tilt, cruise



**2009 FORD F150 4x4**  
4X4, red, grey interior, crew cab, cd player, power windows, locks, tilt, cruise, bed liner



**2009 DODGE CHALLENGER R/T**  
black, black leather, power sunroof, navigation, power seats, windows, locks, tilt, cruise, wheels, NEW tires



**2009 GMC SIERRA 1500 SLT**  
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**2007 GMC YUKON SLT**  
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**2010 CHEVY SILVERADO 4X4**  
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Sheriff Derrick  
Cunningham



Chief Deputy  
Kevin J. Murphy

## 2016 Citizens Academy

We have a lot going on at the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office! I would like to congratulate our 11 graduates from our 1st session of the 2016 Citizens Academy! We will have another Citizens Academy starting in September so please keep checking our website [www.MontgomerySheriff.com](http://www.MontgomerySheriff.com) for details on enrollment.



Summer time is upon us and kids will be out of school. **Now is the time to remember the Sheriff's Office offers vacation security home checks to Montgomery County residents.** All you need to do is call 832-2578 during the hours of 8:00 am - 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday and answer a few questions or call our non-emergency Dispatch number after hours at 832-1328.

### Helpful tips to remember while you are preparing for vacation:

- Cancel your mail service with your post office
- Stop your newspaper—extra newspapers in your driveway lets people know you are not at home
- Notify trusting neighbors that you are leaving so they can monitor any activity at your residence
- **ALWAYS HAVE A PLAN OF ACTION**

## Kids Fishing Rodeo

Come out and bring your kids to our annual Kids Fishing Rodeo is coming up on Saturday, June 18th from 6 am - 12:00 noon for kids between the ages of 6-12 years. Kids only need to bring their bait



and tackle. We provide the snacks, drinks and fun! The annual event is held in the same location: Montgomery County Ponds, 7 miles south of the Southern Boulevard on Highway 231 South (across from Meriwether Road-next to the new Sweet Creek Farm Market). **Please remember this event is for the kids and no adult fishing will be allowed. For more information, please contact 832-1339.**

*Sheriff Cunningham and staff look forward to seeing you June 18th!*

## Show-n-Tell Camp

The Montgomery County Sheriff's Office is now accepting applications for our **Show-N-Tell** summer camp for youths who are interested and serious about camp enrichment. It is not a disciplinary camp but a way of bonding with our youth to promote positive interaction. Camp will last for 1 week and is totally free for boys and girls between the ages of 9-



11. It will be held on August 1-5, 2016. We will be going to Camp Chandler in Wetumpka, Alabama and will be bused from Montgomery to the camp. Applications can be obtained by coming to the Sheriff's Office at 100 South Lawrence Street or the Mac Sim Butler Detention Facility (County Jail) located at 250 South McDonough Street, by fax (334) 832-7113 or by email [LisaCrenshaw@mc-ala.org](mailto:LisaCrenshaw@mc-ala.org). If you need additional information concerning the camp, please call 832-1339. The Sheriff's Office will accept the first 100 approved applications.

### Requirements:

MONTGOMERY COUNTY RESIDENT  
MUST BE BETWEEN 9-11 YEARS OLD  
PROVIDE BIRTH CERTIFICATE

**\*\*DEADLINE TO TURN IN YOUR APPLICATION IS FRIDAY, JULY 1ST\*\***

## Courtney Ward's Basketball Camp

The Montgomery County Sheriff's Office is proud of their own. Courtney Ward is not only a Deputy with the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office, she is also the head coach of the girls' basketball team at Sidney Lanier High School. She gained experience from playing basketball during high school at Jefferson Davis High School and during her college years at Florida State University. Deputy Ward has been named 2016 ACC Women's Basketball Legend. As a former Florida State Women's Basketball point guard, Courtney has been named FSU's representative for the 12th annual ACC Women's Basketball Legends Class.

Deputy Ward will be hosting a Basketball Camp this summer at Sidney Lanier High School, June 6th - 10th for boys and girls ages 4 - 14 from 8:30 am - 3:30 pm. The cost is \$50.00 for ages 4-8 and \$65.00 for ages 9-14. We know that parents are looking for good programs for their children during the summer months and we would like for them to take advantage of a great basketball tutorial program. This will not only help keep the children occupied but will also give them the knowledge and skills of basketball which will be a great asset for the community.

Thank you for your continued support of the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office and our staff!



## Employee Recognition

### Major Jon Briggs



We would like to recognize Major Jon Briggs from our agency for recently graduating from the 32nd Leadership Montgomery class. Major Briggs has been with the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office since 1995 and successfully made his journey to the rank of Major last year. Graduating from Leadership Montgomery is just another positive representation you have on Montgomery County and their citizens. Congratulations, Major!

For a full bio on Major Jon Briggs:  
<http://www2.mc-ala.org/mcsol/about/Pages/JBriggs.aspx>

### Sheriff Cunningham

Sheriff Cunningham received the **2016 Legacy Award** presented by Leadership Montgomery. This award is given to a deserving Leadership Montgomery member that is "keeping up" with the vision of the founding fathers of Leadership Montgomery, Mr. George Goodwyn, Mr. Lanny Crane, Mr. Mike Jenkins and Mr. Solomon Seay, through continued hard work and success in the community. Congratulations Sheriff on a well-deserved honor!



## Firearms Familiarization Course

There are still slots available for our June 11th, Firearms Familiarization Course! Sign up now and learn how to protect yourself! We know that learning how to protect yourself is very important in today's world. Our course is held one Saturday a month and has been scheduled for the following dates:

**Saturday, June 11th**  
**Saturday, July 9th**  
**Saturday, August 13th**  
**Saturday, September 24th**  
**Saturday, November 12th**

The class is held at our Firing Range and lasts all day and is **FREE** to Montgomery County citizens! The morning session is classroom instruction on firearm safety and firearm laws. The afternoon session allows citizens to practice shooting on our Firing Range for the remainder of the class. All classes are under the instruction of the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office Range Master.

### Course Requirements:

- Montgomery County Citizen
- Obtain a Montgomery County Pistol Permit (prior to the course date)
- Complete an Application for the Course

### Pistol Permit Questions?

334.832.1335 or 334.832.1337

### Course Questions or to Obtain an Application?

[LisaCrenshaw@mc-ala.org](mailto:LisaCrenshaw@mc-ala.org) or 334.832.1339



***Your safety is our primary concern; therefore, we ask that you do not bring children to this class.***





Sheriff Bill Franklin



VISIT OUR WEBSITE: [www.elmoreso.com](http://www.elmoreso.com)

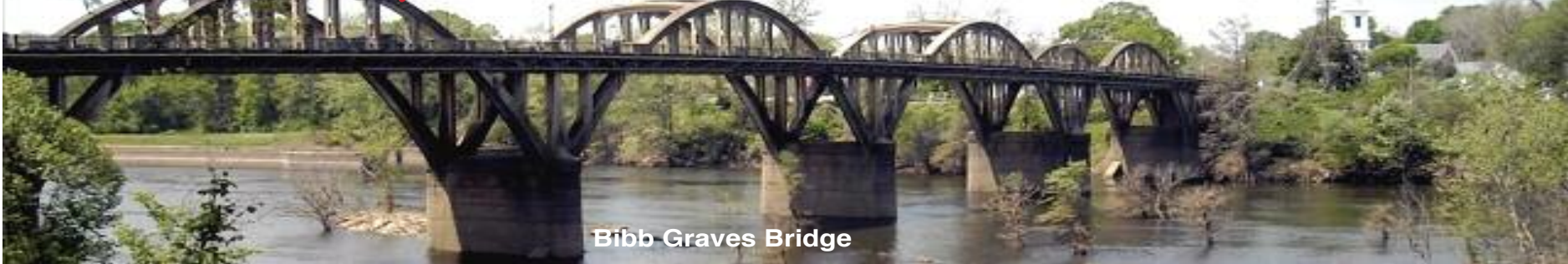
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**Elmore County Sheriff's Office**  
 8955 U.S. Highway 231,  
 Wetumpka, Alabama 36092

Dial 911 for EMERGENCIES ONLY  
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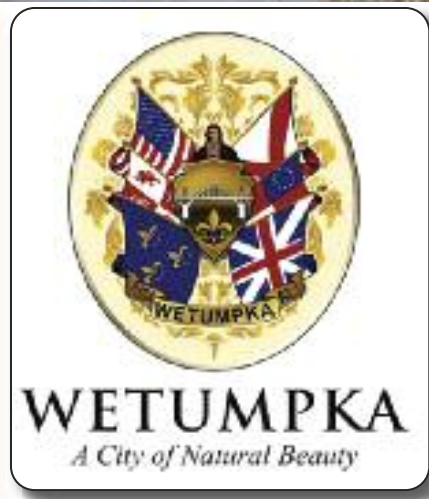
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 Office Hours: Monday - Friday 8 A.M. - 4:30 P.M.

**From the Mayors desk**



By the time this article is published we hope Wetumpka will be selected as the newest designated **Main Street Alabama City**. This program is designed to bring jobs, dollars and people back to historic communities. The focus to bring vitality and boost economic development in our downtown district will benefit our local businesses, continue to enhance the quality of life and increase the tax base which increases the services provided by the City.

This will not be a City run program but a program operated under the non-profit Downtown Wetumpka. The City will be a supporter as well as the Chamber of Commerce and local businesses but once we are accepted it will operate under Downtown Wetumpka. We feel this program, along with the upcoming streetscape project, is exactly what we need to bring energy back to downtown Wetumpka. Only three communities are selected every year and we feel Wetumpka is the perfect fit.

Another key to success will be everyone working together. One business can certainly benefit off another. If one business is drawing the people downtown, the others have an opportunity to capitalize as well. With that being said I invite everyone to visit our beautiful downtown community. Not only does it offer great views, you can also find delicious food and plenty of retail therapy.



**Call Janice at 334-850-5510 for all your Elmore County advertising needs.**

**Thanks to all our Tallassee Quarterly ADVERTISERS!**

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**AUTAUGA COUNTY**



# Autauga County Law

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162 W 4th St, Prattville, AL  
**(334) 361-2500**



**Sheriff Joe Sedinger**

## Central Alabama CrimeStoppers Fundraiser

The Autauga County Sheriff's Office and the Prattville Police Department teamed up and participated in a Dunking Booth to help raise funds for the Central Alabama CrimeStoppers. The fundraiser was held at the Prattville City Fest on Saturday, May 14, 2016 in downtown Prattville, and was very successful with raising over \$1300.00 for the organization. We can't wait to do it again next year. The participants in the dunking booth were: Sgt. Chris Hill (ACSO); Assistant Chief Diane Hamm (PPD); Captain Larry Nixon (Metro Jail Warden); Deputy Steven Geon (ACSO); Lt. Pat Kowalczyk (PPD); Sgt. Ken Gray (ACSO); Sheriff Joe Sedinger (ACSO); Police Chief Mark Thompson (PPD); Lt. Steve Adams (ACSO); & Corporal Steve Davis (PPD)



Corporal Steve Davis (PPD)



Deputy Steven Geon (ACSO)



Sheriff Joe Sedinger (ACSO)



Police Chief Mark Thompson (PPD)



Sgt. Chris Hill (ACSO)



Lt. Pat Kowalczyk (PPD)



Assistant Chief Diane Hamm (PPD)



Lt. Steve Adams (ACSO)



Captain Larry Nixon (Metro Jail Warden)



Sgt. Ken Gray (ACSO)

**ALERT**

### Scams, Identity Theft and Drug Awareness

Sheriff Sedinger spoke about Scams, Identity Theft and Drug Awareness with the Seniors at the Autaugaville Senior Center on May 17, 2016.



## 4th of July Parade

**9:00 a.m. - Monday, July 4th**  
 Parade begins at the Autauga County Courthouse and ends at Pratt Park.

The Independence Day Parade will begin at 9am at the Autauga County Courthouse and wind its way through downtown. This years honorees will be the Autauga County Law Enforcement with special Grand Marshal Karl Wade.

Registration is required to be in the parade but there is not entry fee. For more information call the Special Events Office at (334) 595-0854.



## Lion's Club BBQ & Arts and Crafts

Free Admission  
 10:00am - 2:00pm Pratt Park. Immediately after the parade, join the fun at the Lion's Club BBQ and Camp Stew sale at Pratt Park.

Music, a patriotic program, a children's fun area and lots of arts and crafts for the entire family.

## Immediately after the parade there will be a CARDBOARD BOAT RACE at Pratt Pool.

Usually begins at 10:30am. There will be teams creating their competition boats of our cardboard, pool noodles and duct tape. Trophies awarded. Two people, no more or less must race on the boats. New rules this year so you must pre-register. Fee: \$5.00 per boat. Call (334) 595-0800 for more information.

## Pratt Pool

is open to the public  
 Fridays, 12pm - 5pm,  
 Saturdays, 10am - 5pm,  
 Sundays, 1pm-5pm.  
 Swim suits required,  
 (boys and men's must have a mesh lining inside).  
 \$3.00 per person  
 3 year olds and under free



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"The Preferred Community"





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**151 SYCAMORE**

Five acres in Prattville city limits in cul-de-sac, only 5 mins. from I-65 & 20 mins. to downtown Montgomery & Maxwell AFB. You enter into a wide foyer then into formal living room & a large dining room. The cozy den has a wood-burning fireplace w/brick hearth all the way across one wall. The kitchen has been updated w/granite countertops & stainless steel drop-in stove, a granite island that overlooks the private backyard. 3 bedrooms, 2 baths & the master bath is wrap-around with double vanities. On the opposite end of the house there is an apartment. It has its own kitchen & bath, bedroom and sitting area. There is too much to mention and a lot more to see!

**1545 NORTHINGTON ROAD**

Custom built home w/extra wide molding. Gracious foyer & greatroom w/loft ceiling. Wood floors, fireplace w/gas logs, built-ins. A large formal dining room. The kitchen has granite countertops, island, loads of cabinets and counterspace. Built-in electric oven, gas cook-top, dishwasher, pantry, breakfast bar, extra large breakfast area overlooking backyard. 4 extra large bedrooms, 3 on one side w/Jack & Jill bath. Master on opposite w/master bath, jetted tub, double vanity, walk-in shower & extra large closet. Large laundry room. Upstairs has large bonus room. Two car garage and an oversized 2 level deck. A 20 x 20 workshop with roll-up door. Call today for your showing!

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Expires June 30, 2016

# Prattville Farmers Market 2016!

**The Farmers Market will be held EVERY SATURDAY**  
June 4th thru September 24th.  
7:00 a.m. until 12 noon.

The Prattville Farmers Market is conveniently located off Doster Road just a few blocks off Main Street. Its close proximity to Pratt Park with the Splash Pad, children's play area, tree-lined walk ways, pond, pool and picnic areas make it a wonderful place for a family outing. Enjoy the park and picnic with fresh produce. Lots of fun events will take place at the Market throughout the season. For more information about the Prattville Farmers Market or to register as a vendor, contact the Special Events office at 334/595-0854 or visit the website at [www.prattvilleal.gov](http://www.prattvilleal.gov).

### Music & Art



**There's still time to register to be a Vendor!**

Contact Special Events  
334/595-0854  
or [www.prattvilleal.gov](http://www.prattvilleal.gov)

**Call Eric Barnes**  
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Advertise your Business in the next issue of The Alabama Gazette!  
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for rates and information.

# 2016 YOUTH ART CAMP

Ages 7-12  
June 20-25 & July 18-23

**Grades K-6**  
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&  
**Grades 7-12**  
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SUMMER OF IMAGINATION

**\$75 per camp**

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## extension

ALABAMA A&M & AUBURN UNIVERSITIES

### The Alabama Cooperative Extension System Canning Workshop

**Tuesday, June 21, 2016 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.**  
Autauga County Extension Office (in the Auditorium)  
2226 Highway 14 West,  
Autaugaville, AL

Attendees will learn about food safety while canning high-acidic foods (water-bath canning) and canning low-acidic foods (pressure canning). Information will be available on pickling, freezing, and drying foods.

Workshop instructor, Regional Extension Agent Janice Hall said safety is key to food preparation, "Food safety will be an important part of this workshop, so proper canning equipment usage will be demonstrated. Past participants reported to us that they were once afraid of pressure canning, but after attending our workshops, they felt more at ease with the process."

The registration fee for this workshop is \$5.00 which will include receiving a **FOOD PRESERVATION COOKBOOK!** Participants will also be able to sample food cooked during the workshop.

Seating is limited; so, please register soon! If you are interested in attending this workshop or learning more about food preservation, please call the Autauga County Extension office at 334- 361-7273 to register.

**Workshop Instructor:**  
**Janice Hall**  
Regional Extension Agent Food Safety and Quality  
334-361-7273

Published by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Alabama A&M and Auburn Universities) in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. An equal opportunity educator and employer. All are welcome.



# Southern Cuisine

Sign in a restaurant. I don't know where except I bet below the Mason Dixon Line. It reads, **"ALL OUR FOOD IS SEASONED. CUZ WE'RE IN THE SOUTH AND WE LIKE IT THAT WAY."**

I admit that I'm a hot sauce-aholic. I put hot sauce on almost everything. I don't use hot sauce because I think the food tastes bland or under-seasoned. I just like that extra kick. As some chefs say, "that extra dimension to the flavors." What ever that means.

There seems to be a general increase in the "heat" that is put in food recently. Really not just a general increase, actually an all out assault. Burger chains are trying to out do the competition with the addition of chipotle sauces, jalapenos and now the ghost pepper. If it keeps up, you will be required to eat your burger wearing rubber gloves. Sriracha sauce is one of my favorites and TABASCO has their own sriracha sauce now.

Like the sign says, food in the south is seasoned and seasoned well. Some foods require some seasoning, like grits. If you don't add some salt to the water, the grits just don't taste good. I read some comical instructions on how to cook grits and it said that you should stop adding butter when it looks like your kids yellow rain slicker.

The same goes to adding salt when you are boiling potatoes, for potato salad or mashed potatoes. One of the chefs I worked under told me the water to boil potatoes in should smell like the ocean. Oh! You say, too much salt is not healthy. If you only eat home-cooked unprocessed foods, you have complete control on your salt intake. Hint, Hint.

But beyond salt, there are vinegars, peppers, and many herbs and spices that are used to compliment everything from fruits and vegetables and meats and seafood.

And I know that you have started your garden already and there are all types of herbs growing that you can use in your meals. Another, hint, hint.

I went to Fairhope for a conference last month and marveled on how green and beautiful everything was. Flowers blooming, gardens being tended to, and everyone out shopping, getting their supplies for spring. It is picnic and outdoor eating time. The days are still mild so you can eat outside and enjoy the first crops of spring. And the Farmers Market looked like the parking lot at the Iron Bowl. The early crops, the young vegetables and tender herbs were plentiful and make for a delicious light spring meal.

The problem with young fresh herbs, is storing them to maximize the fresh flavor. If you were growing rosemary, sage, marjoram, or oregano, you can dry them to use later and they do hold up to freezing. Other herbs as basil, savory and cilantro will live longer if the flowers are kept pinched off. This is to keep the leaves from becoming bitter.

After picking the leaves, rinse them in cool salted water. There's that salt again. The salt will chase away the bugs and not harm the plants. About a tablespoon of salt for a large bowl of water. Then the salad spinner works well and paper towels. Then store in a plastic container with paper towels between layers of herbs. Helps with air flow. For lesser amounts, plastic bags will work, but I still put paper towels in with the herbs.

Southern cuisine has spread the world over! Proof! I read a blog from a foodie in Hong Kong. He posted pictures at a restaurant of fried chicken, gator nuggets, lobster poutine and pork ribs with jambalaya rice.

But I digress.

The temperature is still bearable, the mosquitoes are still small, the humidity is less the thick fog and the vegetables are still young and tender. Time to eat outdoors.

First a salad that looks hard but just simple steps that are easy to follow. You can do this!! First read the recipe and organize yourself. It should not take 35 minutes to put this salad together. And there is only one item that requires cooking. This is a salad that is perfect for Spring. Tangy citrus and fresh herbs.

## SHRIMP SALAD WITH GRAPEFRUIT & MINT

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbs freshly squeezed lime juice (1 medium lime)
- 2 tbs freshly squeezed grapefruit juice (1/2 small grapefruit)
- 1 tsp soy sauce
- 1 tbs fish sauce
- 1 tsp sriracha sauce
- 1/8 tsp salt, plus extra for salting the grapefruit
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1/2 pound cooked and peeled pink shrimp. Buy the shrimp already cooked and frozen, or cook your own with some Old Bay Seasoning to give the salad an extra punch.
- 1/4 cup grated carrot
- 1/4 cup chopped cilantro
- 1 avocado, peeled, pitted, and cut into medium dice
- 1 tbs vegetable oil
- 1/3 cup thinly sliced shallots
- 1 pink grapefruit
- butter lettuce leaves (anything but iceberg lettuce)
- 1/4 cup roughly chopped dry-roasted, salted peanuts, for garnish
- 1/4 cup fresh mint leaves, cut into thin ribbons, for garnish

### METHOD

1. Some parts of this recipe can be made ahead of time:
2. In a small jar, prepare the marinade by mixing the lime juice, grapefruit juice, soy sauce, fish sauce, sriracha sauce, salt and sugar. Store in the fridge.
3. Chop the shallots, saute them in the oil in a medium saute pan over medium-high heat until caramelized, about 10 minutes. Let them cool and set aside.
4. Cut the peel off the grapefruit, remove any white pith and slice horizontally into 1/2 inch rounds. Then slice into 1/2 inch wide strips, and then into medium cubes. Salt them lightly and store in the fridge.
5. Wash and dry enough lettuce leaves for four servings.
6. Grate the carrot and refrigerate.
7. Just before serving, chop the cilantro and avocado.
8. Rinse the shrimp and pat dry. Put the shrimp in a large bowl and add the carrots, cilantro, avocado and shallots. Add the marinade mixture and toss. Let the shrimp marinate for 20 minutes in the refrigerator.
9. Tear the lettuce leaves into bite-sized pieces and portion into four serving dishes. Spoon the grapefruit cubes and then the shrimp mixture on top, drizzling with a little of the excess marinade.
10. Garnish with chopped peanuts and mint and serve.

SERVES 4



Next recipe is perfect for Spring also. Once you prepped the vegetables the meal is almost done. You have some leeway with the vegetables you want to use and the cheese. Experiment, make it your recipe!

## FARMER'S MARKET VEGETARIAN QUESADILLAS

### INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1/2 cup chopped zucchini
- 1/2 cup chopped yellow squash
- 1/2 cup chopped red onion
- 1/2 cup chopped mushrooms
- Add the following to add a little zest to the veggies 2 tbs of chopped jalapenos (seeds removed)

1 tablespoon olive oil cooking spray

6 (9 inch) whole wheat tortillas

1 1/4 cups shredded sharp Cheddar cheese

### METHOD

1. In a large nonstick pan, cook red pepper, zucchini, yellow squash, onion, and mushrooms and jalapenos in olive oil over medium to medium-high heat for about 7 minutes, or until just tender. Remove vegetables from pan.
2. Coat the same pan with cooking spray, and place one tortilla in pan. Sprinkle 1/4 cup of cheese evenly over tortilla, and layer 3/4 cup of the vegetable mixture over the cheese. Sprinkle another 1/8 cup of cheese on the vegetables, and top with a second tortilla. Cook until golden on both sides, for approximately 2 to 3 minutes per side. Remove quesadilla from pan with large spatula, and repeat with remaining ingredients. Cut each quesadilla into 8 triangles with a pizza cutter. Serve hot.
3. Add your favorite salsa, or make some guacamole, or add sour cream as a topping.

Enjoy your Spring. Spring is Nature's way in saying, "Let's Party"

SERVES 3 to 6



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**Judge Peggy Givhan**

# Southern Gardening Potpourri for June

by Peggy Givhan

June is the month for graduations, weddings, family vacations, trips to the lake or to the beach or to the mountains. In other words, June may be the most fun month of the year. Maybe June is my favorite month because of my birthday. It seems that the older I get, the more time I allot to celebrate my birthday and it is truly getting to where I may be celebrating the whole month.

The definition states that a perennial is a plant that lives for at least 3 years or more. An annual is a plant that lives for one year, and dies. The biennials come up the first year, bloom the second and then dies. I will add that there are two types of perennials, herbaceous, which dies to the ground during winter and woody stemmed. The woody stemmed plants can lose their leaves in the winter (deciduous) such as hydrangea or keep their leaves, such as aspidistra (iron plant).

And speaking of the iron plant, which is almost synonymous with the deep south, we can definitely name this a work horse. Not only will it grow almost anywhere, including at the feet of magnolias, but in sunny locations, or deep shade. If it looks a little raggedy after a hard winter, just cut the stalks back to the ground before the end of June, and it will put up a whole new flush of leaves. If you wait until after July 1st, you will see nothing until the next spring. For those out in the audience who say they have brown thumbs, this is your success story. These plants are almost indestructible. Use the leaves in a cut flower arrangement as a filler and they will add drama. I was at a nursery in Loganville, Georgia where they were selling for \$5.00 for a gallon pot. When I looked out in my back and front yards, I have so many stands that I think I will add them to my financial sheet. Maybe I can call myself Aspidistra poor.

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| (3). Coleus                 | (12). Elephant Ears                 |
| (4). Dusty Miller           | (13). Tradescansia                  |
| (5). Lamb's Ears or Stachys | (14). Salvias                       |
| (6). Plumbago               | (15). Hibiscus                      |
| (7). Sedums                 | (16). Myosotis                      |
| (8). Astilbe                |                                     |
| (9). Hydrangeas             |                                     |



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Email: [allyson.andrews@icloud.com](mailto:allyson.andrews@icloud.com)

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# Gazette Seniors...

You may be  
over the hill if...  
your fortune cookie  
has a "use by" date



**Dr. John Bitter**  
Editor  
Senior Section

Pleasing the clientele anywhere can be somewhat of a vexing problem, and none more vexing than at an institution where the bulk of those being served are

well into their Golden Years. The chef at your humble scribe's newest abode, **Elmcroft of Halcyon**, can well endorse this observation as she was confronted with the following experience:

As a general rule, Gloria Crews does an admirable job of pleasing the palates of the residents.

But one day she found herself facing an insurmountable odd. A new guest of somewhat of a crotchety nature had joined the Elmcroft family. But Chef Crews saw no problem. To be on the safe side, she decided to see to it that the new guest's gastronomical desires were met.

At the conclusion of the noon meal the chef stationed herself by the elevator as the new arrival was about to depart at the conclusion of his dinner. Smiling affably Chef Crews inquired: "And how was your dinner sir?"

Whereupon the new resident frowned and snapped: "Not enough bread!"

Determined to insure that the needs of the residents were met as is possible given the many constraints under which the chef must work, she insured herself that at the following day's luncheon there were four slices of bread at the new guest's place.

At the conclusion of the meal Chef Crews positioned herself in the path of the departing guest and asked: "How was your meal today, sir?"

Whereupon the new guest glared back and growled: "Not enough bread."

Well now, thought the chef, we can't have this. So, for the next day's meal

she insured that there were six slices of bread at the new guest's place.

Greeting the resident at the conclusion of his meal the chef inquired: "How was your meal today, sir?"

In response to this inquiry the resident made a disapproving grimace and snapped back: "Not enough bread."

By now the chef was at her wits end. The next day as she was shopping for incidentals the chef passed a nearby bakery. She went inside and inquired of the baker if he could bake a large loaf of French bread.

"Of course," replied the baker.

"How long of a loaf can you bake?" responded the chef.

Somewhat puzzled at the request the baker replied: "How long do you want?"

The chef thought for a moment and asked: "Can you bake a loaf of French bread three feet long?"

The baker thought for a moment, made a mental measure of the dimensions of his oven and said: "Yes, but just barely."

Pleased with this news the chef ordered such a loaf for the following day.

On the appointed day the chef called one of his cooks aside and said: "I want you to run down to the bakers and pick up a loaf of bread he has for me."

The cook did so with dispatch, and upon return to the kitchen the chef placed the lengthy loaf on a table, honed up her sharpest bread knife, and sliced the loaf neatly from end to end. She then placed the loaf of French bread on the new resident's table. This presented an interesting sight since the loaf extended well beyond both sides of the table.

Stationing herself at the elevator door at the meal's conclusion the chef awaited the departure of the new resident. As he approached the chef smiled from ear to ear and asked: "How was your meal today, sir?"

The resident stopped, looked squarely in the chef's eye, and with a disapproving snarl responded: "Back to two slices of bread I see."

## A NEW IMAGE

As a young lad in elementary school these many years past the mind still retains the image of George Washington, our first president, resplendent in his revolutionary war uniform. How impressive that was.

Shift time a few decades and another presidential image emerges, that of our first woman president, resplendent in an orange jump suit.

Not an image worth retaining.

## PRESIDENTIAL RANKINGS

Ever since the current presidential campaign got underway we have been inundated with rhetoric from the various candidates with regard to what each could do for the electorate, coupled with a scathing report on the shortcomings and transgressions of his or her opponents for office. This is one aspect of public office that remains constant.

The wise voter has learned to take it all with respectable "grains of salt," and to then make his or her own judgments. Anyone who would take any of the political blathering as real is a fool or a blind partisan—or both.

In 1948, historian Arthur Schlesinger, Sr. did a survey for Life magazine which rated the qualities of America's presidents, from George Washington on, and others have followed in his path.

Almost universally, the top in respectability were: George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Franklin D. Roosevelt. Thomas Jefferson limped in three times, and then the top classifications varied.

As to worst, eight presidents ranked at the bottom, consistently. These being: James Buchanan, William Henry Harrison, Andrew Johnson, Franklin Pierce, Millard Fillmore, and William G. Harding.

Lyndon Johnson ranged from 5th to 15th. George Bush didn't do well at all, while his dad did fairly well in the ratings.

Dwight D. Eisenhower ranged from 8th to 22nd place in the various surveys, and Harry S Truman was included in the top circle, ranging from 5th to 10th place; as well he should.

Barack Obama showed up in a couple of the later surveys, but he hasn't been around long enough to really make an observation.

Most of the rankings, either good or bad, may have involved a good bit of revisionist thinking, but nonetheless, they were about what one would expect.

One would have thought that Ronald Reagan and Harry Truman would have scored higher than they did, but for the most part, all the rankings were based primarily on what one could glean from the writings of historian; many of whom were revisionists.. Franklin Roosevelt was the only president of recent memory who did well. Richard Nixon and Jimmy Carter, surprisingly, did not fare as poorly as one might have thought.

With all this in mind, what do we really know about the current crop of office seekers? Most of our opinions are based on our individual political leanings, and what the media tells us, and they didn't get the reputation of being "them lying news people" for nothing.

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By **Kylle' D. McKinney**

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## THE MARSHALL MOMENT

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

# Soul Searching

### “Fathers Getting The Job Done”



One of the most sobering events of life for me was becoming a father. There is obvious responsibility that goes with marriage, but marriage is also about partnership and sharing life’s ventures. However, with a child, there is a weight of responsibility like nothing else in life. A parent has one chance to shape a life which will affect what happens for generations as well as an eternal destiny.

Unfortunately many homes in America are suffering from the phantom father. A man is present who may have fathered the child or children, but is not positively involved in the welfare of the home or children. Likewise, there are far too many homes where men have fathered children and simply walked away from the family. It is without debate that fathering a child does not make a man a father. Statistics over the past 30 years tell a sad story of what is happening to children in homes where there is no father. Some of these are a “550% increase in violent crime, 400% increase in illegitimate births, 200% increase in teen pregnancies and a 300% increase in teen suicide. More than 70% of all juveniles in state reform institutions come from fatherless homes.” Homes in America are not so much in need of a man, but in desperate need of men who are fathers.

There is a moving story in the ministry of Jesus about an outstanding father. You can find it in the fifth chapter of Mark’s Gospel. It is about a man named Jairus who had a seriously ill daughter. He provides some of the best lessons on fatherhood you will ever find. He did three things incredibly well. If all of us fathers sought to meet these three needs in our families, I can only imagine how much better the homes of our nation and the children in them would be.

First, Jairus attended to the physical needs of his family. It sounds so simple, yet in many families men selfishly absorb needed resources or doesn’t work to provide for his family. It is sad to see a family who does not have enough food to eat or adequate clothing or housing because the father has squandered away the family’s money. It is also sad to see families who have the top of the line in everything at the cost of the father being constantly away from the home working to pay for them. Now, I know that it is nice to have the top line in things, all the way from designer clothes to a new automobile. But as nice as that is, it is necessary that a man spends time with your family. His family needs to live in a strong, vibrant, and sustaining relationship with him.

One day Jairus’ twelve-year-old daughter became ill. When illness strikes our children, our hearts ache. We want to take their illness for them. As Jairus realized that his daughter lay dying, he could have sat down and wept away the hours. But Jairus was a father who strove to meet the needs of his family, and that sent him out in search of Jesus, the healer. Jairus’ foremost desire was that his daughter be healed.

Second, Jairus met the emotional needs in the crisis surrounding their family. Many fathers have accepted the macho image which our society views as the manly ideal. Our families need an image of a father who has a kind and gentle spirit more than they need macho men. This talk of having a kind and gentle spirit is by no means idle talk. The prophet Micah declared to Israel that God requires people to be lovers of mercy and to learn to walk humbly before God. (Micah 6:8)

Jairus was a man who displayed a kind and gentle spirit. As Jesus began to accompany Jairus to his home and his sick daughter, their journey was interrupted. A large crowd slowed their journey, but Jairus did not act improperly to the crowd. He displayed a kind spirit. As they journeyed, a woman who was sick touched the hem of the robe of Jesus in order that she might be healed. As Jesus stopped His journey so that he could find out who had touched His garment, Jairus did not voice any impatience; he did not act in any way other than a gentle way. Through all of this, Jairus exhibited a kind and gentle spirit, a spirit worthy of imitation.

Fathers must constantly display a kind and gentle spirit for our families to follow. Frustrations and anxieties well up occasionally in virtually all of us men.

However, how we handle them is the real test of our faith and a powerful witness to our children. *Most children are more sensitive to their parent’s stress than parents realize. That’s why it is so urgent that parents, and especially fathers, learn to handle emotions properly.* Without this, every other member of the family suffers anxiety and insecurity. In this day when the pressures of society try to force us to see others as objects and enemies, our families need an image of emotional health to follow.

Third, Jairus met the spiritual needs of his family. Jairus was a man who displayed great spiritual faith. His little 12 year-old girl lay dying and he went forth to seek Jesus, the healer, because he believed that Jesus could heal his precious daughter. Jairus did a very difficult thing. He committed his daughter’s life to Jesus. When our children become ill, we stand ready to do anything, to perform any task to ensure their healing.

Some people might say that his action was that of a desperate man, that he had no other place to turn except to Jesus. I would say that he turned to Jesus because he believed that Jesus could heal his daughter that Jesus could restore her health. Jairus was a man who had faith.

The pressures of our society seek to destroy the spiritual values of our families. Our families need strong examples of spiritual faith to follow. No one is more significant in the family than the father in passing on strong spiritual values.

Some time ago I saw these rather startling observations. *“Research has revealed that if a child is the first person in a household to become a Christian, there is a 3.5 % probability that everyone else in the household will become Christians. Obviously this is not very high at all. If the mother is the first to become a Christian, the percent goes up and 17% of the homes will see the remainder of its members trust Christ. But if the father is first, there is a 93% probability that everyone else in the household will follow.”*

Fathers, if you want to get the job done, pay attention to the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of your family. There are no shortcuts. There is no one else the Lord will look to one day for an accountability of influence on your children more than you. Your children will leave home one day. Will they be prepared to be part of a healthy family and contributing member of society? Even more importantly, will they be prepared for eternity?

It’s not easy being a good father, but it’s certainly not impossible. It takes hard work, hard praying, and making hard decisions. You can’t do it alone. God doesn’t expect you to. God doesn’t want you to. Don’t leave Him out of your adventure in fatherhood.



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## Reflections

By Michael J. Brooks

### IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME

Canadian Army Lt. John McRae was in the line of defense that withstood the German assault in Belgium in 1915. The Germans resorted to chemical warfare using chlorine gas but the Canadians held fast. Later McRae officiated at a colleague’s burial. In the ensuing days he noticed how quickly the poppies grew over the newly-dug graves. He wrote *“In Flanders Fields”* that became the national poem of Canada, and a loving tribute to all the dead in World War I.

My mother had three brothers who served in World War II. John Wesley, whom we called “J,” was the one who gave me my middle name. He served in the war and was discharged. Raymond was a glider pilot and flew on D-Day. Uncle Raymond never talked about his service, but his son later told me the glider was used to move men and materials behind enemy lines without detection. The casualty rate for glider pilots was 70 percent on D-Day. Uncle Raymond was in the fortunate minority.

And there was the final brother, Melvin. Uncle Melvin was shell-shocked, as it was called in those days, and never had significant conversations or did

meaningful work the rest of his days.

It’s always fitting to pause and remember the sacrifices of our veterans who ensure the freedoms we enjoy in America.

Jesus likewise gave us a memorial to the cross of Calvary. On the night of his last supper with his disciples he took familiar elements of the Passover meal and assigned new meaning.

The bread, he said, represented his body that was about to be unjustly broken. A few hours later he was man-handled, abused and nailed to a Roman cross. And the cup, he said, represented his blood that would be shed for the sins of the world.

Roman execution was a fact-of-life in the first century. Citizens saw criminals nailed to crosses where they remained for days subjected to pain, the elements and shame, since they were crucified naked. But Jesus died within six hours. In some way our finite minds can never comprehend the sins of the world were laid on his body on the tree and he died quickly.

Knowing that we tend to forget things we shouldn’t, Jesus exhorted his church to observe the Lord’s Supper and remember the magnitude of his sacrifice. **“This do in remembrance of me”** is a motto hewn into countless communion tables throughout our churches, and we do well to remember with gratitude the price paid for our forgiveness.

It’s appropriate to remember our military heroes on Memorial Day, Veteran’s Day and Independence Day, but it’s also appropriate to remember our spiritual hero who gave his life for us.

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

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**“Whoever is kind to the needy honors God.”**  
*~ Proverbs 14:31*





Patricia Killough



Please send Patricia your family birthdays, anniversaries and weddings to [alabamagazette@gmail.com](mailto:alabamagazette@gmail.com)

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

# Home Town Community News

## June Birthdays



- |                            |                        |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Ruby Henley              | Kelly Kilgore          |
| 2 Christian Grant          | Ruth Preble (87th)     |
| Amber Holbrook             | 15 Angie Ashurst       |
| Pat Moseley (77th)         | Mary G. Thaggard       |
| Mike Moseley (77th)        | Caty Jane Turnipseed   |
| Barbara White              | 16 Saralu Belkofer     |
| 3 Eleanor Haynie           | Robert Gardner         |
| Margie Johnson             | David Morrow           |
| Kade Wallace               | Terri Ratliff Taylor   |
| 5 Braden Crowe             | Carson Tucker          |
| Michelle Crowe             | Garrett Tucker         |
| Lane Carter Johnson        | Anna Shay Wasden       |
| Maggie Mills               | 17 Susan McGuire       |
| Johnny Rush                | 18 Mary Jane Flurry    |
| 6 John Michael Higgins     | Marion Grant           |
| William Grant              | Jonathan Lowe          |
| 7 Jeannie Handey           | Frieda McDevitt (95th) |
| Frank Litchfield           | 19 David Vinson        |
| James Stanley              | 20 Linda Reynolds      |
| 8 Georgie Harris           | Michael Taylor         |
| 9 Faye Boyd (60th)         | 21 Mary Raley          |
| Laura Smith                | 22 Nita Tidwell (93rd) |
| 10 Juanita Beckman         | 23 Thomas Berrey       |
| Jeffery Horton             | 24 Alice Ivey          |
| Seth Lumley                | 25 Janet Treat         |
| Justin Manning             | 26 Jan Morris          |
| Melinda Newell             | 27 John Donahey        |
| Sylvia Phillips            | 28 Paul Hanson         |
| 11 David Livingston        | Nadean Holley (102nd)  |
| Ashley Owens               | Tricia Norris          |
| 12 Gary Crowe              | 29 Ansley Brown        |
| Charlotte Gaston           | Lauren Moffitt         |
| Beverly Ming               | Dot Rebren             |
| Mackenzie Richardson (8th) | 30 Kathy Blount        |
| Madilyn Sellers (8th)      | Gordon Davis           |
| 13 Rachel Miller           | Wyatt Echols           |
| 14 Kerry Brown             | Jonathan Killough      |
| Julie Echols               |                        |

### Happy Birthday Trace Mason!



Trace celebrated his 3rd birthday on Saturday, May 14th on the playground of Frazer United Methodist Church with many family and friends.

Everyone had a great time!



### Daniel Selvage celebrates at Legoland in Florida

Daniel turned 8 years old on May 21, 2016. He celebrated his birthday with a trip to Legoland and Universal Studios with his parents, Jason and Stephanie and his little sister Sarah Kate.

## Happy Anniversary

- |                                |                                 |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 Bill & Harlan Ratliff (60th) | Felix & Janice Norman           |
| 2 Glenn & Sue Borders (60th)   | 18 Lera & Kim Evans             |
| Tony & Kate Smith              | Eddie & Rhonda Spivey           |
| 3 Joe & Amy Boyd               | 21 Mr. & Mrs. Wayne Cobb        |
| Tom & Vivian Ledbetter         | Lowell Thomas &                 |
| Rick & Ann Pascal              | Julianne Hataway (58th)         |
| 4 Claude & Joan Collier        | 22 Mr. & Mrs. Mike Crutchfield  |
| 5 Frank & Linda Clayton        | Ron & Jan Johnson               |
| Mr. & Mrs. Charles Ming        | 23 Harold & Susie Van Patten    |
| 6 Shayne & Patrice Wasden      | Mike & Mary Pat Sikes           |
| 8 Ken & Karen Deavers          | Matt & Melanie Smith            |
| Jim & Joy Fleming              | Dan & Marcelle Thompson         |
| 9 Slade & Skeeter Rhodes       | 25 Mike & Brenda Moseley (56th) |
| 11 Jason & Hope Marsh          | 28 Vance & Ruth Cordle          |
| Mr. & Mrs. Steve Young         | 29 Billy & Betty Gallops (48th) |
| 12 Bobby & Nicole Burton       | 30 Gary & Linda Beaty           |
| Tommy & Jennifer Champion      | George & Liz McCurdy (59th)     |
| 15 Mr. & Mrs. Tim Nester       |                                 |

## Sympathy to the families of...

- Pringle, Virginia L. ....died April 20, 2016  
 Livings, William Michael "Mike" (57) ....died April 23, 2016  
 Carlton, Rev. Arthur McCoy (96).....died April 28, 2016  
 Hand, Eloise Pouncey (86) .....died April 29, 2016  
 Park, Ney P. Jr. (80) .....died May 3, 2016  
 Copeland, Lillian (80).....died May 7, 2016  
 Green, Christine Thornton (90).....died May 11, 2016  
 Vetter, Stanley G. (57).....died May 11, 2016  
 Britton, Evelyn Locke Sledge (101) .....died May 12, 2016  
 Boyd, Dempsey Clower (82) .....died May 18, 2016  
 Martin, Ms. Florence Till (89) .....died May 23, 2016  
 Tillery, Daryl Norman (48) .....died May 25, 2016  
 Williamson, Nellie Ruth Owens Deavers (88).....died May 25, 2016

### A Graduation Blessing for Jackson Graham Corbin



JACKSON, You have definitely made a major impression on the school.

Both, staff and students, have learned great patience from listening for hours and hours and hours, as you made your journey from potential "guitar destroyer" to genuine music maker.

As witnesses to your developing creative ability, we have experienced everything from,

"What in the Universe is that?" to authentic amazement at your artistic creations.

Any time I find myself emptying the waste baskets, I can hear your voice saying, "Mrs. H, I'll do that. You should never have to take out trash." Thank you for boldly showing respect for your teachers.

Jackson, all of life is learning. The Bible, itself, is written to and about learners. Good teaching comes only from good learning. Of course, learners do make mistakes, but mistakes are not failures. They're just "write-outs" on the road to knowing more than you did before.

This is part of an essay your wrote this year about God's faithfulness:

"God is faithful to me. That's how I got adopted. He guided me through tough times and different families and put me with the Corbin's, a really good Christian family. He has helped me through the school years to get my work accomplished and to learn the things I needed to learn."

"May the God of peace make you holy in every way, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again.

God will make this happen,  
 FOR HE WHO CALLS YOU IS FAITHFUL.  
 ( 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24)

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

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



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

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*Trisston  
Wright Burrows  
Ms. Wheelchair  
America/  
Alabama 2005*

## Trisston's Tidbits...

By: *Trisston Wright Burrows*  
[www.trisstonwrightburrows.com](http://www.trisstonwrightburrows.com)

### "Happy Met'Cha Day"

Do you believe that certain days throughout your life are anointed? That God has an unexpected blessing meant just for you that day?? Boy, I sure do! And one of those blessed days occurred ten years ago this month.

*"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." Proverbs 3: 5-6*

Although I had completed my reign as Ms. Wheelchair America/Alabama 2005, the next year I was still receiving request to make personal appearances and to speak at events. On a beautiful, sunny day in June of 2006, I traveled to Troy University located in Troy, Alabama to speak at an innovative, intensive, five-day career leadership training program for high school juniors and seniors with disabilities from throughout the State of Alabama called **Alabama Governor's Youth Leadership Forum**. When I arrived I was greeted by a handsome gentleman named Brian who would be speaking along-side of me on the Independent Living Panel. Brian has the same disability that I have (Cerebral Palsy) but his affects him a little differently than me. Like me, he has never allowed his disability to serve as a barrier to living life to its fullest.

I had no idea that attending this wonderful program would end up changing my life (and last name!). After all, I was there to share my story and hopefully make a positive difference.

After my day at the program was over, Brian contacted me and we began dating. As we grew closer and closer, I knew he was "The One" and he knew I was his "Miss Wright". We married about two years later.

Each year Brian and I celebrate the day we met...thanking God for the blessing of bringing us together. We affectionately refer to this day as our "met'cha" day.

*Happy "Met'Cha" Day, Brian!! I love you!*

**Many Blessings!**

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## Marine Corps League's Townsend Detachment



An honor detail with the Marine Corps League's Townsend Detachment #920 from Montgomery, Alabama paid tribute to Montgomery native and U. S. Marine Henry "Ben" Townsend on Friday, October 23, 2015.

This marked the 32nd anniversary of the 'Beirut barracks bombing.' Lance Corporal Townsend was stationed at the Marine Barracks when two truck bombs struck separate buildings housing United States and French military forces – members of the Multinational Force in Lebanon.

Lance Corporal Townsend was injured during the terrorist attack and subsequently died on December 2, 1983 at Bethesda Naval Hospital, Bethesda, Maryland. Lance Corporal Townsend was assigned to 1st Battalion, 8th Marines 2nd Marine Division, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

Townsend Detachment was chartered in 1995. The detachment is comprised of active duty, reserve, retired and prior service Marines and FMF Corpsmen and chaplains. The detachment chose to honor posthumously promoted Corporal Townsend, when they chose the detachment name. The Townsend Detachment has commissioned a stone to be placed at Corporal Townsend's grave site indicating the Detachments choice of Corporal Townsend as honoree. The stone was anticipated to be completed by Memorial Day 2016. The Townsend Detachment hosted a ceremony which place the stone at the grave site.

Corporal Townsend's grave is in the Pike Road community at the Gilmer Cemetery on Old Pike Road.

Corporal Townsend is indeed an unsung hero, a Marine who served with honor and did his duties as assigned, even unto his untimely death.

Marine Corp. League members of the Townsend Detachment salute you, Corporal Townsend and stand with you. **SEMPER FI**

## Medac, PC

Johnnie W. Strickland, Jr. MD

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[www.Medac4u.com](http://www.Medac4u.com)



*"Every cell to your body functions like a car, it has it's own engine, You can put the best gasoline (food) in, and the best oil (vitamins/minerals); but if you throw sand (chemical toxins & heavy metals) into the motor, the first two doesn't matter. At MEDAC, PC, we focus on helping to get the sand out fo your motor. We also help with the food and the oil so that you motor can hum and run in the optimal way it was designed.*

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Helping Families Help Themselves



Continued from page 13A

17. Why is there no direct contact info or direct emails links to board members on the Pike Road Schools website? We were told any questions to school board members should go through the school first. Do you have any concerns about this arrangement, i.e. that those who may be the subject of criticism might have the ability to "screen" complaints? NA.

18. Does the School Board plan to instigate its own investigation of any points/criticisms/allegations or concerns that (were) highlighted in our piece on the first year of Pike Road Schools? What will be the nature of such an investigation? Will you (or your designated investigator) talk to all teachers, including those who allege they have been harassed, intimidated and/or bullied by Dr. Freeman and Angela Lang? NA.

19. Are you aware that many teachers, staffers, and/or parents seem hesitant to talk, fearing possible retaliation? If individuals do feel this way, would this concern you? NA.

20. If there is indeed a "pattern of behavior" regarding Dr. Freeman's negative interactions with faculty and staffers, do you think it is appropriate for a reporter to investigate such a possibility? How do you respond to the accusation that Dr. Freeman apparently seeks to purge staffers who she might deem as not "acting on our beliefs" (a direct quote from her)? NA.

21. Per our reporting, Dr. Freeman has routinely cautioned faculty members to not disclose to the public any negative experiences or opinions. In your opinion, are such warnings/requests appropriate? NA.

22. According to a story published in Sunday's *Montgomery Advertiser*, "teachers" described the first semester of PRS as being akin to a "medieval plague that swept through the school." Were you aware such an eyebrow-raising consensus of opinion existed? Why do you think so many instructors apparently hold/held such an opinion? NA.

23. In a waiver request submitted to the State Department of Education, Dr. Freeman (who we assume wrote the request) writes "instructional leaders will provide continuous ongoing feedback and support to all lead learners." Per our reporting, at least some "lead learners" describe receiving little or no support from the administration and indeed felt like teachers were being made to be scapegoats for the "medieval plague" type atmosphere that existed/exists at the school. Will any investigation you may launch explore the possibility that some teachers believe they were made to be "scapegoats" and received little or no support from the administration? NA.

24. In the same paragraph of the waiver request is this sentence: "In addition, our evaluation system will be based on showing evidence that each Lead Learner is furthering our mission and acting on our beliefs." What exactly are these "beliefs"? NA.

25. The introduction of the FreshGrade assessment program has been controversial with many students and parents. We also learned that FreshGrade was used as part of the administration's "evaluation system" of faculty. Per our knowledge, teachers were "evaluated" by FreshGrade just one time by the administration (early in the school year). No further FreshGrade "evaluations" materialized. Does this (apparent) fact speak to the time-consuming nature of using FreshGrade? As a board member, did you read through these FreshGrade evaluations of school system employees? NA.

26. Several former and past teachers have told us that their performance has been harshly criticized in one-on-one "coaching" sessions with principal (Lang) and/or Dr. Freeman. However, we have been told that neither the principal or Dr. Freeman actually spent any meaningful time in the teacher's "learning space" to actually observe their teaching performance. How can the teaching abilities of "lead learners" be fairly assessed absent such monitoring? NA.

27. An eighth grade student wrote an essay about her concerns with "The Pike Road Way." *The Gazette* published excerpts of this essay in its May edition. This student alleges that both Angela Lang and Suzanne Freeman rudely and summarily rejected ideas for the new high school and concerns about the first year of PRS. In fact, some of these students were reduced to tears after their

interaction with these administrators. The student also said that posters soliciting student input that students had placed on school walls were removed. Given the purported importance placed on valuing "student voice" do these allegations concern you? Will any investigation you may choose to launch look into the experiences of these students? NA.

28. (We have learned) that at least several PRS instructors do not hold certifications for the grades they are teaching and/or the subject matters they are teaching. Is this true? Have you researched this? Will you? If this is correct, does this concern you? NA.

29. We understand that teachers whose contracts may not be renewed will be notified of this on the last day of school. Other school systems we are aware of make an effort to notify such personnel weeks before the end of the school year (presumably to give those who are losing jobs and benefits as much time as possible to seek employment in other school systems). Why doesn't PRS extend the same "courtesy" to its non-renewed teachers? NA.

30. Of the original faculty, how many have either been terminated, have already submitted resignations or will not have their contracts renewed? NA, although Mr. Hawthorne did say these names will be placed in the minutes of the June 6 board meeting. Will board members conduct "exit interviews" with these individuals in an effort to assess their experiences at PRS? NA.

31. As mentioned, teachers whose contracts will not be renewed apparently will receive this notification on the final day of the school year. Is this timing designed to minimize potential negative feedback from students and/or parents (who may be upset that popular teachers have been dismissed)? NA.

Full disclosure: Bill Rice's wife and mother-in-law did receive "pink slips" on Friday, May 31st - the day after students' final day of classes.

32. Is it true that PRS was not "registered" with the Alabama Department of Labor as late as December? This, per one interview source, kept a terminated faculty member from drawing unemployment compensation. If this was in fact the case, has this oversight been corrected? NA.

33. Are you familiar with the Schlechty Center or any of the programs or educational leadership organizations in which it is involved (such as the Superintendents Leadership Network)? Have you researched this organization on your own? Do you see parallels between Schlechty methodology and terminology and the so-called "Pike Road Way"? Your conclusions? How do you respond to the charge that under said "Pike Road Way" students could be viewed as 'guinea pigs' in an "experiment" to introduce "radical" or unproven education methods? NA.

34. What empirical data do you cite to defend the superiority of Schlechty-teaching methods (including extreme reliance on project based learning and collaborative learning) to "traditional" education? NA.

35. Have you ever personally attended conferences, seminars or events hosted by Schlechty or its affiliate groups? Have you read any of the late Mr. Schlechty's nine books? NA.

36. Do you agree that "traditional" approaches to teaching and organizing schools are no longer appropriate in a "rapidly-changing" world? Have you personally had difficulty adapting to this "rapidly-changing world" because of shortcomings caused by the traditional education you may have received? NA.

After one year of PRS - and after at least some of the concerns about "The Pike Road Way" have been publicized - do you still feel this system will succeed in attracting families and the best and brightest students to Pike Road? And the best teachers? NA.

37. If a faculty member expresses opinions about education that perhaps do not gibe with the views espoused by Dr. Freeman is this alone appropriate grounds for dismissal? NA.

38. Have Pike Road Schools and/or School System funds been used to pay for registration fees to Schlechty events and/or to pay for Schlechty associates to conduct faculty workshops? What is this dollar figure? In tight economic times, do you think such expenditures are warranted? NA.

39. If it is true that Dr. Freeman has already

attended approximately 40 (or more) Schlechty events in her professional career, why does she need to attend even more? NA.

40. Re: The unique "FreshGrade" software: In one of the SDE "waiver requests," Dr. Freeman writes that "during the 2015-2016 school year, we will talk with colleges and universities in Alabama and beyond to discuss how they utilize grades and possible alternatives to accommodate our students." How many colleges in Alabama and beyond did Dr. Freeman or other school officials end up talking to about FreshGrade? What responses has she received to date? Can all the universities she has spoken with work with "FreshGrade" in the admissions process? NA.

41. How much did/has the school system spent on FreshGrade software? NA.

42. Do you have any concerns about students using their Mac Books to play video games or watch videos? Did you happen to read the recent article that concluded that students (at West Point) who did not use "technology" actually received higher grades than cadets who had laptops in the classroom at all times? Do you think it's at least possible that full-time use of laptops and technology on the part of students does NOT produce superior results to traditional "book" education? NA.

43. Are you satisfied that parents were fully aware of all of the "innovations" PRS is using (no grades, first U.S. system to try "FreshGrade," no books, no desks, no tests, little or no homework, etc, PBL used more than any other system in Alabama, etc.) prior to the start of the school term? NA.

44. What evidence or testimonies make you think that Pike Road School, under the leadership of Dr. Freeman, is producing outstanding results for students and is indeed a model or "trail blazer" for other systems to follow? NA.

45. Do you think the future of PRS is bright? See statement. Why do you believe this? NA.

46. As time goes on, do you think that it is at least possible that "The Pike Road Way" may prove to be a deterrent to future school and town growth? That talented and independent-thinking teachers may leave (voluntarily or otherwise), that the "desertion" of some students might accelerate and that potential outstanding teachers may opt to not apply for positions at PRS? NA.

47. If this scenario materializes, would it be appropriate for school board members to take specific actions to reverse such a hypothetical trend? NA.

48. In our earlier reporting, a source told us that some students had been caught viewing pornography on their Mac Books during class. We did not include this allegation in our package of stories because of concerns this anecdote might just be "hearsay." However, we have since learned more information that leads me to conclude this did, in fact take place. In our interview of May 2nd with Dr. Freeman, four teachers and Ryan Kendal (school IT director), we asked if anyone had heard this allegation. Ryan spoke up and said no, adding that (paraphrasing) maybe some students had got on Facebook and perhaps viewed material that some might deem inappropriate. In effect, Ryan and all of those present denied any knowledge of this accusation. Was such a "denial" truthful? NA.

49. (Prior to publication of our May edition) had you ever heard from ANYONE that students were viewing pornography in class? Did anyone at the school (Ryan included) investigate this? Did you talk to any students? Were any parents notified of this? To date, have any parents been notified of this? Was there a "cover-up" to prevent this news from being made public? NA.

50. Do you welcome comments from community members who in the future may want to address concerns about the direction of PRS? What is the easiest way for such members to get on the agenda of school board meetings? What is the best way for parents or community members to contact you? NA.

NOTE: I also emailed Mr. Hawthorne a copy of the questions I used in my interview with Dr. Freeman. These dealt with discipline concerns, possible failure to follow through on pledges made to students, faculty and parents, as well as other issues developed in our May edition. It is my hope that the topics addressed in these questions will be addressed or referenced in any follow-up investigation the board might commission.

## Another full disclosure from Bill Rice ...

My wife, Carrie Rice, received her "pink slip" from Superintendent Dr. Suzanne Freeman on Friday, May 27th. I believe she was one of seven faculty members who received these curt letters (I asked for an accurate number, but this was not provided). My mother-in-law, Elizabeth Fryer, the school's English as Second Language director, also received a pink slip.

I believe my wife was one of the most popular teachers at Pike Road School (among students at least). This is not just my opinion. When Carrie posted the news on Facebook, she received 79 comments of sympathy and well-wishes. About 20 of these comments were from Pike Road students or parents. These comments describe an educator who is much loved, and who had made a profound and positive impact on students.

She has also received several letters of support and gratitude from parents and students. One parent's letter was emailed to Dr. Freeman and my wife. I'll use this as an example of the sentiments shared with us:

"My daughter was in tears after hearing Mrs. Rice was pink-slipped ... I can't speak for every family at PRS, but in our house, Carrie Rice epitomizes The Pike Road Way. She is the one who convinced these kids to buy into a way of learning that was completely outside their comfort zone. She is the one who worked to understand and motivate each child individually. She is the one who these kids trust, who they respect, who they use as a role model ... She is the one who got these teenagers to want to learn and do more."

My wife actually thought she had been terminated about a month before the

end of the school year (when the referenced letter was written). She was later told, "no," that this meeting with Principal Angela Lang and Superintendent Dr. Suzanne Freeman was, in fact, one of the "coaching sessions" teachers were routinely subjected to.

At this meeting, Carrie made it a point to get her superiors to specifically state their objections to her abilities as a teacher. The reasons provided: She did not "herd" large groups of children well, she had failed in her cafeteria monitoring duties, and she had participated in "negative conversations."

I also note that all teachers who received "pink slips" were notified a day after the final day of school for students. Readers might share my opinion of why this might have been the case. I do know many other school systems, as a courtesy to those affected, deliver such news weeks before the end of a school term. This ends teachers' "limbo" status and allows them to actively pursue other employment. This custom, however, is not part of the Pike Road Way.

Carrie and my mother-in-law (one of the finest people I know) join a long list of teachers and principals who have worked under Dr. Freeman who apparently were fired for the possible crime of not sharing Dr. Freeman's "beliefs."

Like at least one poster who commented on Facebook, I also wonder how a school system is to advance if its superintendent routinely fires teachers who students love, respect and value.

Carrie did love her students and became friends with many of their parents. We greatly appreciate their kind thoughts and words of support.



# Readers share comments on May article on Pike Road Schools...

This email is in response to the article titled "Exclusive: Pike Road's New School System Under Fire" by Bill Rice. This is not a news article; at best it is a very poorly written editorial.

I am not saying that PRS does not have its issues but what school doesn't, especially a school in its first year? Are you offering any solutions to the issues you reported or are you just trying to shed a negative light on a school that is trying to educate our children in a new and creative way?

Maybe you are writing this smear piece because your wife is a teacher at PRS and has not been asked to return?

I would love to know what you hope to accomplish with an article like this other than to try to hurt a school and a community?

Are you going to start reporting on every school where your paper is circulated and list their unfounded shortcomings, or are you just trying to pick on the new kid on the block?

- **Keith Williams**, concerned Pike Road citizen and parent.

\*\*\*

The following comments were taken from The Alabama Gazette website ([www.alabamagazette.com](http://www.alabamagazette.com)). These individuals do not have to sign their real names. We are not including their "screen names."

\*\*\*

"Bill - Doesn't your wife work at Pike Road School? I never saw that noted in the story."

\*\*\*

"I would like to know why the person who wrote this article didn't disclose that his wife is a teacher there? (Although not for much longer it seems after reading this) It seems like a conflict of interest."

\*\*\*

"My son attends PRS, and we do not have any complaints. He is in kindergarten and will come out reading, writing well, and able to express his creativity. Ms. Hardy is an excellent teacher, who communicates well with the parents. She keeps Fresh Grade updated and posts videos of my son learning as well as what he has learned by showing examples of his work. It's the first year the school was opened and hiccups could be expected. As for my family and I, we say, PRS, yes, yes, yes!"

\*\*\*

"It's about time someone does a story on this school system. When we voted we were not told it would be a Montessori Curriculum. The school board should have a meeting with parents to let them voice their concern. No GPA's, no tests, no homework, no paper, no pencil, no writing, oh and no spelling lessons. What child or parent of a child wouldn't love this? What happens when they get to 9th grade? How are they playing sports with no GPA's? Can you say HIPPY COMMUNE LEARNING!?"

\*\*\*

"Under fire.... by whom? Other than identifying the Principal and the Assistant by name, you have not identified one single source... just statements which anyone could have easily made up.... nothing in your Pulitzer Prize winning exclusive piece seems credible."

\*\*\*

"I disagree. Have you really been to the school and observed these things you are writing about or are you just making it up?"

\*\*\*

"I am so glad to see an actual report confirming what we in the education world have been hearing."

\*\*\*

"Two previous comments suggest that the writer failed to disclose that he has or had relatives working at PRS. (They) are incorrect. If readers turn to page 6 at the bottom of the page the writer, in a highlighted box, makes it very clear that his wife and mother-in-law either work or had worked at the school. IT IS A COMPLETE DISCLOSURE. Solid."

**NOTE: Readers can contact Bill Rice, Jr. directly via email at: [bricealgazette@gmail.com](mailto:bricealgazette@gmail.com)**

## Repeat after me: 'We believe our superintendent is a highly respected expert'

Fortunately for anyone applying to be an officer in the PRS PTSA, the school's beliefs are listed on the website under the header "Our Beliefs." To me, Belief No. 10 stands out more than any other.

**"We believe the superintendent and principals are lead learners and are highly respected experts who have a global impact on teaching and learning."**

Presumably it was the superintendent herself (Dr. Freeman) who thought it important that such a statement of belief appear on the school's website.

Are Pike Road parents and students being told what they have to believe? Is it compulsory that they believe their superintendent and principals "are highly respected experts?" What about those people who do not believe Dr. Freeman is a highly respected expert? Are their children disqualified from attending this school?

As to the question of whether I respect Dr. Freeman (or respect her "highly"), I will say I do not respect the education reforms she is seeking to implement which, to me, are dangerous.

In my opinion, students will not be well served by these reforms, in either the short term and especially in the long term. Should I respect someone I believe is almost certainly going to cause unnecessary damage to my children's educational development? Of course not.

I also do not respect the way Dr. Freeman allegedly treats those who may not agree with her.

And is Dr. Freeman, in fact, an "expert" in education? She's no doubt considered an expert among the group of progressive reformers who hope to "blaze (the) trail that could change public education in Alabama and far beyond" – a quote taken word for word from a PRS "waiver request" submitted to the State Department of Education.

To me, Dr. Freeman is certainly not an expert in delivering the form of education I believe has stood the test of time, and that I believe is best for Pike Road children, my own included.

Not only does Dr. Freeman's Pike Road Way advertise its aim to demolish many traditional aspects of education in Pike Road, she clearly hopes to do her part to spread these ideas throughout "Alabama and far beyond."

No, I do not respect people who want to destroy what I view as good, and spread what I view as bad. I actually believe such ideas are toxic and should be stopped in their tracks.

In Pike Road, however, members of the board of education and apparently every other elected leader in Pike Road are cheering this effort on.

**Instead of pausing to reassess the PRW after one year, our community's leaders are doubling down in their endorsements of the PRW. They have chosen to hitch the community's future to the wagon that is the PRW.**

- **BILL RICE, JR.**

## 'Spoiler Alert ...'

It's customary for many school boards to produce annual evaluations of superintendents. I don't know if the Pike Road BoE plans to perform (and publicize) such an evaluation of Dr. Freeman and Principal **Angela Lang**. In my opinion, it doesn't need to. The statement they belatedly emailed me cuts to the bottom line, and serves as a "spoiler" for any soon-to-be published evaluation.

"We couldn't be more satisfied with (Dr. Freeman) and an overwhelming majority of parents and the community who know what is really going on at the school as a whole agree. She has been a blessing to Pike Road School and all of our children ..."

Some school systems grade superintendents on a numeric scale of 1 being awful and 4 being outstanding. It's a superintendent's GPA really. Well, Dr. Freeman can look forward to a 4.0, or - if the board decides to use FreshGrade - a blue dot.

- **BILL RICE, JR.**

## Not impressed by first board meeting

On Wednesday, May 23rd I attended a meeting of The Pike Road Board of Education. This was the first board meeting since our series of articles were published on May 5th. Suffice it to say, I detected no level of concern over the many allegations and unflattering characterizations published in our early May edition. Needless to say, our reporting was not mentioned in any board discussion.

I add for the record that the board meeting was slated to begin at 6:30 a.m. From PRS website data, I learned that the school board meets twice a month on Mondays at 6:30 p.m. and twice a month on Wednesday's at 6:30 a.m.

The Wednesday morning board meeting I attended actually did not start at 6:30. It ended up starting at 6:55 in the morning because board member **Dr. Morgan Simpson** was late. When he finally arrived, he said he thought the meeting was that night.

- **By BILL RICE, JR.**

## Schlechty director chooses not to comment

Since a fair portion of the copy I've produced on Dr. Freeman and the "Pike Road Way" references the Schlechty Center (based in Louisville, Kentucky), I thought it appropriate to give the center's director, **George Thompson**, a chance to directly answer some of our questions.

It's my belief, after copious research, that ideas for transformational change espoused by the late **Phil Schlechty** have had a profound influence on the thinking of Dr. Suzanne Freeman. It is these ideas (my opinion) that birthed the "Pike Road Way."

A previous profile story on Dr. Freeman asked her to cite "the greatest influence on (your) professional career." Dr. Freeman replied, "Being a member of the BellSouth Superintendents Leadership Network with the Schlechty Center. George Thompson and Phil Schlechty have become true mentors to me."

I e-mailed Mr. Thompson a list of questions, seeking to learn how many Schlechty-events Dr. Freeman may have attended in her professional career (a question she refused to answer in my own interview with her). I asked Mr. Thompson several other questions, such as how much taxpayer money those attending Schlechty conferences and workshops have spent? He did not reply to my questions.

It's my opinion that the Schlechty Center has pocketed millions of dollars selling its version of "transformational education change."

- **By BILL RICE, JR.**

## Partial list of questions not answered to date by Superintendent Freeman

**Note:** We began asking many of these questions on May 2nd. At that time, Dr. Freeman asked for more time, citing the school's lean staff. We agreed this was appropriate. Weeks later when we had still not received any of these answers, we asked again (via email). Dr. Freeman replied by re-sending her earlier email asking for more time. She did add (on May 27th) that she has been very busy working on an important grant application.

1. How many parents have withdrawn their children from PRS? One parent, whose child will attend another school next year, told us she recently saw the folder holding withdrawal forms. "It was about an inch and a half thick," she said. Could someone not obtain the answer to this question by simply counting these forms?
2. How much taxpayer money was spent with The Schlechty Center this year for workshop fees and conference registration fees?
3. How many Schlechty-hosted events would you estimate you have attended in your career?
4. Is it true some students were viewing pornography on their Mac Books during class time? When did you learn this and what if anything was done about this?
5. Is it true that several PRS teachers taught grade levels and/or subject matter in which they did not hold the proper state certification?
6. As late as December, was the school not registered with the Department of Labor, preventing one terminated teacher from drawing unemployment benefits?
7. How much were you paid to be a consultant for Pike Road Schools prior to your being named superintendent? Did you also receive any expense allowances in this role?
8. How much has the school system paid the company that has provided the school the "FreshGrade" assessment software?
9. How much has the school system paid Appleton Employment service to screen and hire substitute teachers and paraprofessional teachers?
10. Why have you not provided us a copy of your employment contract (weeks after we requested the same)?
11. Why have you not provided a copy of the flier that allegedly shows that all of the education reforms implemented at PRW were clearly spelled out to parents prior to the start of the school year?

## Pike Road email contacts:

**Pike Road School email: [info@pikeroadschools.org](mailto:info@pikeroadschools.org)**  
(board members request that anyone seeking to contact them use this address).

**Board Chairman Ray Hawthorne, Jr.:**  
[ray@clevelandriddle.com](mailto:ray@clevelandriddle.com)

**Superintendent Suzanne Freeman:**  
[Suzanne.freeman@pikeroadschools.org](mailto:Suzanne.freeman@pikeroadschools.org)



Table of Unregulated Contaminants. Columns include Contaminant, Range, Average, MCL, and MCL. Rows include Chloride, Sodium, Total Dissolved Solids, Special Contaminants, pH, Total Hardness (as CaCO3), Unregulated Contaminants, Bromodibromobenzene, and Chloroform.

General Information

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. The Wall Street Water Authority is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components.

The sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and radioactive material, and it can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activities.

As you can see by the tables, our system had no monitoring violations of allowable limits of contaminants in drinking water. We're proud that your drinking water meets or exceeds all Federal and State requirements. We have learned through our monitoring and testing that some contaminants have been detected. The EPA has determined that your water is SAFE at these levels. MCL's are set at very stringent levels. To understand the possible health effects described for many regulated contaminants, a person would have to drink 2 liters of water every day at the MCL level for a lifetime to have a one-in-a-million chance of having the described health effect.

Total Coliform: The Total Coliform Rule requires water systems to meet a stricter limit for coliform bacteria. Coliform bacteria are usually harmless, but their presence in water can be an indication of disease-causing bacteria. When coliform bacteria are found, special follow-up tests are done to determine if harmful bacteria are present in the water supply.

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. People who are immunocompromised such as cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy, organ transplant recipients, HIV/AIDS positive or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections.

Tallahassee Water Works, from whom we purchase our water from was recognized by the Alabama Department of Environmental Management's Drinking Water Branch's Safe Drinking Water Program for reaching an optimized level of performance for the second year in a row that is beyond the minimum requirements established by the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

Thank you for allowing us to continue providing your family with clean, quality water this year. In order to maintain a safe and dependable water supply we sometimes need to make improvements that will benefit all of our customers. These improvements are sometimes reflected as rate structure adjustments. Thank you for understanding.

We at the Wall Street Water Authority work around the clock to provide top quality water to every tap. We ask that our customers help protect our water sources, which are the heart of our community, our way of life and our children's future. We ask that our customers help protect our water supply by reporting any manufacturing use of fire hydrants or repairing any water theft. We ask that you be conservative again this summer to avoid any mandatory restrictions on water use. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our customers who have reported water leaks to us on a timely manner, which helps to keep the cost of water down and also helps to keep a more stabilized rate structure.

For more information, contact:

Mr. Kenneth Young, Manager
Wall Street Water Authority
5029 Natusauga Road
Tallahassee, Alabama 32309
Telephone: 334-383-5902

Unregulated contaminants are those for which EPA has not established drinking water standards. The purpose of unregulated contaminant monitoring is to assist EPA in determining the occurrence of unregulated contaminants in drinking water and whether future regulation is warranted.

Table of Secondary Contaminants. Columns include Contaminant, Range, Average, MCL, and MCL. Rows include Aluminum, Chloride, Iron, Color, Foaming Agents, and Odor.

Table of Special Contaminants. Columns include Contaminant, Range, Average, MCL, and MCL. Rows include Calcium, Carbon Dioxide, Magnesium, pH, and Total Alkalinity.

Table of Unregulated Drinking Water Contaminants. Columns include Contaminant, Average, MCL, and Average. Rows include 1,1-Dichloroethene, Chloroethane, 1,1-Dichloroethane, Dioxin, 1,2,4-Trinitrobenzene, Hexachlorobenzene, 1,3,5-Trinitrobenzene, 1,3,5-Trinitrobenzene, Methylene, Aldicarb, Aldrin, Bromobenzene, Bromoform, Bromochloroethane, Butoxal, Carbaryl, Methidathion, N-Butylbenzene, Naphthalene, P-Chloroaniline, Para-Propylbenzene, and Perfluorooctane.

All drinking water, including bottled drinking water, may be reasonably expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. It's important to remember that the presence of these contaminants does not necessarily pose a health risk. The EPA or ADEM requires us to monitor for certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants do not change frequently.

The table below lists all of the drinking water contaminants that we detect.

Table of Detected Drinking Water Contaminants. Columns include Contaminant, MCL, MCLG, Range, Amount Detected, and Likely Source of Contamination. Rows include Bacteriological, Turbidity, Inorganic Contaminants, Nitrate (as N), Total Nitrate & Nitrite, Sulfide, Organic Contaminants, Total trihalomethanes (TTHM), Chlorine, Total Organic Carbon (TOC), Haloacetic Acids (HAA5), and Secondary Contaminants.

Table of Primary Drinking Water Contaminants. At high levels some primary contaminants are known to pose a health risks to humans. This table provides a quick glance of any primary contaminant detections.

Table of Primary Drinking Water Contaminants. Columns include Contaminant, MCL, Amount Detected, and Amount Detected. Rows include Bacteriological, Total Coliform Bacteria, Turbidity (NTU), Fecal Coliform & E. coli, Radiological, Beta particle and photon (mrem/yr), Gross Alpha particle (pCi/L), Combined radium 226 & 228 (pCi/L), Tritium (pCi/L), Strontium 90 (pCi/L), Uranium (ppb), Inorganic, Antimony (ppb), Arsenic (ppb), Asbestos (MFL), Barium (ppm), Beryllium (ppb), Cadmium (ppb), Chromium (ppb), Copper (ppm), Cyanide (ppb), Fluoride (ppm), Lead (ppb), Mercury (ppb), Nickel (ppb), Nitrate (as N)(ppm), Nitrite (as N)(ppm), Total Nitrate/Nitrite (ppm), Selenium (ppb), Sulfate (ppm), Tallowin (ppb), Organics (Chlorinated), 2,4-D (ppb), 2,4,5-TP (Sigma) (ppb), Acrylamide (ppm), Atrazine (ppb), Benz(a)pyrene(PHAs) (ppb), Carbofuran (ppb), Chloranes (ppb), Dieldrin (ppb), Di(2-ethylhexyl)sebacate (ppb), Di(2-ethylhexyl)phthalates (ppb), Dioxin(2,3,7,8-TCDD) (ppb), and Haloacetic Acids (HAA5)(ppb).

Annual Drinking Water Quality Report. Wall Street Water Authority. January-December 2015.

Is my water safe? Last year, as in years past, your tap water and all U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) drinking water health standards. Your local water officials vigilantly safeguard its water supplies and one again we are proud to report that our system has not violated a maximum contaminant level or any other water quality standards. We're pleased to present to you this year's Annual Drinking Water Quality Report. This report is designed to inform you about the quality water and services we deliver to you every day. Our constant goal is to provide you with a safe and dependable supply of drinking water. We want you to understand the efforts we make to continually improve the water treatment process and protect our water resources. We are committed to ensuring the quality of your water. Our water source is purchased from the City of Tallahassee, which is treated surface water from Lake Thurloow on the Tallapoosa River. We have storage capacity of 1,100,000 gallons in 3 storage tanks, 4 booster-pumping stations and 156 flush bywells. The water we provide to our customers requires specialized treatment. The City of Tallahassee adds Chlorine Dioxide to the disinfection process. Chlorine Dioxide is utilized as disinfectant for taste and odor control, disinfection byproduct reduction and iron and manganese control. Chlorine is added to the water as disinfectant and the required residual is maintained to protect your drinking water from any possible outside contaminants.

The Wall Street Water Authority routinely completes a water storage facility inspection plan, and utilizes a Bacteriological Monitoring Plan and a Cross Connection Policy is in place to insure good safe drinking water for our customers. The City of Tallahassee has completed a Source Water Assessment Plan, which is available at their office for review. This report provides information about potential sources of contamination and is set up to help protect our source.

We want our valued customers to be informed about their water utility. If you want to learn more, please attend any of our regularly scheduled Board meetings. They are held on the 2nd Monday of the month at the Wall Street Water Authority office that is located at 5029 Natusauga Road and began at 6:00 p.m.

The members of the Board of Directors are: Wilbur Terrell, Chairman, Steve East, Vice Chairman, Alfred Golden, Secretary, Wilbur Berry, Treasurer, William Rogers Welch

Important Drinking Water Definitions:

Action Level (AL) - The concentration of a contaminant that triggers treatment or other requirements that a water system shall follow.

Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) - The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG) - The level of a disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL) - The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG) - The level of a disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.

Milligrams per year (mrem/yr) - Measure of radiation absorbed by the body.

Nephelometric Turbidity Unit (NTU) - Nephelometric turbidity unit is a measure of the clarity of water. Turbidity in excess of 5 NTU is just noticeable to the average person.

Non-Detects (ND) - Laboratory analysis indicates that the constituent is not present.

Pure per million (ppm) or Milligrams per liter (mg/L) - One part per million corresponds to one molecule in two billion or a single penny in \$10,000.

Pure per billion (ppb) or Micrograms per liter (ug/L) - One part per billion corresponds to one molecule in 2,000,000,000 or a single penny in \$10,000,000,000.

Pure per quadrillion (ppq) or Picograms per liter (pg/L) - One part per quadrillion corresponds to one molecule in 2,000,000,000,000 or a single penny in \$10,000,000,000,000.

Resonance per liter (pCi/L) - Picocuries per liter is a measure of the radioactivity in water.

Treatment Technique (TT) - A required process utilized to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

Threshold Odor Number (TON) - The greatest dilution of a sample with odor-free water that still yields a just-detectable odor.

Variations & Exceptions - ADEM or EPA permission not to meet an MCL or a treatment technique under certain conditions.

Explanation of reasons for variance/exceptions

Based on a study conducted by ADEM with the approval of the EPA a statewide waiver for the monitoring of asbestos and dioxin was issued. Thus monitoring for these contaminants was not required.

The City of Tallahassee and Wall Street Water Authority routinely monitors for contaminants in your drinking water according to Federal and State laws. Unless otherwise noted, the data presented in the following tables show the results of our monitoring period of January 1st to December 31st, 2015.