

God Bless the USA

JULY 4, 1776

Remembrance & Celebration



The Preamble To The United States Constitution
We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.




The signing of the Constitution of the United States.

In the United States, Independence Day, commonly known as the Fourth of July or the Fourth, is a holiday commemorating the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, declaring the independence of the Thirteen Colonies from the United Kingdom of Great Britain. On Independence Day there are many events such as fireworks, parades, barbecues, carnivals, picnics, concerts, baseball games, political speeches and ceremonies, and various other public and private events. These events celebrate the history, government, and traditions of the United States.

Independence Day, the only holiday that celebrates the United States, is a national holiday marked by patriotic displays. Similar to other summer-themed events, Independence Day celebrations often take place outdoors. Independence Day is a federal holiday, so all non-essential federal institutions (like the postal service and federal courts) are closed on that day. Many politicians make it a point on this day to appear at a public event to praise the nation's heritage, laws, history, society, and people.

Wikipedia



"The Star-Spangled Banner" is the national anthem of the United States. The lyrics come from the "Defence of Fort M'Henry", a poem written on September 14, 1814, by 35-year-old lawyer and amateur poet Francis Scott Key after witnessing the bombardment of Fort McHenry by British ships of the Royal Navy in Outer Baltimore Harbor in the Patapsco River during the Battle of Baltimore in the War of 1812...

Original lyrics of
"The Star-Spangled Banner"
are as follows:

O! say can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watch'd, were so gallantly streaming?
And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there -
O! say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave?

On the shore, dimly seen through the mists of the deep,
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze o'er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected now shines on the stream -
'Tis the star-spangled banner, O! long may it wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion
A home and a country should leave us no more?
Their blood has wash'd out their foul foot-steps' pollution,
No refuge could save the hireling and slave,
From the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave;
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.

O! thus be it ever when freemen shall stand
Between their lov'd home, and the war's desolation,
Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the heav'n-rescued land
Praise the power that hath made and preserv'd us a nation!
Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,
And this be our motto - 'In God is our trust!'
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.




JULY 2023

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July 4th - National BBQ Day



What did the people of the newly formed United States eat while celebrating the Fourth of July? Did they just decide to eat something different from their usual menu? When and where did the idea of a menu just for the Four of July start? Legend has it that on July 4, 1776, John Adams and his wife celebrated the country's independence with a meal of turtle soup, poached salmon with an egg sauce, green peas, boiled potatoes, and a desert of Indian pudding or apple Pandowdy. Turtle soup was a very popular summertime meal back then. A far cry from the usual meal associated with the holiday now.



Inside the StateHouse

With Steve Flowers

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



The Alabama Community College System

Sometimes overlooked and often unsung, Alabama’s community and technical colleges are on a roll. It is time they get the recognition they deserve as workhorses for the state’s economy.

There are 24 community and technical colleges in the state, located on 50 different campuses with over 130 service locations. This means every Alabamian reading these words is close to incredible education and training opportunities.

The colleges offer over 300 degrees and certifications, and award more than 30,000 credentials each year that show employers these students are serious about working.

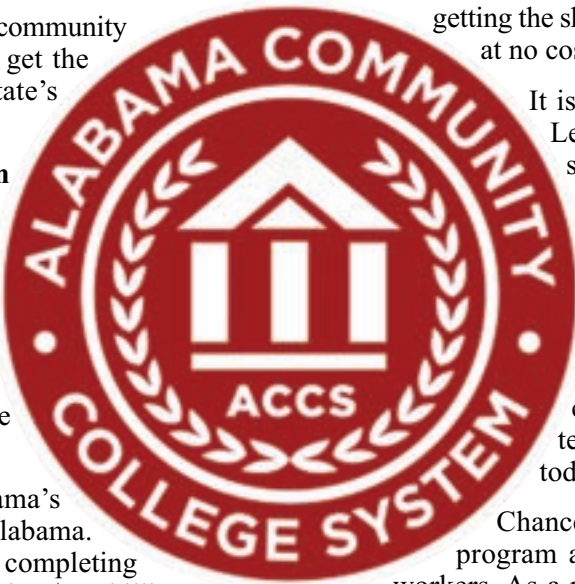
More than 155,000 students are served by Alabama’s community colleges, and 95% of students live in Alabama. What is more, 71% choose to stay in Alabama after completing their studies. These students and alumni add an amazing \$6.6 billion to Alabama’s economy each year, according to a report from Lightcast, a national firm that analyzes labor markets. Nearly 99,000 jobs in Alabama are generated or supported by Alabama’s community colleges, their students and alumni. To put it another way, that is one of every 27 jobs in the state.

Under the leadership of Chancellor Jimmy Baker, who took the helm of the Alabama Community College System (ACCS) in 2017, innovative and transformational programs are in place that “*build strong Alabama people who are willing to work and do what it takes to move the state forward,*” as Baker puts it.

Among the most impressive is the Innovation Center, a division of the ACCS that brings together the state’s community colleges, businesses and industries. These partners deliver Skills for Success training for careers that employers say are most in demand but lack qualified Alabama workers to fill.

By working together with Alabama businesses and industries, the ACCS Innovation Center ensures Skills for Success training is perfectly aligned with the jobs that employers say they need to fill right away.

Since its launch, a little more than a year ago, more than 2,700 Alabamians have benefitted from Skills for Success training. The appeal to trainees – other than



getting the skills needed for an in-demand job – is the training is offered at no cost to them.

It is free to trainees thanks to appropriations from the State Legislature and support from Gov. Kay Ivey, who has put a strong emphasis on workforce training. The Governor’s Success Plus initiative aims to add 500,000 Alabamians with postsecondary credentials to the state’s workforce by 2025. Rapid training from our community colleges will be key to reaching this important goal.

It is incredible to think that every Alabamian has the opportunity to receive no-cost training and become credentialed for jobs as bulldozer operators, fiber optic technicians, truck drivers and more, but that is the reality of today’s community college system in our state.

Chancellor Baker has wisely built a workforce training program around the skills that employers say they need in their workers. As a result, many students can walk right out of training and immediately into jobs that are waiting for someone with their exact skillset. The training is essentially “*customized*” for Alabama employers in desperate need of workers.

What is also innovative is how quickly Skills for Success training can be delivered. Part of each training course is offered online, with self-paced learning that can take place anywhere one can connect to the internet. Some have said they have completed the online training from their mobile phones over a few hours in the evening. When a trainee completes the online portion of the course, they then get hands-on training with qualified instructors at a nearby community college or some other regional location.

The average Skills for Success course can be completed in as little as two or three weeks. Any Alabamian can sign up for no-cost training and in less than a month have a community college credential that shows employers they have the skills and qualifications to do the job. With Skills for Success training, they are “job-ready” on day one for jobs that are in high demand throughout the state thanks to the forward-thinking leaders of the Alabama Community College System and the State Legislature.

June 14, 2023

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



The Legacy of Adam Smith



JUSTICE WILL SELLERS

Adam Smith, the anchor of that group of inquisitive Scotsmen who spawned the Scottish Enlightenment and significantly changed the world, was born 300 years ago this month.

The era of his birth was still primarily agrarian with superstition superseding science. He would alter this status by observing his community, pursuing the life of a scholar, and questioning his experiences in the world around him. And..... he wrote his thoughts down.

Scotland was ready to nurture the likes of Smith. With an expanding middle class, his community was beginning to prosper and grow. Smith would want for little and had the resources to think about his world and consider both the nature of man and the means to achieve a happy existence.

The foundation for his community was based in many respects on the political, social, and legal framework that originated in the Magna Carta. Indeed, the structure established by Magna Carta produced several results that were the basis for a portion of Smith’s theories about wealth and prosperity.

Smith was never content to accept the world as he found it. He asked probing questions and considered thoroughly the looming issues of his day. He was a practical academic who would pay close attention to the world around him. He noticed what worked, what failed, and what made people successful.

Initially, his observations were contained in academic lectures which Smith, a prolific writer, eventually turned into books that are still in print and studied today.

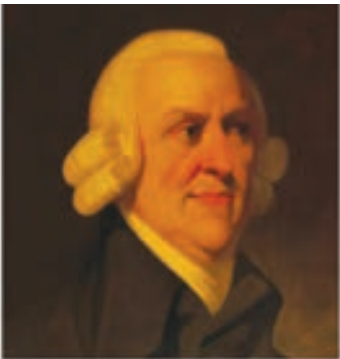
His first major work was “A Theory of Moral Sentiments,” which was Smith’s attempt to understand and explain human nature. He theorized how people could lead a balanced life between unbridled self-interest within the constraints of self-control but with sympathy and compassion for others. From a view of how individuals lived in community and how they behaved together, Smith realized that certain principles emerged that created a prosperous environment and happy citizenry.

From these observations came the book for which Smith is most famous: “An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations,” or “Wealth of Nations,” for short. From its publication even until today, the book is quoted, misquoted, and used to justify any number of ideas - both good and bad. Indeed, the problem with writing a philosophical book that is more than 1,000 pages is that there is something for everyone to embrace or reject. And, when read in conjunction with Smith’s other works, like any inquisitive scholar, his “Wealth of Nations,” when taken out of context, appears inconsistent.

Smith was not necessarily an original thinker but had the presence of mind to write down his thoughts. Others might have introduced the idea, but Smith teased our various concepts and risked his reputation by exposing his musings for critique and inquiry.

“Wealth of Nations” made numerous observations about the commercial world and posed explanations of prosperity. Smith noticed it made little sense for people to be jacks of all trades and observed that individuals had different skills sets that made them better at some things than others. He posited that once labor was divided into specialized tasks, products were more efficiently produced, prices were lower, and prosperity seemed to abound. His work then encouraged specialization so that industry could produce goods more efficiently.

Another observation was the importance of self-interest. Smith detected that the reason people worked hard was to promote their own well-being. This pursuit of selfish aims not only benefited the self-seeker, but also created a



**“Are you in earnest
resolved never to barter
your liberty for the lordly
servitude of a court,
but to live free, fearless,
and independent?”**

Adam Smith (The Theory of Moral Sentiments)

commercial environment prospering the entire society. He saw trade not as delivering a mere service, or a zero-sum game, but as workers collectively seeking to improve their financial status such that they worked harder to sell more products, which worked to lower prices for consumers.

He further reasoned that for a nation to prosper, government should allow as much freedom as possible so that individuals can pursue their self-interest. Smith was concerned that the restraints on industry be it by regulation or taxation could reduce productivity. This was a real concern in his day as guilds might restrict by license who could produce what goods at what price. Guilds served to stymie innovation and productivity that occurs when laborers, motivated by profit, develop more efficient means to produce more goods.

Smith also saw that taxation from government created disincentives to work hard. If people were taxed too much and lost their hard-earned profits, they would have no reason to find new ways of production and expand their business.

So, when Smith looked at Scotland and noticed the prosperity, he reasoned that commercial success from individual employment to business owners was almost magically motivated. He theorized that an invisible hand rewarded a society that had the most freedoms to allow business to sell and consumers to buy with few limitations to restrain open and free markets.

Another, equally critical part of prosperity was having a stable, reliable, and consistent system of justice. Unlike other countries, Scotland had just this. Magna Carta had planted seeds that established legal structures to create economic dynamism in one instance by limiting any infringement on the “ancient liberties and free customs” that allowed trade to flow in and out of London. It further sought to reduce restrictions of the use of waterways to transport goods among cities. Free trade was also supported by requiring a consistent system of weights and measures throughout the land.

Adam Smith’s genius was to look around and see why his country was prosperous and speculate on the root causes of economic success. “Wealth of Nations” was not a guide to prosperity, but, rather, it was an observation that if a country, state, or community wants to achieve commercial success, there are obvious means to accomplish it.

When grounded in a government that supports specialization and free movement of labor, limits regulation, restrictions, and taxation, and fosters a reliable legal system, a magic, invisible hand almost spontaneously creates commercial success.

No wonder his legacy is still debated.

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ROBSERVATIONS...

By: Rob Tate

WHAT’S IN A NAME?!

Four years ago, I wrote the first part of this Robservation. It doesn’t seem that long ago but it was. Not surprisingly, things have not even come close to changing. You might even say that things under the new administration are far worse. Why? Because they are. But I felt compelled to reiterate the first part of this and to add a couple of more items.

The lie is still in force and like the Wizard of Oz, the alphabet networks are hellbent on not letting us look at the man behind the curtain. Here we go!

THE LIE

According to a 19th century legend, the Truth and the Lie met one sunny summer day. The Lie told the Truth, “*It surely is a very beautiful day today, is it not?*”

Truth looked around suspiciously and raised her eyes to heaven for the day was indeed really beautiful. “Indeed, it is,” she said. So, the two spent all day playing together until they happened upon a swimming hole. The Lie said, “Hey, Truth, it is so hot right now and the water appears to be very nice, let’s go swimming together!”

Truth, always suspicious of the Lie, tested the water with her toes. The water was deliciously refreshing, she agreed and the two quickly undressed and started swimming.

Suddenly the devious Lie rushed from the water, put on Truth’s clothes and scurried away. Furious at the Lie’s deception, Truth emerged from the water in order to expose the Lie and recover her own clothes. The world, ever watching however, seeing the Truth naked and uncovered turned its eyes with contempt, fear, horror and rage.

Truth, abandoned and dishonored, returned to the swimming hole and disappeared forever while hiding in her shame. Only occasionally does she make herself known but only to be quickly driven back into the depths of darkness.

Since that fateful day, the Lie has traveled the world over dressed as the Truth while satisfying the needs of deceived societies and a decadent world that does not want to see nor acknowledge the naked Truth.

Jean-Léon Gérôme, 1896.

August 20, 2018, snowflake and fascist ANTIFA types knocked down the Silent Sam statue on the UNC Chapel Hill campus. I am not here to defend Silent Sam or definitely not the guy who erected the statue, but anarchy is not my gig. When reading about this and other such statues being destroyed or taken down, I came across the biography of a truly evil guy but I cannot understand why people are not clamoring for his statue to be removed from a college campus. This guy was born way back in 1649 and served in several business capacities until his death in 1721.

Records show that this man participated in and profited greatly from a flourishing slave trade. In other words, he was not just a slave owner but a slave trader. The worst of the worst. For example, in today’s world he wouldn’t be the Crackhead but the guy who supplies Crack to little kids. He wouldn’t just lust over child pornography, but he would have made it and participated in it. This is the kind of guy he was. He also enforced a law that at least ten slaves should be carried on every ship bound for Europe. In his capacity as judge, he also on several occasions sentenced so-called “black criminals” to whipping and enslavement. When the demand for slaves began to increase rapidly, to keep up with growing demands, he and other English merchants apparently even began to kidnap young children and deport them to distant parts of the world, very much against their will.

In addition to being a slave trader, kidnapper and all-around dirt bag, he was eventually fired in 1692 for his illegal profiteering in a myriad of business dealings. Nice guy, huh? Yet his statue remains prominently on the college campus that bears his name, Yale University.

Yeah, you heard it right. **Elihu Yale.** I find it amazing how so many people, especially those from the north, hate and denigrate all things southern and feel it acceptable and their right to destroy historical monuments down here while keeping their monuments to horrific people intact and relevant school names in place. Before we allow any more destruction and social social re-engineering here, let’s all flood New Haven, Connecticut, rip down the statue of a ghastly man while forcing an acceptable name change. If it works for a Robert E. Lee high school, it should work equally well at Yale University.

Yup the Lie is forever “at it.”



Elihu Yale pictured with slave child. Note: The locked collar on child’s neck. c. 1708

Let’s flash forward four years and see what the lie is up to now.

- 1. George Washington University 2022:** Ridiculousness at its best. One would think that after several years of this nonsensical push to remove all things American from within America, this foolishness would stop. But at the same time, why would anyone be so naïve as to think this? When there is never any legitimate pushback or standing up for oneself, the wannabe ruling class of socialists are going to keep pushing. Why wouldn’t they?
- Recently, there was an Op Ed piece in the Washington Post that called for George Washington University to change its name because of course, George Washington owned slaves, was a bad man, blah, blah, blah. The way I look at it. It is time to tell people to simply shut up and move on. The most disturbing part of this article, and the irony should not be lost on anybody but here is a hint, “The Washington Post.” Am I the only one here seeing this?
- 2. Running up against a 2024 deadline, there will be a total of 9 US Army installations that will be forced to change their names.** The most notable is arguably Fort Bragg which is now Fort Liberty and Fort Lee which became Fort Gregg-Adams. Of course, the narrative on many news sites about Fort Lee is that it was named after the “slave-holding leader of the Confederate forces during the Civil War.” At least one institution said no to the woke crowd, Washington and Lee University, and kept its centuries old name intact. Where is Elihu Yale when you need him?
- 3. Since 2020, at least 82 schools have changed their names of their “racist” namesakes.** An addition of three will be from here in Montgomery; Jeff Davis, Robert E. Lee, and Sidney Lanier. (<https://www.cnn.com/2022/09/05/us/confederate-named-schools-update-reaj/index.html>) So, exactly where does it end? Who knows.

People who know me know that I love history. The good and the bad. Like the saying goes, history is not for me to throw away but to learn from. Too many people want to throw it away and insert their own version of history. I just finished reading the book, **1984** for the first time since high school. The removal of all thing’s history was central to the story. We see that today. Slavery was bad, no doubt. But what about Black slave owners? What about Blacks that kidnapped and sold other Blacks to the slave traders? What about the many Native American tribes that had and often abused Black and White slaves? “Hey, Rob. We can’t talk about that.”

My point is simply this. The whole goose and gander thing. If we are going to denigrate one area of history, we must denigrate all of it covering the same topic. Sorry. The whole Robert E. Lee – bad; Elihu Yale – good, argument is ridiculous. We have young people in this country who praise the likes of Che’ Guevera, Stalin, Lenin and Marx while hating on the American founders. They extol communism and socialism while hating democracy and capitalism. This is why it is so dangerous to erase your history and selectively place propagandist history in its place. Sometimes, it may even begin with something small like the removal of a statue or a name.

Be careful what you ask for!




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2 Chronicles 7:14

14 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.

King James Version



Ronald A. Holtsford

After each census (last census in 2020), each state reconsiders its Federal Congressional voting districts. Alabama, by population has seven districts which will not change in at least the near future. Alabama at one time had as many as ten districts. The Voting Rights Act §2 was the focus of a Congressional bipartisan compromise wherein an effects test resulted but on the same hand it was determined that such section did not guarantee population proportional representation. Nineteen ninety-two litigation changed the Alabama map to where the districts were divided having one predominately African American district found in west Alabama and that currently meanders into the city of Montgomery and the city of Birmingham. The city of Montgomery is therefore split into two districts which to me I find strange. For the most part it divides the west part of the city which has been during my residence here since 1978 predominately African American and the east being predominately Caucasian; the east being a part of Barry Moore’s, District 2 and the west part of Terry Sewell’s, District 7.

To look at earlier voting maps from many years past seem to me to be more rational. But to meet the constraints of the Voting Rights Act, et seq. from the 1960’s, the map now meanders along political and thus mostly racial lines. Meandering voting lines are reminiscent of gerrymandering. Gerrymandering is a term invented in the early 1800’s to describe voting lines supported by the then Boston mayor later to become a U.S. vice president. In the 1800’s it was more difficult to create “gerrymandered” voting maps but much easier now with computers that can input needed data and use algorithms that produce about as many variable maps as you would like. Gerrymandering can consist of cracking, packing, hijacking and kidnapping. Cracking is redrawing lines so that the other party cannot get a majority where packing is drawing the lines around a predominant area. I can’t help but see gerrymandered lines when looking at District 7 but folks a lot smarter than me came up with the map. Hijacking is redrawing lines where two incumbents exist and one will have to go. Kidnapping is redrawing lines to exclude the address of the incumbent to force him or her out.

Following the 2010 census, a single predominately African American district still existed and has since the 2020 census. A new map was drawn after the 2020 census which looked substantially like the 2011 map. It was adopted by the legislature as HB 1. The case at hand deals with an argument that a second mostly African American district should exist through new redistricting. The 5-4 Supreme Court majority supports the original three plaintiff cases in favor of a second predominant African American district. Two of the cases were merged and the third was a parallel in Federal District Court. The case was heard by the United States Supreme Court in October 2022 but a decision was not released until June 2023.

The Supreme Court held, “(a) The District Court faithfully applied this Court’s precedents in concluding that HB1 likely violates §2.”

WHAT IS THE RECENT U.S. SUPREME COURT CASE REGARDING ALABAMA CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS?



“(b) The Court declines to remake its §2 jurisprudence in line with Alabama’s “race-neutral benchmark” theory.”

“(c) To apply its race-neutral benchmark in practice, Alabama would require plaintiffs to make at least three showings. First, Alabama would require §2 plaintiffs to show that the illustrative maps adduced for the first Gingles precondition are not based on race. Alabama would next graft onto §2 a requirement that plaintiffs demonstrate, at the totality of circumstances stage, that the State’s enacted plan contains fewer majority-minority districts than what an “average” race-neutral plan would contain. And finally, Alabama would have plaintiffs prove that any deviation between the State’s plan and a race-neutral plan is explainable “only” by race. The Court declines to adopt any of these novel requirements.”

“(d) The Court disagrees with Alabama’s assertions that the Court should stop applying §2 in cases like these because the text of §2 does not apply to single-member redistricting and because §2 is unconstitutional as the District Court applied it here. Alabama’s understanding of §2 would require abandoning four decades of the Court’s §2 precedents.”

Interestingly enough, Justice Clarence Thomas was a part of a dissenting opinion. He said, “The question presented is whether §2 of the Act, as amended, requires the State of Alabama to intentionally redraw its longstanding congressional districts so that black voters can control a number of seats roughly proportional to the black share of the State’s population. Section 2 demands no such thing, and, if it did, the Constitution would not permit it.” He further wrote, “Again, the maps’ key design features are:

(1) making District 2 majority-black by connecting black residents in one metropolitan area (Montgomery) with parts of the rural Black Belt and black residents in another metropolitan area (Mobile); (2) leaving enough of the Black Belt’s majority-black rural areas for District 7 to maintain its majority-black status; and (3) reducing District 1 to the white remainder of the southern third of the State. If the State did this, we would call it a racial gerrymander, and rightly so. We would have no difficulty recognizing race as “the predominant factor motivating [the placement of] significant number[s] of voters within or without” Districts 1, 2, and 7.”

Justice Thomas looked at the percentage of African American Alabamians to Caucasian Alabamians. The ratio is less than 2/7. For the reasons above Justice Thomas dissented and was joined in dissent by three other justices.

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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John W. Giles

What does Joseph Stalin (Soviet Union), Adolf Hitler (Nazi), Mao Tse-tung (Communist Chinese Marxist) and Joe Biden have in common? They all have their opposition arrested, grossly abusing the power of government for political purposes. Trump’s record as President, earned him the respect and unbreakable loyalty among the masses. He has become a global threat on so many fronts to enumerate, why is this?

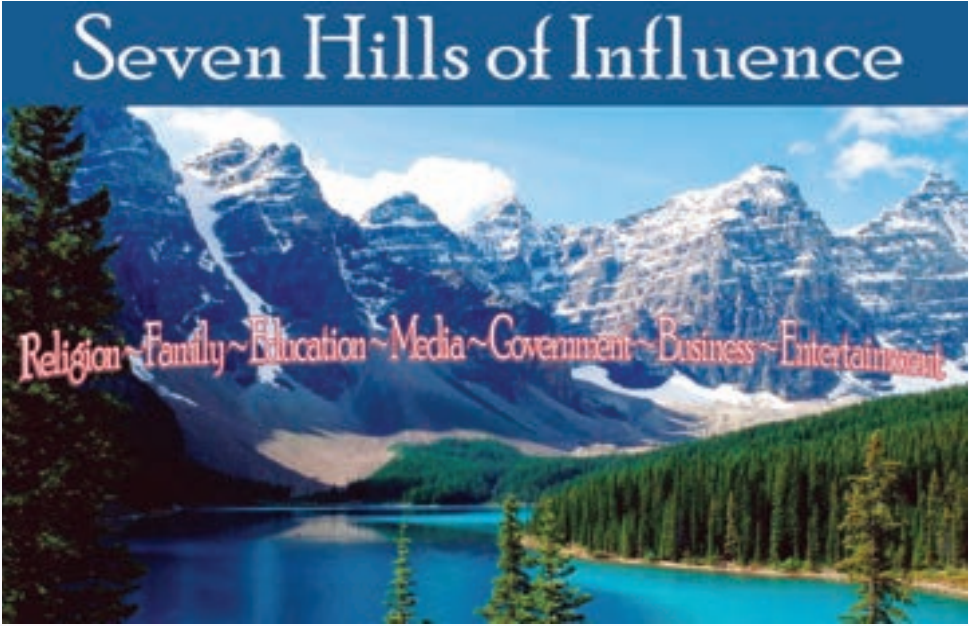
President Trump, at every turn was stumbling across sacred cash cows, discovering corruption and kicking over ant hills exposing the internal and external enemies of our great Republic. The raging battle for the heart and soul of America is now at a pinnacle, we must all enlist as “Change Agents,” what does this look like?

For decades, protégé’s of Marxist – Leninist communist ideology, espouse they can conquer America, without firing the first shot, it is true. Their strategy is to infiltrate, infect, redefine, alter missions and cause division inside the Seven Hills of Influence, setting the stage for civil war to destroy us from within. These Seven Hills include religion, family, education, media, government, business (trade unions), and arts (entertainment). Actually, it is a brilliant approach, implosion is happening now on every hill at an exponential rate in America.

We are facing some of the most devious, grotesque, satin filled, organized, deeply structured, well-financed criminal minds feverishly deploying multi-layered assaults inside the USA. While clenching the reins of power, these scheming corrupt minds have mainlined the “Art of War” designed by the heartless Communist Chinese War General, Sun Tzu from the 7th century. In a war room style setting, these criminal operatives with no soul, go to the blackboard, drawing up a war schematic with tentacles emulating the wiring harness of the space shuttle. There will not be one trace of DNA, fingerprints or a money trail. They are masters of deception. With unlimited resources, they assign trojan horse B-52’s style carpet bombing on the Seven Hills of Influence.

If you are still reading this article, it can be concluded you are in the regiment of the well-informed engaged to save our country. I am not certain one has the ability to adequately communicate in one article the gravity of peril facing our free society. On the heels of the last six years of unleashing hell on this country, the yoke in the cockpit is pinned to the dashboard, full throttle with the crash site racing to us in plain view. It is my heart-felt desire to articulate where we are and how to save this once, great nation. Good news, it is never too late for the redeeming hand of God. He can tip the scales, but we are accountable with

Battle for America ~ Fought on Seven Hills



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all of this on our watch.

While most are sleeping, talking about the next “X-Factor, The Voice or Dancing with the Stars,” the highly motivated left are on their battle stations, executing the deliberate shredding of the fabric of this country. Always remember, the Communist Chinese Party goal is to be the dominate world economic power. America has to fail to accomplish this by engaging internal actors of treason eroding all Seven

Hills. Most of these actors belong to the Democrat Party, but some, sadly to say are unprincipled Republicans.

Our country is in FPCON Delta, the highest level of threat. Every man, woman and child were engaged during WWII as we fought in the European and Pacific theaters at the same time. My mother was a Bell telephone operator and enlisted in the Marine Corp at the beckon call of her nation in distress. If you are not currently engaged in an assignment to retake our nation, your silence is not only viewed as an endorsement, but adversarial notions will prevail taking on real estate with no visible opposition. A Change Agent has their finger in the dyke, while a Conformist runs for cover. The human body has been divinely created with adrenal glands, producing the natural chemical Adrenaline, which triggers the flight or fight reactions. If you are ready to saddle up, take your battle station, here is your assignment.

Pick one of the hills: religion, family, education, media, government, business (trade unions) or the arts(entertainment). You will not have to look very far to see the erosion. Follow your passion, prioritize so you are not diluted, stay focused on one goal. Become an expert, read everything you can on the topic taking a conservative realignment approach. Don’t reinvent the wheel, join forces with others to strengthen the fire-wall. Ping the tuning fork to set the pitch, find the plumb bob mark for reset and do not move until you have centered the bubble on the level. Be like Nehemiah, he was unshakable, unrelenting at building the wall with one hand and fighting with the other. Those behind us are depending that we preserve the blessings of liberty to our posterity. Liberty comes with a high cost to Obtain, but even more so to maintain.

Pick your hill, select your battle field, roll up your sleeves and go to work to save your country. Together we can move the needle into the abyss, just ask Target and Bud Light.

God, please continue to show mercy and save these great United States of America.

RELIGION

FAMILY

GOVERNMENT

PICK
YOUR
HILL!

ENTERTAINMENT

MEDIA

BUSINESS



John Sophocleus

Applauding SCotUS...with Caveats



Allen v. Milligan



THINK

On June 8, 2023 SCotUS affirmed the federal District Court [Allen v. Milligan] finding Alabama’s Congressional map likely violated the Voting Rights Act. I applaud this inferior decision, polluted by a century of unconstitutional mappings... driven by the arbitrary 435 limit concentrating power to HoR members. Sadly, SCotUS shows little resolve to follow the Constitution and make our House representative again, so I submit strong caveats on how to proceed with elections after redistricting for a second ‘majority minority’ US House District.

Some readers will recall many warnings I’ve provided these past decades on ‘cascading’ problems driven by not adhering to Constitutional representation rules, from a dysfunctional Electoral College to promoting dis-crimination/hyper-gerrymandering. The May 2022 Alabama Gazette column entitled, “Discrimination via Poor Representation” explained the clause [Art. 1, Sec. 2] designed to guarantee our **representative republic** of States. I’m weary from efforts to educate those who proudly display their ignorance asserting democracy - a word which can NOT be found in our US Constitution.

Observation of how far we’ve ‘progressed’ since the 435 limit was imposed (1929) by DC oligarchs speaks for itself as we evolve further away from the one representative for every 30,000 (round-up) rule well argued at the Constitutional convention. As population increased this past century, we now have one representative for about 800,000. Well over a 25 fold reduction in real representation concentrating power to a more insulated, corrupt DC politburo that’s behaving exactly as the founders cautioned... if citizens were foolish enough to allow. 1929 was highly influenced by ‘Progressive Era’ national socialist types, successfully redefining the lost cause of fighting for independence and sovereignty to championing hegemony and white supremacy. A very effective way to block non-progressives/decentralists from Congress, this dissolution of our representative republic aided and abetted the desired result with hyper-gerrymandering, excessively restrictive ballot access laws and a rigged system to install big gov’t [traditional] conservatives and [modern] liberals to establish our command economy.

Many forecasted Alabama losing a US House seat in the 2020 census. Federal judges planned to use reduction to six seats as an excuse to avoid ‘doing right’ where one House member would be 17% (1/6) of the population instead of the 14% (1/7) result. Somehow 17% would magically better match Alabama’s 27% Black population than **14%** in the minds of federal jurist who are either ignorant or unwilling to abolish the unconstitutional 435 limit results and attenuate concentration of power to DC oligarchs. When one less congressperson didn’t come to fruition and this lame ‘get out of ruling free’ card didn’t evolve, the Allen v. Milligan ruling became much more likely and shamelessly continues the unrepresentative 435 sham.

Allen v. Milligan further illustrates it is long overdue for legislators and judges to restore **ALL** voters’ rights and allow more representation and candidates as designed by our wise founding fathers. Let’s move toward the designed representative ‘diverse’ result, incrementally increasing (it took us over four score sail this far off course) to about 140 Alabama members in the US House and become what our Constitution designed/envisioned. Don’t care what judges and current politburo members say the number should be... Washington weighed in when delegates suggested lowering the threshold down to one for 20,000 population. Some States did not yet have enough

population for the 30,000 rule in the 1780s. This moved delegates to include text that each State (as the Sovereign unit) must have at least one representative, causing the un-constitutional 3 Elector State tallies in presidential elections today under the 435 abomination. Until one exhibits the fortitude, visionary wisdom, integrity and intelligence of George Washington, I’m unwilling to consider **any** unconstitutional number submitted.

Imagine how much ‘un-mined’ intelligence, talent and **less** biased, competitive thought buried by our incompetent (at best) judicial decisions these past several score when contemplating future elections, hopefully mapping more representative/less gerrymandered districts under this absurd static, unconstitutional seven district result. Congressperson Terri Sewell has been most discussed. Her disregard for civil rights (esp. for wrongful taking from Black landowners and others unable to defend themselves) is exactly what DC oligarchs want installed into their packed, unrepresentative, hyper-gerrymandered districts. Under constitutional (one for 30,000) districting it is less likely the politburo could draw a mapping result to install her.

Reduction from 1/7 to 1/140 power would correctly dilute Ms. Sewell’s rhetoric (along with other AOC, MTG, et al extremists) where she would require others in the Alabama delegation to gain support/traction for consideration of proposed legislation. Remember a Constitutionally correct HoR wouldn’t pass much federal legislation - reduced to issues more representative of the people. My Congressperson is similarly installed, thankfully he’s too incompetent/lazy to get much accomplished. There was a brief moment it appeared he found a spine donor, speaking out against big govt. Democrat Trump (currently a corporate welfare queen in the Red jersey) but when pandering to the duped was more expedient... that fleeting moment of bravery quickly expired.

Presidential and congressional elections all the way down to county commission and city council districts exhibit this growing discrimination via poor representation results from flawed districting. Efforts to restore representation are finding the usual ‘alphabet soup’ of resistance [ACCA, BCA, et al] to continue on the path of more concentrated political power as these political parasites strive to keep their political theft churning. The hyper-gerrymandered mapping that install Terri Sewell caliber politburo members is about to be tested a little. If the duopoly offers such flawed candidates in the general election, it is more likely a big govt. conservative (i.e., Republican) may win to redistribute more to the red parasites at a time when blue parasites are getting relatively less of productive citizens’ wealth.

In closing, there were seven non-duopoly US Congress candidates in the 2022 election cycle now determined improperly districted. It seems prudent to allow other candidates access to the ‘more perfect’ districts in the 2024 election without having to overcome Alabama’s wildly anti-competitive ballot access laws yet again. Unlikely our politburo, which abhors political competition, would allow this; I suggest the duopoly look to recruiting sound small gov’t. nominees like Portia Shepherd and Richard Benderson (if wanting to address ‘majority minority’ designation advancing a Black candidate to compete with Sewell) who’ve shown understanding of how deleterious the duopoly parties have been to the common, productive, decent citizens of Alabama.

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Safeguarding Parental Rights: A Cornerstone



Kenneth Paschal
Alabama House of Representatives

Strong Republican conservative Kenneth Paschal introduced and shepherded through the 2023 Alabama legislative session a very important bill that is sorely needed in today’s world dominated by far left leaning institutions. This bill which is now law does one thing. It protects parental rights. Every State needs to adopt a similar law if it has not.

As we navigate the complex landscape of modern society, one fundamental principle remains unwavering: the significance and importance of parental rights. The foundation of any civilization lies in recognizing and

upholding the authority and autonomy of parents in guiding the upbringing of their children. Today, as we grapple with an ever-secular world, it is crucial to reassert the importance of parental rights, as our Judeo Christian background teaches us. These rights are the bedrock of a strong and prosperous society. This is why such a law is essential.

Parental rights are not simply a legal construct; they embody the essence of a natural bond between parent and child. Parents possess a profound understanding of their children’s unique needs, aspirations, and dreams. They are entrusted with the responsibility of nurturing and cultivating the values and virtues that will shape the next generation. These rights empower parents to make critical decisions regarding their children’s education, healthcare, religious upbringing, and overall well-being.

It is through the exercise of parental rights that families maintain their autonomy and preserve the values they hold dear. By entrusting parents with the authority



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



to make decisions that align with their moral and cultural beliefs, we foster diversity, individuality, and resilience within our society. The ability of parents to instill their values into their children is instrumental in building a society that celebrates the richness of various perspectives while promoting harmony and unity. Such a law guarantees this.

Moreover, parental rights play a pivotal role in maintaining a healthy balance between the state and the family. Recognizing and respecting the primacy of the family unit ensures that government intervention remains limited, preserving individual liberties and preventing an overreach of power. It is imperative to protect this delicate equilibrium, as an erosion of parental rights can pave the way for an intrusive and overbearing government at all levels, encroaching on personal freedoms and weakening the bonds of trust between citizens and their government. That is why this law is so important to codify our core beliefs as Americans of all political persuasions.

The preservation of parental rights is of paramount importance in fostering a strong and vibrant society. Recognizing and upholding the authority of parents to shape the lives of their children is a testament to the enduring values that have guided our country since the Declaration of Independence. This law safeguarding parental rights, empowers families to pass on their values, traditions, and aspirations to the next generation, creating a society that is both resilient and adaptable. Let us strive to protect and cherish these rights, for in doing so, we lay the foundation for a bright future for our children.

Such a law sends a clear message that raising children into adulthood is the responsibility of their parents not the village that the far left champions.

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DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE: REBELLION, OR INTERPOSITION?

Those who think of something more than hotdogs or fireworks on the 4th of July, generally honor the day as a patriotic holiday, the birth of American independence.

But if we believe the Bible to be the Word of God, we must ask whether the Declaration and the War for Independence which followed were consistent with the Bible. If not, can we truly celebrate Independence Day?

Romans 13:1 commands, **"Let every soul be subject to the higher powers," and I Peter 2:13 enjoins us to "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether to the king, as supreme; Or to governors, as to them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well."**

But in writing these words, Paul and Peter assumed that government commanded what was right and forbade what was wrong. What do we do when government commands what is wrong or forbids what is right? Paul and Peter were both executed by the Romans for preaching the Gospel, and when the authorities forbade the preaching of the Gospel, the apostles responded in Acts 5:29 **"We ought to obey God rather than men."** We see other acts of civil disobedience by the Hebrew midwives in Exodus 1 and by Daniel and his companions in Daniel 1, 3, and 6.

The Declaration of Independence, however, does not constitute civil disobedience. Rather, it fits a Biblical, legal, and constitutional doctrine known as interposition, also called the doctrine of the lesser magistrates. This doctrine holds that when a higher magistrate, such as a king or the federal government, acts in an illegal and tyrannical way, lower government officials such as nobles or members of parliament in England, or state and local governments in the United States, have a duty to oppose the higher magistrate, call upon him to change his tyrannical ways, or if that fails, remove him from office.

An example of interposition is found in II Chronicles 10. After 400 years of decentralized government under the judges, Israel demanded a king and was given a flawed but limited monarch in Saul. The power of the monarchy grew under David and grew still further under Solomon. After Solomon's death, a delegation from the ten northern tribes spoke with Solomon's son Rehoboam and promised to serve him forever if he would lower their taxes and reduce their forced labor. Rehoboam refused, and the northern tribes seceded, declaring "What portion have we in David? And we have none inheritance in the son of Jesse: every man to your tents, O Israel: and now, David, see to thine own house." (10:16) Rehoboam tried to raise an army to subdue the northern tribes, but a prophet of God named Shemaiah commanded Rehoboam to return to his land, because, the Lord said, the secession of the northern tribes **"is done of me."** (11:4)

Another act of interposition is found in England in AD 1215. Faced with the tyranny of the Norman King John, Archbishop Stephen Langton gathered the barons and the bishops and instructed them in the doctrine of interposition. They then drafted the Magna Charta, met King John at Runnymede, and forced him to sign this Great Charter of rights with the threat that if he did not, they would remove him from the throne. Other examples include the English Parliament's trial of King Charles I in 1649, and the Glorious Revolution of 1688 which led to the English Bill of Rights of 1689.

The Declaration and War of Independence were similar acts of interposition against England. The colonists believed the English king and parliament had acted toward them in a tyrannical manner by usurping the autonomy guaranteed them by their colonial charters. They argued that Parliament had no authority to tax the colonies because the colonies had no representatives in Parliament; hence their slogan, "Taxation without representation is tyranny." They tried more moderate means of redressing their grievances, such as sending the Olive Branch Petition, but England rebuffed their entreaties. So they responded with the Declaration.

One of the true masterpieces of literature, the Declaration does more than declare independence; it states the legal and philosophical case for doing so. It

begins by saying we are entitled to independence by "the laws of nature and of nature's God," and then adds that "a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation."

The Declaration then sets forth **"self-evident" truths: "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights."** Note that the Framers based their belief in equality on God's creation, and they believed rights come from God, not from the State. If rights come from the State, they are not unalienable rights but rather negotiable privileges, because if the State gives, the State can take away. Governments are instituted among men, not to grant rights, but to "secure" them; and "whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation in such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness."

But has the Government of Great Britain become tyrannical? The Declaration answers, "The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world."

Then comes the next section of the Declaration: A statement of the colonists' grievances against the English government. These include violations of the colonial charters, violations of English common law, and violations of the English Bill of Rights. Some of these grievances later form the basis for some of the rights in the American Bill of Rights.

After listing these grievances, the Declaration states the colonists' efforts to redress them:

"In every stage of these Oppressions we have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms. Our repeated Petitions have answered only by repeated injury. A Prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people."

The Declaration then reaches its climax: **"these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be, Free and Independent States."** And having invoked the "laws of nature and of nature's God" and having appealed to the doctrine of Divine creation and God-given unalienable rights, the Signers appeal **"to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions,"** affirm their **"firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence,"** and pledge **"our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor."**

This was not rebellion. It was an act of interposition by which the thirteen colonies seceded from England. George Washington had no intention of overthrowing King George III and enthroning himself as King George IV of England.

Samuel Eliot Morison of Harvard described the War for Independence as "The Conservative American Revolution," fought "as a defensive movement to maintain the rights and liberties which the English colonists had always enjoyed, and to which they felt they were entitled." As Alexander Hamilton told a French visitor, "There have been no changes in the laws, no one's interests have been interfered with, everyone remains in his place, and all that is altered is that the seat of government is changed."

Eleven years later, delegates gathered in Independence Hall to draft a Constitution for the new nation. As the delegates exited the Hall on September 17, a woman asked Ben Franklin, "What sort of government have you given us." He answered, **"A republic -- if you can keep it."**

Never, in the 236 years that have followed Franklin's charge to the American people, has the American constitutional republic been in greater danger than today. May we answer Franklin and those who gave us this great heritage: We will keep the republic, and we will restore our Constitution. To this end, like them, we pledge our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor. And we will add, as Washington did when he took the oath of office as President, "so help me God."

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John Taylor

Moonbat Mendacity

Following the suggestion of a fellow Alabama Gazette columnist, I read through “Let’s celebrate the real history of Jefferson Davis”, by Josh Moon. No surprise—it is just more “Righteous Cause” blather.

The sub-title claims the South fought to “protect” slavery, yet the institution was constitutionally legal and Abe Lincoln and the Republicans stated *ad nauseum* that they had no intention or authority to interfere with slavery where it existed. A central

reason for Republican opposition to slavery expansion was clearly explained by Horace Greeley: *“All the unoccupied territory...shall be preserved for the benefit of the White Caucasian race—a thing which cannot be except by the exclusion of slavery.”*

Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, and Oregon enacted laws that partially or totally restricted Blacks from living in those States yet we are supposed to believe they were fighting to end slavery. Both Alexander Stephens and abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison understood that remaining in the Union was the best way to protect slavery.

Jefferson Davis believed in federalism (States’ Rights) and understood the U.S. Constitution is a compact among sovereign States, i.e., a voluntary federal republic. To reiterate a point made in a previous article, in 1846 Davis succinctly described the only legitimate federal powers are those delegated by the States.

Conscription was used on both sides. “Drafts” have been implemented as far back as ancient Egypt. However, the Union went far beyond conscription. Approximately 500,000 Union soldiers were foreigners. They scoured Europe to “recruit”, sometimes offering financial incentives. Many “Union recruits” were actually mercenaries and some were literally criminals. The July 1863 New York Draft Riots--the most violent riot in American history--came about as a result of many Irish and German immigrants (largely Catholic) being forced into Union service. Most came to America for opportunity, not to join a fight they had no interest in. The Draft Riots resulted in massive property damage, assaults, and the hanging of the largest number of Blacks in American history.

Both sides also offered exemptions. Lincoln made sure his son, Robert, was never in danger of serving in combat. Most of those representing the corporate and banking interests who waged war against the South never wore a Union uniform. Conversely, a large number of affluent Southerners served in the Confederate military.

The article claimed the South committed treason. The Southern States held conventions and voted on secession, essentially reversing the process in which they joined the Union. Article 3, Section 3 of the U.S. Constitution describes treason in plural form – they and their – this references the States (uninvited invasion of a State is treason). There is a strong argument that Lincoln

committed treason by calling for 75,000 volunteers to invade the seceded States and a clearer case when he authorized the invasion of Maryland in September 1861. Under Article IV, Section 4, of the U.S. Constitution, the federal government does not have authority to enter a State unless invited by the governor or the legislature.

Jefferson Davis was held in prison for two years awaiting a trial over treason. Davis wanted a trial; his primary representative was the renowned New York attorney, Charles O’Connor. On the Union side, there was considerable trepidation about a possible trial. U.S. Chief Justice Chase and Judge Franz Lieber warned it would be a mistake to put Davis on trial since, as Chase noted, from a constitutional standpoint, “secession is not rebellion” and “We cannot convict him of treason.” Lieber said “Davis will be found not guilty.”

Slavery was a point of contention; however, the war was fought over secession. Once the North realized the Confederate Constitution’s low import duties would attract trade to Southern ports, the powers that be envisioned financial ruin. Multiple editorials in Northern newspapers referenced this impending calamity. This is exactly what Lincoln told Southern peace representatives: John Brown Baldwin on April 4, 1861; George Randolph, A.H.H. Stuart, and William B. Preston on April 12-13, 1861; and Rev. Richard Fuller and his associates on April 22, 1861. Lyon Gardner Tyler, son of President John Tyler, referenced the three meetings and Lincoln’s commentary (What about my tariff?) as the tipping point. Lincoln also emphasized revenue collection (not slavery) as being paramount in his March 4, 1861, First Inaugural Address and in the Blockade Proclamation.

Jefferson and Varina Davis “adopted” a young Black child name Jim Limber Davis – he was eventually taken away by Union soldiers from Michigan. In addition, research by Phillip Magness and Sebastian Page discovered records in the British Archives revealing Lincoln’s continued attempt to deport Blacks from the U.S. virtually until the day he died.

Rather than the so-called “Real Jefferson Davis”, we should study the “Real Abraham Lincoln.” Rest assured the Lincoln Cultists will do everything possible to demonize anyone who dares to expose the Real Lincoln.

Sources: *Emancipation after Colonization: Lincoln and the Movement for Black Resettlement*, by Phillip Magness and Sebastian Page; *The Long Surrender*, by Burke Davis; *Copperhead Chronicles*, by Al Benson, from freerepublic.com; *A Confederate Catechism*, by Lyon Gardiner Tyler; The “*Righteous Cause Myth*” has been detailed by Brion McClanahan and others associated with the Abbeville Institute. The Josh Moon piece appeared in the Alabama Political Reporter.

NOTE: Author Dr. Jeffery D. Addicott stated approximately 800,000 immigrants were in Union service. Remember, July 4th symbolizes the successful secession from the British Empire.

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John Martin

The National Debt Catastrophe

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A debt ceiling crisis is a phenomenon that occurs on a regular basis in our crazy spendthrift Congress. Since its members are spending other people's money, the great majority of them relentlessly throw it around without any consideration about the consequences imposed upon our country's economy. Then later, when the bills come due, and they discover that they have already spent beyond their Constitutional limit, they plead for another increase in our national debt ceiling. And if they don't get it, our government will shut down. Today, our debt is **OVER 31 TRILLION DOLLARS**. Next year, if current trends continue, it will **SURPASS** our **GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT**.



Obviously, this practice is devastating to the value of our currency, and it is seriously threatening its status as the world's reserve currency. Already, Russia, China, and others are looking for alternatives to American dollars in their international trading. And of course, since the beginning of the Biden regime, inflation has skyrocketed. Could American dollars soon evaporate like Zimbabwe dollars?

Every citizen with at least half of a brain understands the means of balancing a budget—he does it every day of his life—**ALWAYS** spend less than you earn. If you can't afford it, don't buy it. Stay out of debt. If you must borrow, pay it off **ASAP**.

But Congress has a “What, me worry?” attitude. It's not their own money. So who cares? For them, cutting spending is at the bottom of their priority list. Their priorities are their favorite pork barrel projects—everything from public assistance follies to the infamous military-industrial complex.

Comments on the internet verify that many ordinary people don't seem to care either. Instead, they recommend raising taxes and going after “the rich tax cheats” who earn more than \$500,000. Some have actually insisted, “We **CAN'T** cut spending.”

But could we? Anybody who has studied our history and looked at the things our government has done should clearly see that **MOST** of the things that government does is unconstitutional—anything that is not specifically authorized in our Constitution. What **IS** authorized? **ONLY THREE THINGS**.

- 1. NATIONAL DEFENSE:** That would be what we need to protect our country from foreign invaders, but **NOT** a massive military-industrial complex, and **NOT** massive aid and intervention all over the world. If you want to see an example of a rational national defense, look at Switzerland. It is effective and low cost. Switzerland has not been invaded for the last 400 years. Meanwhile, we are being massively invaded, mostly on our southern border.
- 2. PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE:** This includes roads, bridges, waterways, airports, and other public facilities.
- 3. JUSTICE:** This includes the infrastructure and services needed to protect our rights and property and maintain a civilized society.

Stop and think. Do we really need to spend many tens of trillions of dollars to provide these essentials?

What is our government buying that we don't really need? What is it buying that we are actually **BETTER OFF WITHOUT**? The list is so huge, it is incomprehensible. It is so massive, a team of perhaps 1000 financial experts might require a decade or more to merely list them all. Here is a **SHORT** list of just a **FEW** of them.

- 1. PUBLIC ASSISTANCE:** This includes our so-called “welfare programs” including **SNAP**, child care, welfare payments, section 8 housing, utilities, Obamaphones, Cash for Clunkers, benefits for illegal aliens, and numerous other “freebies.” These actually disincentify people to work for their livings, and to make it even worse, people who actually do some work on the side can become disqualified. So they say, “Why work for a living when I can vote for one?”
- Public assistance is **NOT** Social Security and veterans, benefits. These are items we have already paid for, and that money should be in a secure reserve fund. But for many years, greedy politicians have been “borrowing” (actually stealing) that money and never paying it back.
- 2. FOREIGN AID:** This is basically welfare for third world countries, especially Africa and parts of the Middle East. Much of its purpose is to feed hungry children, but corrupt officials over there often seize the food and sell it on black markets. But even worse, feeding hungry children encourages reckless child bearing and actually exacerbates hunger down the road. What these countries really need is **CONTRACEPTIVES** to abate their exploding birth rates.
- 3. REGULATIONS:** America is **OVERWHELMED** by regulations and mandates—most of them excessive, and some completely useless. The more strict the enforcement, the greater the damage to the economy. The shutdown of Volkswagen for minuscule quantities of nitrogen oxides was a national tragedy.
- 4. WARMONGERING** has cost us many trillions of dollars to impose massive carnage and destruction around the world. What have we gained in Vietnam, Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan?

Some recent ongoing expenditures that need the chopping block are from

George W. Bush—The Patriot Act, Homeland Security, and the TSA. These items are abusive, invasive, and useless. They should have never existed in the first place.

In our earlier days, way back in the 1820's, federal funding was derived from tariffs and duties. With our funding so limited, spending excesses were usually well controlled. But even then, numerous Americans were obsessed about our national debt, and it was a lively topic at dinner table discussions. Presidential hopeful **ANDREW JACKSON** called it “**The National Curse**.”

As soon as he was elected in 1829, Jackson vowed to eliminate it—\$58 million (about \$2 billion today). The United States collected millions in tariffs and sold federal land for millions more. He could have frittered that money away. But he knew that was a dangerous fiscal policy and could lead to irrecoverable deficits. Instead, he vetoed spending bills left and right, and on January 1, 1835, zeroed out our entire national debt. He gave the surplus funds back to the states. In our history, the Jackson administration was the only one to accomplish a national debt payoff. (HINT: That's why we need to **KEEP** him on the \$20 bill.)

Up until 1913, when **WOODROW WILSON** authorized the federal income tax (which recklessly didn't even have a cap on it), the United States had kept federal spending under control. With his huge tax windfall, Wilson drove us into World War I and escalated spending to unprecedented levels. During his regime from 1913 until 1921, Wilson consumed **ALL** of the new tax money **AND** expanded our debt from **\$2.9 billion all the way up to \$24 billion—a 722% increase**.

In spite of his scandals, Warren Harding managed to trim our debt back 6.79% until he died in 1923. At that point, we received the blessing of our greatest president since the days of our founding fathers—**CALVIN COOLIDGE**—the epitome of what every president should be.

Coolidge had a quiet and steadfast demeanor and stood for frugal, limited government, laissez-faire policies, and economic power controlled by individuals. He was a “minimalist politician,” often labeled as “Silent Cal” and regarded by some critics as somewhat lazy. But the truth is that he did exactly what **EVERY** president (and Congress) should do; he refused to meddle into things where our government shouldn't be meddling. “It is much more important to kill bad bills than to pass good ones.... Four-fifths of all our troubles would disappear, if we would only sit down and keep still.”

Coolidge always kept a tight rein on the federal budget and maintained a surplus every year, and at the same time, reduced taxes. Inflation dropped from 1.73% to **MINUS** 1.2%. Unemployment plummeted from 6.7% to 3.2%. Taxpayers earning between \$10,000 and \$100,000 increased 84 percent. Manufacturing rose over 50%.

Coolidge always kept expenditures down and actually **LOWERED** our national debt by nearly 25%. No other president or Congress has done that in the 20th century or later.

The bottom line is **WHY** do our elected officials have to be so greedy and recklessly fritter our hard-earned money away, and then when that's all gone, commit us to **BORROW** additional money and pay interest for even more worthless agents, programs, projects, and enforcement that rational people would never want? **THIS IS NATIONAL SUICIDE**.

WHEN are we going to get our fiscal house in order? **WHEN** will we bite the bullet and **STOP** the debt hemorrhage? When will we **LIMIT** reckless spending? When will we **SAVE** our nation from bankruptcy?

Will we **EVER** be treated to another Coolidge administration?

So let it be written. So let it be done.

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Answers for Myles July 2023 Crossword Puzzle on page 14.

1	E	2	Y	3	E	4	D		5	I	6	T	7	S		8	A	9	L	10	L
11	N	E	A	R					12	N	O	W				13	P	I	E		
14	D	A	T	A					15	S	P	A				16	P	E	T		
					17	W	18	H	I	S	T	19	L	E							
20	C	L	O	S	E	D			23	H	E	A	T	S		24		25			
26	A	I	R				27	R	E	D			29	G	L	O	W				
30	T	O	N	S					32	S	E	T				34	E	R	A		
35	S	N	A	K					36	E			37	S	W	38	E	D	E	N	
					39	M	I	S	40	S	I	O	N								
41	T	O	E						43	S	I	R				44	D	I	S	H	
48	O	W	N						49	A	T	E				50	E	C	H	O	
51	N	E	T						52	Y	E	S				53	D	E	E	P	



MARINE CORPS LEAGUE CONVENTION



The Marine Corps League Department of Alabama held its convention at Montgomery, AL, June 23-24, 2023. The Townsend Detachment #920 hosted this event with 80 Marines from 18 detachments from across Alabama participating. Rear Admiral Kent Davis, Commissioner of the AL Department of Veterans Affairs, presented information on the services offered by this department. Montgomery Police Chief Darryl J. Albert described his departments' services to Montgomery. New officers were elected and installed as well as promotion of the Marine Corps League's honor and fun society, Military Order Devil Dogs, which participates in raising funds for charities including its support of children's hospitals located at the city wherever the annual national Marine Corps League meets.



MACOA continues to serve seniors!

The Montgomery Area Council On Aging (MACOA)
SERVING SENIORS FOR 48 Yrs.

The Montgomery Area Council On Aging assists senior citizens by providing services to promote independent living, by offering opportunities to enhance quality of life, and by increasing community awareness of senior issues. You can help! MACOA needs volunteers once a week to deliver meals. *If you can help, please call 334-263-0532.*

115 East Jefferson Street / Montgomery, AL 36104 /

<https://www.macoa.org>

FRAUDSTERS NEVER GO ON VACATION

By Kylie' D. McKinney
Alabama Social Security Public Affairs Specialist



Fraudsters will never take a break. While you are out enjoying fun and sun this summer, they are working hard to find new ways to scam you. Seniors and younger people are particularly vulnerable to scammers who claim to represent Social Security. To protect you and your loved ones, you can:

Visit our **Protect Yourself from Social Security Scams** webpage at <https://www.ssa.gov/scam/> for information on what tactics scammers use and how to report them.

Check out the Federal Trade Commission's page at <https://consumer.ftc.gov/scams> for additional scam-related information.

Here are some tips to follow when you identify a potential scammer:

Hang up right away or ignore the message.
Never give personal information or money.

Report the scam immediately to our Office of the Inspector General at:

<https://oig.ssa.gov/report/>

If you owe money to Social Security, we'll mail you a letter with payment options and appeal rights. We only accept payments electronically through Pay.gov or Online Bill Pay, or physically by check or money order through our offices.

We will never do the following:

- Threaten you with arrest or legal action because you don't agree to pay us money immediately.
- Promise a benefit increase in exchange for money.
- Ask you to send us gift cards, prepaid debit cards, wire transfers, internet currency, cryptocurrency, or cash through the U.S. mail.

There are no vacations for fraudsters, so you need to stay informed of the latest Social Security-related scams. For more information, please visit our blog at www.blog.ssa.gov. Please share these useful resources with your loved ones.

Support YOUR Local Law Enforcement



Sheriff

Derrick Cunningham

(334) 832-4980

www.montgomerysheriff.com



Chief Deputy Murphy

MONTGOMERY COUNTY SHERIFFS

OFFICE PRESENTS:

CAMP SHOW-N-TELL

We still have a few slots available for
Camp Show-n-Tell, which will be held at
Camp Chandler,
July 31-August 4, 2023!

The camp is free and open to youths between the ages of
9-11 and activities to include arts, crafts, archery,
swimming, canoeing, outdoor survival skills, big dance
and much more!

Please call our Support Services Division at 334.832.2515
for more information and stop in to pick up a camp
application at 100 S Lawrence Street in Montgomery.

POLICE OFFICERS PRAYER

Lord I ask for courage
Courage to face and
Conquer my own fears...
Courage to take me where
Others will not go...
I ask for strength
Strength of a body to protect
others and strength of spirit to
lead others...

I ask for dedication.
Dedication to my job to do it
well.
Dedication to my community,
to keep it safe...
Give me Lord, concern for
others who trust me and
Compassion for those who
need me...
and please Lord through it all
Be at my side.

Sheriff's Office App

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

- Go to your Phone's setting icon.
- Scroll Down and click "Applications".
- Scroll down to "MCSO" or "Montgomery County AL Sheriff" ... OR
- Click "Application Manager", if it doesn't take you directly to the location.
- Click "Notifications".
- Turn on "Allow Notifications" & "Previews in pop-ups".

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



Autauga County SHERIFF'S OFFICE



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Prattville, AL

www.autaugasheriff.org



Sheriff
Mark Harrell

Lowndes County SHERIFF'S OFFICE



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Sheriff
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Honoring Our Heroes



WWII Veteran, Brigadier General (BG) Marvin Kent Seigner 100th birthday

Was celebrated at a gala attended by 150 people at the Wynlakes Golf and Country Club on his birthday, June 10, 2023.

His daughter, Cindy Cornett sang the inspirational song, “Wind Beneath My Wings” in tribute to her dad.

The night was closed with a beautiful rendition of “America”.



JULY BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. James Carl Poole Jr. - July 1st | 8. Gilbert R. Monismith Jr. - July 13th |
| 2. James Edwin Salminen - July 3rd | 9. David Headley - July 17th |
| 3. Michael Springer - July 4th | 10. Cheryl D. Grinstead - July 23rd |
| 4. William C. Stewart - July 5th | 11. Charles Winnick Ashley - July 24th |
| 5. Bill Allison - July 9th | 12. Christopher Laneaux - July 24th |
| 6. Raymond Keel - July 9th | 13. James Allen Campbell - July 27th |
| 7. John Oseburn David - July 10th | 14. Robert Shafton Kohn - July 28th |



Staff Sgt. Doris. Norris



Staff Sgt. George White, Jr.

Daughters of the American Revolution Celebrate June 14th Flag Day

Members of area chapters of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR) and other guests met at Trinity Episcopal Church in Wetumpka for a Flag Day Tea on June 10, 2023. Captain William Bibb Chapter NSDAR hosted the tea to honor and to celebrate the flag of the United States of America. Kathleen Tobias, Regent of the Captain William Bibb Chapter, welcomed attendees, and following patriotic observances including the salute to the American flag and the singing of the National Anthem, AL Society Daughters of the American Revolution State Regent Patrice Donnelly, State Recording Secretary Anne Parramore and District Director Jessica Maddox were introduced.



State Regent Patrice Donnelly described the historical meaning of America's flag day. Lexie Turnipseed presented an impersonation of Betsy Ross describing how General George Washington requested that she create an American flag.



Captain Michael Jeffries



In Memoriam of those that served. WWII and Korean War Veteran Robert Douglas Pike



March 24, 1925
May 31, 2023

Letter from the Editor

The Alabama Gazette is proud to spotlight our veterans in the Tri-County area each month. Dr. Martha Poole Simmons has for years, personally interviewed each veteran that has been spotlighted in the Gazette.

The willingness of these veterans to share their story with our readers is over and beyond their many years of sacrifice to our great nation.

Many of these heroic men and women that we have spotlighted over the years have now passed on to a greater reward. How humbling it is for us to have been able to show them our honor and respect.

As we celebrate the birth of our nation on July 4th let's not forget the thousands and thousands of lives that have been sacrificed to make us, and keep us, a great and safe nation.

We are honored, thanks to Martha, that we have had a small part in highlighting the lives of these veterans.

Here is a special note sent to us recently, thanking us for recognizing their family member and a great American.

Loretta Grant

Attached is a note from the family of the deceased veteran, Master Sergeant Kenneth W. Ragan. His article was published in the April 2023 issue. The American Red Cross staff member, Daryll Woods, who worked with the Armed Forces and with the Red Cross took me to Ragan's house where the interview was held inside his carport. Because of his age at 93 on April 4, 2023, I felt prompted to get his article published immediately. He became ill shortly after the interview, was hospitalized and passed away on April 5, 2023. One day after his birthday.

Martha

Thank you for taking time to learn our father's story of his time in the military. The article is an excellent way to honor him. Thank you also for providing us with several copies to share with family and friends. This will be treasured for a long time.

The K.W. Ragan Family





1st Sergeant Gerald May: Age: 75



1st Sergeant Gerald May served 24 years in the U.S. Army. His Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) included: Air Traffic Control, Supply Specialist, Linguist, Interrogator, Personnel Specialist, Fighter, Door Gunner, and Rifleman. He received the following medals, awards, and decorations: Bronze Star Medal w/Combat Distinguished Device “V”, Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Army Commendation Medal w/ Combat Distinguished Device “V”, Army Commendation Medal (4th Award), Army Achievement Medal, Joint Meritorious Unit Award, Meritorious Unit Commendation (2nd Award), Army Good Conduct Medal (7th Award), National Defense Medal (2nd Award), Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal, NCO Professional Development Ribbon w/Numeral 3, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon (2nd Award), RVN Campaign Medal (5th Award), Master Aviation Badge, Expert Marksman Badge and Driver/Mechanic Badge w/ Driver Bar.



1st Sgt May was born at Flint, MI, March 29, 1948 to his parents, Edison and Marge May, and he was reared all over the US and Europe because his father was a career soldier in the U. S. Army. Although he dropped out of high school, he earned a GED in 1966. He received an Associate of Applied Sciences Degree magna cum laude from Northern Virginia Community College in 1974, and he used the G.I. Bill to obtain several pilot certifications 1978-1980. In January 1966, he volunteered and enlisted three times in the U. S. Army first at Kalamazoo, MI, then at Cleveland, TN, and lastly at Fredericksburg, VA, all in the U.S. Army. For his three enlistments, he completed Boot Camps at Ft. Knox, KY, in January 1966, at Ft. Knox, KY, in 1975 and in June 1983 at Ft. Bliss, TX.

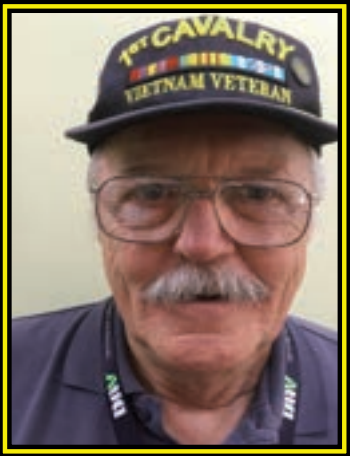
1st Sergeant May furthered his education by receiving training at military air traffic control schools and used that training by serving at military bases in the U.S.A. and abroad. 1st Sgt May attended the Air Traffic Control School at Keesler Air Force Base (AFB) from April-October 1966. This was followed by deployment to the 284th Avn Company as a flight operations specialist in the Flight Operations Center in Seoul, Korea from November 1966-Novmber 1967. Next, he served in the Viet Nam War with the 11th Avn Group 1st Calvary Division as a tower, radar, and forward controller, with additional duties as door gunner and crash truck driver from November 1967-December 1968. During this combat tour, he participated in five major campaigns including the Kae San Valley, Ashua Valley, and the Tet offensive of 1968. When he reenlisted in September 1972, he was sent to Davison Army Air Field (AAF), VA, and served as a tower and radar controller until June 1975 when he again left the service. He enlisted again in 1983 and attended the Military Intelligence School at Ft. Huachuca, AZ, to become an interrogator from August 1983-December 1983. He attended the Defense Language Institute at the

Presidio of Monterey, CA from January 1984-August 1984 to study the Korean language which he used during his second deployment to Korea. He then served at the Military Entrance Processing Center in San Diego, CA, as a Personnel Sgt, Supply Sgt, and Testing Officer from September 1984-1989. His second deployment to Seoul, Korea, was with the 1/53rd AVN Bn as air traffic control section Platoon Sgt from November 1989-December 1990. He served as an air traffic control instructor and simulator operator with B Company 1-58th Avn Bn at Ft. Rucker, AL from January 1991-September 1994. His next deployment was to the 2-58th Avn Bn at Ansbach, Germany, as the platoon sergeant of a tactical air traffic control unit from October 1994-March 1996. His final assignment was service as the 1st Sgt of C Company 1/11th Avn Bn at Ft. Rucker, AL, where he retired from military service December 31, 2000.

After retirement from military service, 1st Sgt May worked as sales and management trainee with Sears for two years, as air traffic controller with the Federal Aviation Administration for seven years, as surveyor with the TN Department of Transportation for one year, as air traffic controller with the Department of the Army for 13 years, as owner and operator of Windwalker Aviation Inc. for 12 years and as flight instructor for 12 years. He retired from all employment in March 2015.

1st SGT May and his wife, Susan, have been married for 25 years and live in a comfortable retirement at Enterprise, AL. He has one son and two grandchildren from a previous marriage. Since his final retirement, he has remained active in his community because he feels that it is important to give back. He serves with the Civil Air Patrol in Dothan, AL, as the commander of the Dothan Composite Squadron. Its charter is three pronged including Emergency Services, Aerospace Education and Cadet Programs. In addition, he serves as a volunteer driver for Chapter 9 of the Disabled American Veterans at Enterprise, AL, having already driven over 20,000 miles with more than 1000 hours of service. He also serves as a Community Emergency Response Team member and trainer.

1st Sergeant May describes what his service in the U.S. military means to him saying, ***“I am very proud to have been in service to my country, but of late, I have been wondering if it was all for naught. The current state of our democracy is becoming more and more fragile. We as a country need to get back to our democratic roots and start working together as a nation. Our elected officials need to get back to supporting their constituents, to stop pandering to the lobbyists and special interest groups and to stop demonizing asylum seekers. They are only trying to get back for what our forefathers and I fought, freedom from oppression.”***





Lieutenant Commander James Malcolm Levy: Age 75



Lieutenant Commander (LCDR) James Malcolm Levy served 20 years in the U.S. Navy. His designation after commissioning was as a Naval Aviator. During his service he had many administrative duties including flight instructor, Operations Officer and Executive Officer. He received the following medals, decorations and awards: Navy Expedition Medal (three awards), Navy Unit Commendation (two awards), Sea Service Deployment Ribbon (three awards), Navy Battle “E” Award, Navy Recruiting Service Ribbon, Meritorious Unit Commendation (two awards), Navy and Marine Corps Overseas Service Medal (four awards), Vietnam Cross of Gallantry, National Defense Medal, Expert Pistol Shot Medal, Rifle Marksmanship Ribbon, Vietnam Service Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal and Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal (three awards).



LCDR Levy was born November 9, 1947 at San Antonio, TX, to his parents, Louis and Sarah Levy. In 1966, he graduated from Texas Military Institute, a high school his grandfather helped found and where his father taught. He graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy and was commissioned as an Ensign in the U.S. Navy June 3, 1970.

Following a life-time dream of becoming a pilot, LCDR Levy completed training and was designated a Naval Aviator in 1972. LCDR Levy trained in the T-34B, and the T-28. In addition to its training duties, the T-28 was actively utilized in the Vietnam War by the U.S. and South Vietnamese Air Force as the

T-28D Nomad, which was equipped to carry a variety of weapons ranging from bombs and rockets to napalm for use on counter insurgency missions throughout Southeast Asia. Because he wanted to serve as a helicopter pilot in the Vietnam War, he then completed four to five months of training at Ellyson Field, FL. While there, he trained in the Bell Jet Ranger (the H-57) and the H-1 (Huey). Ellyson Field served as the sole facility for beginning and intermediate training for flying rotary-wing aircraft for the U.S. Navy.

LCDR Levy’s first assignment after his training was in California. After completing his qualifying in the SH-3G at HS-10, he was assigned to HC-1, Helicopter Combat Support Squadron One at NAS Imperial Beach, CA, where he received further training in the H-3 helicopter, a twin engine, all weather helicopter. He was assigned to a detachment serving onboard the USS Ranger (CVA-61), a Forrestal-class super carrier and the first to be built with an angled deck. He served on this ship for eight months flying the H-3 helicopter. Upon returning from his Vietnam cruise aboard the USS Ranger, he was temporarily assigned to Det Skylab. This detachment was assigned to the USS New Orleans, an LPH- IWO Jima-class amphibious assault ship, operating out of Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. He was involved in making two astronaut recovery missions. Next, he served one year with HC-1 Det 2 stationed at NAF Atsugi, Japan. When deployed, Det 2 was part of CVW 5, the carrier airwing assigned to USS Midway (CVA-41). The USS Midway was the first in a three-ship class of large carriers that featured an armored flight deck and a powerful air group of 120 planes and the longest-serving aircraft carrier in the 20th century. While serving on the Midway, he participated in Operation Frequent Wind, the evacuation of Saigon in April 1975. During the evacuation, his squadron flew Vietnamese

fleeing for their lives from the Midway to other ships. He returned to NAS Whiting Field, FL, as a flight instructor in the T-28 for three years. While a flight instructor, he met and married his wife, Margaret, a year later. On his next tour, he again completed training at HS-10 at NAS North Island at San Diego, CA, where he was retrained in the H-3 helicopter. He served three years attached to HC-1 Det 2 deploying once again onboard the USS Midway. He then returned to his hometown, San Antonio. TX. He served as a Navy recruiter for 2.5 years and was appointed as the Executive Officer during his last year there.

LCDR Levy then returned to NAS North Island at San Diego, CA. This time he was to train as a pilot of the C-12 Huron, a military version of an executive passenger and transport aircraft based on the Beech Model 200 Super King Air. It is primarily used by the US Air Force, US Navy, US Army and US Marine Corps for several functions, including range clearance, embassy support, medical evacuation, VIP transport, passenger and light cargo transport. The C-12 Huron, powered by a twin-engine turboprop engines, accommodates a crew of three including a pilot, co-pilot, enlisted aircrewman and seven passengers or 5,000 lb. of cargo.

Next, LCDR Levy was stationed at NAS Cubi Point, Philippines flying the C-12 to various locations in WestPac. This area includes predominantly the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Hong Kong and Japan. His last duty station was at NAS Corpus Christi, TX, where he retired June 30, 1990 at the rank of Lieutenant Commander.

After his retirement from military service, he worked 20 years as a pilot for UPS. He flew the DC-8 enjoying both domestic and international routes, retiring in 2009. He and his wife, Margaret, have been married 47 years, and they have two children and three grandchildren. They are members of Frazer Church at Montgomery, AL, where he currently serves as a substitute Sunday school teacher. He has been a Sunday school teacher at several other churches. He is a member of Chapter 607 Vietnam Veterans of America and is a member of the Presentation Team.

LCDR Levy’s conclusions about his Naval military service are: “I had always wanted to serve my country. While attending high school at Texas Military Institute, I was offered appointments at both West Point and the US Naval Academy at Annapolis, MD, as well as many civilian colleges. Helping me make my best decision was my Sunday School teacher who was a Naval Academy graduate and served briefly as a Naval aviator, attended law school and became a federal judge. Rescuing folks who found themselves in the water for one reason or another had to be the most fulfilling part of my career. Having been blessed by God with the ability to fly diverse aircraft in diverse places and interacting with diverse nationalities, I received so much from my Naval service. It was an honor to serve my country, and my country gave me something back for it.

LCDR Levy states, ***“ I would like people to remember me as a stubborn, hard-headed and caring Christian man.”***





Alabama Public Affairs Specialist
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SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (SSA) SERVICES IN MONTGOMERY

By: *Kylle’ D. McKinney*
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CELEBRATE YOUR INDEPENDENCE WITH SOCIAL SECURITY

Every July, we take pride in celebrating our nation’s independence. For nearly 90 years, our programs have helped provide financial independence to millions of hardworking people. We have useful online tools like the Social Security Statement (Statement) and our benefits estimator tool that help people not yet receiving benefits. The Statement shows the benefits that you and your family may be entitled to includes personalized fact sheets tailored to your age and earnings situation. The benefits estimator tool allows you to get estimates based on different ages you want to begin receiving benefits. These tools can help you plan for financial independence in retirement.

Don’t receive benefits? You can get the most out of your online experience if you have a personal my Social Security account. You can:

- **Get your Statement instantly.**
- **Request a replacement Social Security card (in nearly every state and the District of Columbia).**
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- **Request a replacement Medicare card.**
- **Get a replacement SSA-1099 or SSA-1042S instantly for tax season.**
- **Report your wages if you work and receive disability benefits or SSI.**

You can create your personal *my Social Security* account at <https://www.ssa.gov/myaccount/>

With so many services and helpful information available online, we are here for you when it’s convenient for you. Be sure to tell friends and family about all they can do with us from any device at www.ssa.gov.

HOW MUCH DID YOU EARN AT YOUR FIRST JOB?

Ever wonder how much you earned the year you worked your first job? Or any other year you worked? You can find out by reviewing your Social Security earnings record.

Your earnings record shows your income for each year worked and your progress toward your future Social Security benefits. We keep track of your earnings so we can pay you the benefits you’ve earned over your lifetime. That’s why it’s important for you to review your Social Security earnings record.

While it’s your employer’s responsibility to provide accurate earnings information to us, you should still review your earnings history and inform us of any errors or omissions. This is so you get credit for the contributions you’ve made through payroll taxes. You’re the only person who can look at your lifetime earnings record and verify that it’s complete and correct. If an employer didn’t properly report even just one year of your earnings to us, your future benefit payments could be less than they should be. Over the course of a lifetime, that could cost you tens of thousands of dollars in retirement or other benefits to which you are entitled. It’s important to identify and report errors as soon as possible. As time passes, you may no longer have easy access to past tax documents. Also, some employers may no longer exist or be able to provide past payroll information.

SOCIAL SECURITY CELEBRATES THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

This year, we celebrate 33 years of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and its importance to many beneficiaries. We’re committed to the principles and spirit of the ADA, and the way it improves the lives of millions. Matt’s story is an example of how the ADA and our Ticket to Work (Ticket) Program can help beneficiaries achieve their career goals.

As a job seeker who is deaf and needs accommodations, Matt was reluctant to tell prospective employers about his disability. He worried that employers would not hire him if they knew about his disability.

That’s when Matt connected with our Ticket Program. This program supports career development for people ages 18 to 64 who receive Social Security disability benefits and want to work. Through this free and voluntary program, approved service providers offer supports and services as participants move toward financial independence through work.

Matt learned how his employment might affect his benefits. He also learned that our Medicare-related work incentive allows him to pursue a career without worrying about health care coverage.

If Matt’s disability interfered with work, he could return to receiving benefits without having to file a new application through the expedited reinstatement process.

Matt now works full-time as a human resource analyst. Thanks to the ADA, he received accommodations for the interview process and on the job. He also found that the Ticket Program helped him find a path to a better future. You can learn more about the Ticket Program at www.choosework.ssa.gov.

Our online booklet, Your Ticket to Work: What You Need to Know to Keep it Working for You found at www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10062.pdf, provides detailed information about the program.

You can learn more about Matt’s story at www.choosework.ssa.gov/library/matt-success-story.

HOW WE SERVE PEOPLE WHO HAVE LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY SOCIAL SECURITY CAN TELL YOU

We strive to deliver great customer service and helpful information to everyone. That includes improving access for underserved communities. We aim to reduce language barriers and increase access to Social Security programs, services, and benefits. If you’re assisting a client with limited English proficiency (LEP), know that we have the resources available to help them in their preferred language. What resources are available?

We encourage you to learn about the resources that are available to serve LEP communities. We provide benefit information online in Spanish – including Retirement, Disability, and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) at SeguroSocial.gov.

Our free interpreter services are available, by telephone and in person, in more than 200 languages, to your clients who prefer to conduct business in a language other than English. These services are accessible by calling our toll-free number at 1-800-772-1213 or by visiting a local office and asking for an interpreter in their preferred language.

If your clients need information about our programs, we offer publications in languages other than English. Please check out our non-English publications and other resources available in more than 12 languages at www.ssa.gov/multilanguage. These include:

- Sample Social Security Statement and 10 supplemental fact sheets.
- Social Security Number for Non-Citizens.
- Understanding the Benefits.

Our Language Access Plan showcases our commitment to increase access to benefits and services for people who prefer a language other than English. For more information, we encourage your clients to review the updated plan at www.ssa.gov/pubs/LAP2022-23.pdf.

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Soul Searching....

Do The Hard Stuff!

Dr. Lester Spencer Over the years, I have witnessed hundreds of people fall away from God and the church. Many of these were avid believers that faithfully followed Jesus, passionately worshipped every Sunday and boldly witnessed to their faith. And they simply walked away from it all.

What happened to them?
Why did they simply walk away from God and their faith in Christ?
Some may ask, “Why and how did they backslide?”

I am convinced that the major reason people fall away from God and the church is not because they do not believe in God anymore. It is because it is hard!

We preachers do not say this enough: “Following Jesus is hard!” We try to make it sound easy and simple. “Three easy steps to following Jesus”, could be the title of a great many sermons. Even some of the ones that I have preached.

But Jesus told us himself that it would be hard...he said things like:

- “Take up your cross and follow me.”
- “Sell all that you have and give it to the poor and then follow me.”
- “If someone slaps you, turn and offer them the other cheek as well.”
- “If someone takes your shirt, give them your coat as well.”
- “Forgive others as freely as my Father has forgiven you.”
- “Give and it will be given back to you pressed down and shaken together.”
- “Treat others as you want to be treated.”
- “Love one another as I have loved you.”
- “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.”
- “Bless those who curse you.”

Yes. I believe the majority of people who quit following Jesus or serving through his church do so because it is hard.

Think about it.

People do not stop eating healthy because they quit believing that eating a healthier diet is good for you. They stop eating healthy, because it is hard. It is hard to eat healthy, especially when you are out and about during the day or on the road. The Chick-fil-A drive through or the Whataburger billboard or the Krispy Kreme Hot Doughnut Sign is blinking red...and they are always calling your name, right? It is so much easier and faster to swing through their drive thru and be satisfied. A lot easier than trying to eat healthy!

People do not quit going to the gym because they stop believing that working out is good for you. They stop going to the gym to workout because it is hard! It is hard to discipline yourself to push your body every day and every week to exercise. Instead, your body tells you to go home after work and sit on the couch and watch the news or binge on your favorite Netflix show while stuffing your face with popcorn. Going to the Gym takes discipline and commitment... and it is hard!

Following Christ is hard too. Christian disciplines such as prioritizing attending worship on Sunday, praying, doing a daily reflection, giving generously, serving others and witnessing to your faith are not easy things to do. But you will never be all that God created you to be and fulfill his purpose in your life without them.


Do you want to live a life of purpose, passion, peace and power?

Do the hard stuff.

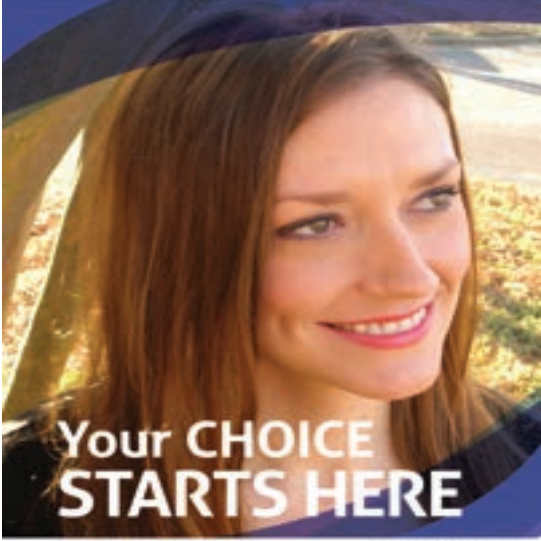
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For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Jeremiah 29:11



“REFLECTIONS” Shiny Happy Christians

By Michael J. Brooks

It’s been a season of hard-charging faith documentaries, including “The Secrets of Hillsong” and “Shiny Happy People: Duggar Family Secrets.” Both saddened me.

I never watched any of the Duggar series on TLC, though I was aware of the basic plot through word-of-mouth. The “Shiny” documentary intertwines with the ministry of Bill Gothard, the Duggar’s mentor, with whom I’m more familiar. Gothard was popular in the faith community of the 80s and 90s. A pastor friend encouraged us, his pulpit brothers, to attend a Basic Youth Conflicts seminar and learn from Gothard. I never did, but I did read voraciously about Gothard since I fielded frequent questions from church members about the ministry.

Gothard took the patriarchal model of the first-century world and insisted it was operable in the 20th century. In the New Testament world a woman had only basic rights and lived at the mercy of her husband’s goodwill. Gothard taught that the wife’s submission to her husband was like the Christian’s submission to God, even if the husband wasn’t a person of faith. For example, if the husband told the wife they were going to a strip club instead of her going to church, she was to obey him and trust God to change his heart.

I remember another conservative leader, Jerry Falwell, taking issue with this, declaring he wished his wife obey God first of all.

Some follow the Gothard model, and this isn’t bad, in my judgment, if it works for them. It seemed to work for the Duggars, at least for a while. The biblical ideal is that the husband/father be a spiritual priest who lovingly leads the family to serve God. But this model certainly doesn’t sanction inhumanity or abuse.

Other people of faith rely on a more egalitarian model; namely, Paul’s principle in Ephesians 5 that couples “submit to one another,” or as a modern paraphrase renders, “Outdo one another in loving service.”

One of the flaws in the documentary is its bias implying a hostile world take-over. Filmmakers included footage of some uniformed military training as though there was to be an assault on the fortress of evil. However, it’s noteworthy that nobody was armed or harmed in the chosen images!

Christians do strive to take over the world--not with weapons of war, but with the love of Christ. Unbelievers have nothing to fear from Christians and should welcome the good they feel compelled to do.

We’ve always had notable faith leaders who mess up; this is nothing new. We pray for mercy and restoration. But high-level failures like this don’t reflect the vast majority of those in the church who try to honor Christ in their lives each day.

“Reflections” is a weekly faith column written by Michael J. Brooks, pastor of the Siluria Baptist Church, Alabaster, Ala..

Michael J. Brooks, 10696 Highway 119 South, Alabaster, Alabama 35007
205.663.7904
siluriabaptist.com



Judge Peggy Givhan

and blue bunting adorn porches, smaller flags peek out of flower pots and gardens, and I saw at one store red, white and blue solar string lights. Using white vinca, red begonias, and blue ageratum in the flower beds complete the theme. I chose to plant a patriotic pot garden with similar plants.

Because my pot garden area is not quite as sunny, I substituted white impatiens. Also white caladiums, red begonias, and bluish purple petunias make a good combination.

So let's shout, Happy Fourth of July!

I have been reading about the growing concern of bee populations dying in droves. One thing we can do locally, is to ensure their continued existence by providing flowers and other plants to attract them to our area. When we state this, we most likely think of flowers in our gardens. But many herbs attract bees and other pollinators if we allow these herbs to flower and eventually go to seed. These herbs are listed as follows:

- | | | |
|------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1. Garlic | 6. Catnip | 12. Oregano |
| 2. Bee Balm or Monarda | 7. Sage | 13. Borage |
| 3. Sweet Clover | 8. Rosemary | 14. Basil |
| 4. Anise Hyssop | 9. Echinacea | 15. Chives |
| 5. Lemon Balm | 10. Lavender | 16. Thyme. |
| | 11. Mint | |

Other bee death facts that many are unaware of show that if it were not for bees and other pollinators, not only would the food supply be impacted, but production could be cut by 75%. Fruit and nut trees, vegetables, wheat, and other food products included.

Southern Gardening

Potpourri for July

Where does the time go? I am barely over Christmas and now we are past the mid mark of the year.

The Fourth of July should be a time to demonstrate patriotism, honoring our founding fathers and all who have made America great. Red, white

PLANT OF THE MONTH--



CYCLAMEN

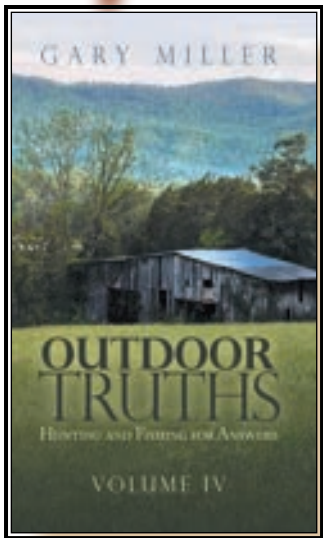
Also known as Hardy cyclamen, will thrive in full sun to partial shade. Even when not in full bloom, the variegated heart-shaped leaves are quite attractive. They usually bloom with butterfly-like flowers in all shades of the rainbow and on top of it all, mildly fragrant. We usually see these plants in nurseries in pots, but do well outdoors. Their bloom time is winter, spring or fall. If buying the tubers, be sure to soak these in warm water for 24 hours before planting. They require well drained soil, Planted just below the surface and do well at the base of trees and those with greedy roots, which ensure summer dryness.

Also do not mulch or cover the leaves in winter against the cold as they will soak up sunlight for next year's bloom, Companion plants for cyclamen would be snow drops, crocus, early daffodils and hellebores. And I like to have pots of cyclamen around Christmas on my mantel or throughout the house for subtle color.

GOOD GARDENING
AND **HAPPY FOURTH OF JULY**



LET'S TALK ABOUT DOUBT



Let's talk about doubt. We all have it. We all use it. Even in the most certain areas, doubt is always present. I can have a trail cam picture of a certain buck that shows up at a certain time of the day, and set up there on the following day, and still have doubt the buck will show up. I can catch fish for five straight days off one point, and can show up the next day, and doubt will still rear its head to play with my head about the possibility of a sixth straight day. Pure doubt itself is agnostic. It only moves to belief or unbelief after more knowledge. For instance, I may want to buy a new bow and want the fastest one on the market. Right now, I have doubts as to which one that is. And not only that, but I also really don't care what brand it is. I am agnostic. I have one parameter. It must be the fastest. When I find out (gain more knowledge) I move from doubt to belief in one and unbelief in another. Doubt is defined as hesitation or

uncertainty between two positions. It is a fixed position between two or more points. Biblical doubt is confusing sometimes. Sometimes the original text refers to unbelief and not pure doubt. Sometimes, there is an honest question about it, as to when Jesus asked Peter, "Why did you doubt?" Here's what I want you to know. Don't let doubt cause you to doubt. Let me write that again. Don't let doubt cause you to doubt. Let me illustrate. In the scriptures, there was a paralyzed man who sat at the pool of Bethesda. He had sat there for 38 years waiting to be put into the pool when the waters were stirred, thinking he would be healed. And for 38 years he wasn't the first one in. And then Jesus healed him. But he had 38 years of minding-filling belief about his physical state. Now he is healed but must lay down each night for sleep. I wonder how long – for how many months or years, he opened his eyes in the morning and

thought "I wonder, can I still walk? I wonder, is the miracle still effective? I wonder, is the healing still working? I wonder, are Jesus' words still good?" Doubt. Now some would criticize his doubt, but his doubt was legitimate. It came from a mindset that had been established for 38 years! It would take a while to change this.

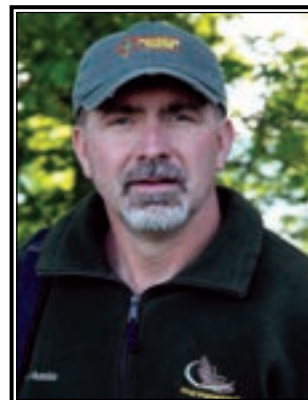
But if we looked at his heart. When HE looked deep in his heart. He knew. He believed. And he got up another day, until his life was over.

What about you. Have you let the devil or others, or even yourself, tell you your doubt has hindered God's desire and ability to bring that miracle into your life? Here's how you can know. Look at your heart. Listen to your heart. When it comes to Jesus, and your belief in him and his goodness and his ability.... What does your heart say?

Don't listen to your mind. The Apostle Paul said, "Take every thought captive." Why? Because he knew that some of us have decades of a faulty mindset and it may take years for our mind to match our heart. But until then, keep chasing away those thoughts, and one day you'll just get up without every even remembering the days you couldn't walk. God is still the same. Don't let doubt cause you to doubt.

Gary can be reached via email at: gary@outdoortruths.org.

Gary Miller has written Outdoor Truths articles for 20 years. He has also written five books which include compilations of his articles and a father/son devotional. He also speaks at wild-game dinners and men's events for churches and associations.



Gary Miller

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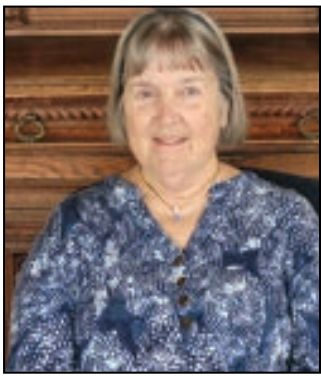
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Home Town Community News

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Congratulations!
100th Birthdays!

Kent Speigner - June 10th

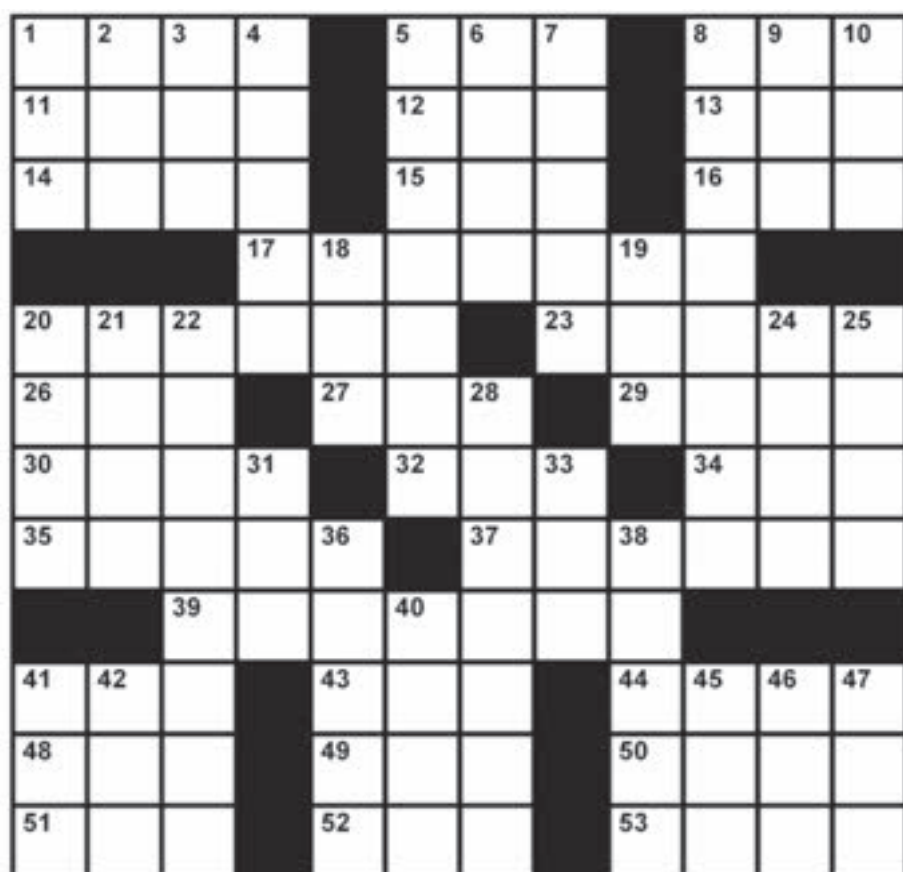
Nita Tidwell 100 - June 22nd

Happy Anniversary

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2 Bob & Liz Morris | 16 Laird & Sarah Bone |
| 3 Everett & Alice Cole (53rd) | 19 Don & Nancy Rabren |
| Dennis & Karen Weber | 20 Spears & Carrie Rhodes |
| 7 April & Hugh Smith, III (15th) | 21 Justin & Bethany Mims |
| 8 Bill & Charlotte Gaston | 26 Blake & Amanda Wise |

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

Winters, William "Bill" Neal 60.....	May 19
Dorsey, Gary Wayne 69.....	May 31
Rials, Mary Glenn Sanders 87.....	June 2
Nelson, Patty Shackelford 68.....	June 3
Ratliff, Harlan Ann Kimbro 84.....	June 3
Sport, Haywood Mal 86.....	June 3
Beasley, Ralph Garner 84.....	June 7
Maddox III, Robert "Bob" W. 82.....	June 9
Sellars, Lindley Jean 41.....	June 9
Wood, Marguerite McDaniel Powell 88.....	June 9
Baxter, Douglas Kendrick 62.....	June 11
Hogg, Nancy Carolyn Corless 95.....	June 11
Allen, Donna Daffron 78.....	June 12
Davis, Kenneth "Kenny" Whatley 61.....	June 15
Rogers, Louis "Lou" Talmadge 82.....	June 15
Spear, Joyce Williamson 86.....	June 16
Honeycutt, Ada Bell 89.....	June 17
Jordan, Richard Marlon 84.....	June 17
Montgomery, John Thompson 85.....	June 17
Hanan, Jeanette "Precious" Hill 91.....	June 18
Lambert, Bill Gary 84.....	June 19
Sides, Mintie Lois White 79.....	June 20
Hardin, William "Bill" Eugene 58.....	June 23
Bledsoe, Judy Faye Reed 73.....	June 26
Grosser, Billie Webb 92.....	June 26



Myles July 2023 Crossword

Across

1. Watched closely
5. "...._ magic"
8. Monopolist's portion
11. Close
12. Right away!
13. Fruit dessert
14. Info
15. Getaway
16. Honeybunch
17. Referee's tool
20. Not doing business
23. Makes warmer
26. Balloon filler
27. Like roses
29. Candle's light
30. Heaps
32. Scenery
34. Chapter in history
35. Chinese zodiac animal
37. Largest country in Western Europe
39. Delegation
41. Stocking's end
43. Elton John's title
44. Gossip
48. Fess (up)
49. Had a snack
50. Canyon sound
51. Bottom line
52. Cry of triumph
53. Profound

Down

1. Purpose
2. Senatorial affirmative
3. Dig in
4. Commission advances
5. Guts
6. Does better than
7. Path
8. Challenged a verdict
9. Fish tale, essentially
10. Tennis stroke
18. "Death Becomes ___" '92 Hawn film
19. Journey segment
20. Feline musical
21. Word with mountain or sea
22. Christmas tree decoration
24. Split
25. White bird
28. Covets
31. Do a downhill run
33. Pair
36. Dissertation
38. Done
40. Place to build
41. Load of bricks
42. Be in debt to
45. Rocks, to a barkeep
46. Lady referred to
47. Short flight

Answers on Page 7.

Congratulations

Sara Reeder
who
turned
100 on
June 8th.
Wishing
you many
more!



HAPPY BIRTHDAY! JULY

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Butch (Mary) Moseley | 13 Jeremy Dickinson |
| Linda Foxworth | 13 Stacey Nestor |
| 2 Ralph Davis | 14 Annie Bouchard |
| Lexie Turnipseed | Lansdon O'Mailia |
| George Pugh | 15 Joan Collier |
| Voncille Talley | Summer Rice |
| 4 Audrey Grant | Paige Stringer |
| Peggy Hubbard | 16 Sherry Tucker |
| David Johnson | 18 Linda Carleton |
| Lynn McKinley | Ann Marie Dean |
| Cindy Smith | 20 Tony Mitchell |
| 5 Ann Emory Harris | 22 Freddie Strength (74) |
| Kathy Ingram | Vangie Walmsley |
| Joyce Todd | 23 Alana Jones Breedlove |
| 6 Skip Mainor | Helen Broadway |
| Glenn Stringer | Zachery Dibole |
| Amber Wooten | Matthew Grant |
| 7 Knox Crowe | Rusty Moseley |
| Denise Hankin | Jim Scott |
| Carolyn Grant | 24 Barbara Garrett |
| Taylor Mills | Eli Browning (20) |
| Brian Mosley | 25 Brantley Woodall |
| 8 Mickie Ann Boyd | Ty Woodall |
| Helen Dibole | 26 Jason Adams |
| 9 Joe Douglas | Stacy Dickinson |
| Katherine Kirk | 27 Jimmy Norman (65) |
| Kathryn Ann Sikes (10) | 28 Arnold Fuller |
| 10 Jeffery Horton | Melanie Higgins |
| Pam Stewart | 30 Shawn O'Mailia |
| 11 Abby Boyd | Ronnie Wallace |
| Luke Frady | 31 Meloney Gwin |
| 12 Cary Dean | Caroline Vocino |
| Bonnie Williams | Marie Hudson |

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

Today's Woman

By: Amanda Walker

Tears & LAUGHTER

Thirty miles and a world apart...

It all started with a simple question. I asked her what kind of toys she had played with when she was a kid growing up in Wilcox County.

At least it seemed a simple question.

The only reason it was on my mind at all was because...well, I am having a bit of the empty nest thing going on and in redoing bedrooms, one of them is decorated with vintage toys. I had shown her the room and some of the things I have recently added—a Gunsmoke puzzle, a Little Lulu tea set, and a Whitman version of Old Maid.

We are only about eight years apart, and even with me raised in Clarke and her over here in Wilcox, I assumed there would be some commonality—as we would have been two girls from roughly the same generation raised about 30 miles apart.

She laughed gently at my question, explaining that there had been no toys in her world when she was growing up, that she grew up down in Tait's Swamp.

She had mentioned before about being raised in Tait's Swamp. She was raised by one set of her grandparents, within running distance of the other set. She had told me about how they would walk to church, even at night. She remembers summer revivals, walking back home after dark...on a road that was what remained of a wagon trail. She remembers being scared of ghosts, and sounds in the night. Pledger Cemetery and its inhabitants was along the path. It still is. She said she would always run passed it because everybody claimed it was haunted. She remembers being chased by cows, as the last trek to the church was a pasture.

They walked to church, because there wasn't a car. Which meant they would walk to the church every school day to meet the bus, because the school bus could not make it down the road that was the remains of a wagon trail.

That changed after the "new" road was built.

The new road is no longer new, but is still red dirt and prone to flooding. There are places where you can still see the banks of the old trail.

I wanted to see this.

I don't know why, but people who live in secluded areas like to go back in time. We try and retrace the steps of what used to be. Maybe it is like this in all areas, maybe it is not confined to rural areas—but for here specifically, this place is different. Some places started as nothing and became something. This area is the opposite. There are remnants of what used to be, and something about walking through what remains allows you to feel the spirit of the place.

So one sunny day last week, we planned a picnic in Tait's Swamp. I packed a cooler. We drove into Camden and got a couple of Club sandwiches before driving back to Canton Bend, and down the road that leads to bryanTait's Swamp.

She said there was a group of about twenty of them that would walk out every morning, over two miles, and back in the evening. There is not much evidence. We stopped at where the house she grew up in used to be. It is not there. Not even a cornerstone. It was nothing more than a shack, built directly on the ground. But she found a specific pecan tree, a peach tree, and a plum. She found the path that led to the riverbank where here grandparents would fish. She was back home...at this place only 30 miles from where I was raised, but in a completely different world.

Amanda Walker is a columnist and contributor with AL.com, The Birmingham News, Selma Times Journal, Thomasville Times, West Alabama Watchman, and Alabama Gazette. Contact her at: Walkerworld77@msn.com or <https://www.facebook.com/AmandaWalker.Columnist>

By: Trisston Wright Burrows

Trisston's Tidbits:

"Keep Going!"

What if I told you that you are probably missing a very important lesson from one of the most famous stories on the Bible? We have all know the story of Noah, who God told to build an ark to save the world from a global flood.

"Make yourself an ark of gopher wood. Make rooms in the ark and cover it inside and out with pitch." Genesis 6:14

But do you know how long it took Noah to build the ark? It wasn't a few days, weeks, months, or even a few years. Most biblical historians estimate that it took Noah between fifty and eighty years to build the five-hundred-foot-long boat.



Just think about that! God gave Noah a vision and a purpose that wasn't fulfilled for over five decades. And you know that during that time, people questioned what he was doing. They questioned if he had heard God right or if it was worth it to continue. And I bet Noah, himself, had second thoughts throughout that time.

Now, think about your own life. God has given each of us a purpose. And like Noah, sometimes the purpose is not fulfilled overnight. And there will probably be people in our life who will question what we are doing because God didn't give the vision to them. He gave it to you.

So, I encourage you that throughout the questioning and doubts to keep going. To keep trusting that vision and purpose that God instilled in you. Because one day, like Noah, that plan will come to fruition, exactly as God said. So, keep going!

Many Blessings!

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Barbara F. Harrington's Ongoing Story.....

Metastasized Breast Cancer stage 3

The story I didn't expect.....

Jun 19th

Lymphedema and Breast Cancer

When I was diagnosed with breast cancer 22 years ago I had a terrific surgeon who helped me understand about lymphedema. He explained he would have to remove at least 15 lymph nodes from my arm and I would have to wear a compression sleeve daily. Just before my mastectomy he told me about an option, a sentinel node procedure. A sentinel lymph node biopsy (SLNB) is a procedure in which the sentinel lymph node is identified, removed, and examined to determine whether cancer cells are present.

A negative SLNB result suggests that cancer has not yet spread to nearby lymph nodes or other organs. A positive SLNB result indicates that cancer is present in the sentinel lymph node and that it may have spread to other nearby lymph nodes and, possibly, other organs. This information can help a doctor determine the stage of the cancer (extent of the disease within the body) and develop an appropriate treatment plan.

First, the sentinel lymph node (or nodes) must be located. To do so, a surgeon injects a radioactive substance near the tumor. The surgeon then uses a device to detect lymph nodes that contain the radioactive substance. Once the sentinel lymph node is located, the surgeon makes a small incision in the overlying skin and removes the node.

The sentinel node is then checked for the presence of cancer cells by a pathologist. If cancer is found, the surgeon may remove additional lymph nodes, either during the same biopsy procedure or during a follow-up surgical procedure. SLNB is usually done at the same time the primary tumor is removed.



I was told I had one lymph node that was positive and would be removed during my mastectomy. It gave me hope that it was found, it could have been a worse scenario if I had not had the procedure done.

Lymphedema refers to tissue swelling caused by an accumulation of protein-rich fluid that's usually drained through the body's lymphatic system. It most commonly affects the arms but can also occur in the chest wall, abdomen, neck and genitals.

Lymph nodes are an important part of your lymphatic system. Lymphedema can be caused by cancer treatments that remove or damage your lymph nodes.

This time round I had five lymph nodes with cancer plus the one from my previous breast cancer diagnosis. It was recommended I go to a lymphedema specialist who could help me understand the best treatment. The keys to managing lymphedema are preventing infections and allowing fluids to flow through the swollen area.

•Keep your skin clean, and use lotion to keep it moist.

•If you get a small cut, clean it right away and apply antibacterial ointment and a bandage.

•Don't get needle sticks (vaccines or blood tests) in the swollen area.

•Don't wear tight clothing or jewelry.

•If you have lymphedema in one arm, have your blood pressure taken on, and blood drawn from, the other arm.

•If your arm is swollen, elevate it above your heart when possible.

Severe cases of lymphedema can affect the ability to move the affected limb, increase the risks of skin infections and can lead to skin changes and breakdown. Treatment may include compression sleeves, massage, sequential pneumatic pumping, careful skin care and, rarely, surgery to remove swollen tissue or to create new drainage routes.

My local specialist recommended a compression sleeve and she massages the area while teaching me to be able to do it daily at home.

The lymphatic system is part of the body's immune system, which protects against infection and disease. The lymphatic system includes the spleen, thymus, lymph nodes and lymph channels, as well as the tonsils and adenoids. Lymphedema can be caused by cancer or by cancer treatment.

•Sometimes a cancerous tumor can get big enough to block the lymph system.

•Surgery to remove cancer may also remove lymph nodes or some of the vessels that carry the lymph fluid. This can cause the fluid to build up in surrounding tissues.

•Radiation treatment can damage the lymph vessels, resulting in too much lymph fluid in the tissue. As I approach the next step in my treatment, radiation therapy, I am trying to understand all I can about lymphedema.

Barbara is sharing with us her journey each month....We are sure that your prayers are appreciated.

The Gazette is honored to share her story with you.



Southern Cuisine

Chef David Spooner, Retired Chef

Volunteer Fireman, Lowndesboro V.F.D., St. Paul's Episcopal Church,



What did the people of the newly formed United States eat while celebrating the Fourth of July? Did they just decide to eat something different from their usual menu? When and where did the idea of a menu just for the Four of July start? Legend has it that on July 4, 1776, John Adams and his wife celebrated the country's independence with a meal of turtle soup, poached salmon with an egg sauce, green peas, boiled potatoes, and a desert of Indian pudding or apple Pandowdy. Turtle soup was a very popular summertime meal back then. A far cry from the usual meal associated with the holiday now.

As the years past, so did people tastes and what items that were available. By the 1800's meals were quite different from what they are today, but there was developing a meal that could be called the starting menu for Independence Day. Turtle soup was considered a delicacy and a symbol of patriotism. It was made with green turtle meat, vegetables, herbs and spices. Poached salmon with an egg sauce was easy to make back then. Salmon was abundant and fresh. Apples were used in a dessert called pandowdy and is the start of the apple cobbler. Also, any barbecued meats, such as pigs, chickens and turkeys.

The most searched for recipes now a day includes potato salad, baked beans, deviled eggs, macaroni salad, smoked brisket, grilled corn

and red, white and blue fruit pizza. Brisket is popular since July is National Barbecue month and the Fourth of July is National Barbeque Day. Besides just celebrating cooking, a favorite past time also celebrated this month is for Pina Coladas, Daiquiris, Tequila and Scotch.

Since hotdogs are popular for the Fourth of July, there are many options that can go on them. Such as Kim chi, fruit chutney and Mac and cheese. Your hotdog doesn't really need a hotdog in it. Try chicken tenders, slow cooked pulled pork with Alabama White Barbeque sauce. Or peanut butter or grilled pineapple. Let your imagination go wild! Instead of a charcuterie board with cold cuts and cheeses, try a hot dog board, with side's dips, and chips. Whatever you want.

And do not forget desserts, where you can let the red white and blue theme shine.

A popular food spread for modern day 4th of July meal will consist of these items.

Hot dogs, barbeque, ham burgers, apple pie, biscuits and gravy, grits, corn dogs, and buffalo chicken wings.



AUNT SISTERS RANCH-STYLE BEANS

No menu will be complete without some sort of baked beans. This is a different take on the standard baked beans.

Ingredients:

- Serves 8-12
- 1-pound ground beef
- 2(1-lb) cans pork and beans
- 1 can kidney beans, drained
- 1 env. Dry onion soup mix



Method:

Brown meat and drain.
Stir in dry onion soup mix, water, catsup and cider vinegar.
Add the cans of pork & beans and the kidney beans that have drained. Mix well and pour inti a casserole sprayed with PAM.
Top with bacon strips and bake at 375degrees until bacon is done about 35 minutes.

Potato salad is very popular and is found on many BBQ menus. After a dish of beans and potato salad, a somewhat lighter side dish is called for.



MARINATED SLAW

Ingredients:

- 1 large head of cabbage shredded
- 1 large green bell pepper chopped
- 1 large onion chopped
- 1 small jar chopped pimento
- 1 cup sugar



Method:

Mix all ingredients and bring to a boil for 2 minutes. Pour over top of veggies while hot. Do not stir. Refrigerate over night and stir before serving.



JACKS BBQ SAUCE

Ingredients:

- ½ cup Lemon juice
- 3 T vinegar
- ¼ cup butter
- 2 teaspoon pepper
- 1 teaspoon red pepper
- 1 teaspoon dry mustard
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 medium onion chopped
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- 3T Worcestershire sauce



Method:

Blend all ingredients in sauce pan and simmer until butter is melted.
Simmer



And don't forget our Southern desserts, where you can let the red, white and blue theme shine!



Apple Pie



Homemade Pound Cake



Meringue Banana Pudding



Homemade Ice Cream



Homemade Brownies

Remember to always monitor your blood sugar levels and speak with your healthcare provider about any dietary changes.



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