





THE ALABAMA

**Gazette**



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# Your Best New Word For 2023: “Overcomer”

By Lester Spencer



*Yes! In 2023,  
you can be an  
“Overcomer”!*

Marcus Luttrell, a former Navy Seal, wrote a book about the deadliest day in Navy Seal history. The book was entitled Lone Survivor and was later made into a very successful movie starring Matt Wahlberg as Marcus Luttrell. Marcus and three other Navy Seals were sent on a secret mission into the mountains of Afghanistan in 2005 to attack top Taliban leaders who were gathering in a small village for a high level meeting. It was supposed to be a quick in and out mission. But things went south fast!

*Continued on page 12*

## ALABAMA STATE HOUSE



Alabama Legislature, 1 South Union Street,  
Montgomery, AL 36130

**Alabama Legislature Gearing Up for  
the 2023 Legislative Session  
Convenes on MARCH 3.**

*Get to know YOUR State Representatives!*

*Is it good to think about any legal  
issues for the New Year?*

- ADVANCE DIRECTIVES
- MEDICARE/MEDICAIDE
- BUSINESS ENTITIES
- TAXES
- POWER OF ATTORNEY
- FINANCIAL ESTATE PLANNING
- LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

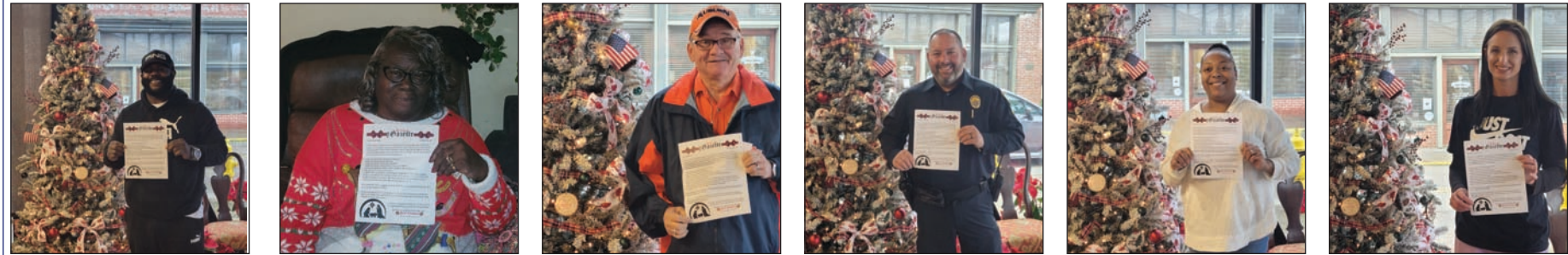
*Ronald A. Holstford - Page 4*

## What’s Your 2023 Resolution?



## \$1,000 Christmas Give-A-Way-A Special time to make new friends!

The Gazette was excited to meet the recipients for this years Give-A-Way.  
We’d like to thank all that submitted letters! Here are a few winners below:



Xavier Allen

Rannie Smith

Danny Ott

Josh Huffaker

Crystal Davis

Courtney Ragland

Classified

Ads

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*Maximum of 20 words each, with price and contact information.  
Keep it simple! Item Picture-\$5 charge. See page 11...*

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## Inside the Statehouse with Steve Flowers

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

[www.steveflowers.us](http://www.steveflowers.us)



### Two New U.S. Senators for Alabama

Richard Shelby walked out of the U.S. Senate this week after 36 years. Walking out with him is almost all of Alabama's seniority and power in Washington.

Seniority equates into power in the Halls of Congress, especially in the Senate. National publications have illustrated the fact that Alabama has benefited more than all 50 states from federal earmarked funds due to one man, Richard Shelby.



Katie Britt

It will be impossible to replace Shelby. His legacy will last for generations, especially in Huntsville, Birmingham, all defense facilities in Alabama, and the new docks he built in Mobile. There has been no senator that brought more federal dollars to their state, unless it was Robert Byrd of West Virginia.

You would think that we would be what some say, "up the creek without a paddle." We are a state that depends on federal defense dollars, and we have zero seniority in the U.S. Senate. Our senior Senator, Tommy Tuberville, has two years seniority and our junior Senator, Katie Britt, has zero years. That probably makes us 50th in seniority in the senate.

However, I contend that our freshman senators, Tuberville and Britt, are the best and right choices for this time. First of all, they will work together as a team. They like each other and deeper than that, Tuberville's people covertly and almost overtly campaigned for Katie Boyd Britt. She well knows that and appreciates it.

Primarily, Tuberville's and Katie Britt's personalities will prevail to Alabama's advantage. They both have larger than life gregarious, vivacious, winning personalities and in a 100-member body, this is admired, respected, and appreciated. You have some pretty big personalities and egos in that 100 member elite chamber.

Shelby has shared with me in past years that you can recognize the prima donnas and show horses, who are running for president, immediately. Then there are those that want to be a long term, effective workhorse senator for their state. The first group immediately starts looking for a TV camera to get in front of. The second group are finding their offices, making friends, building a solid staff and jockeying for committee assignments that help them be effective for their state.

Katie Britt Boyd will be greeted and treated like a rockstar. She is young and looks even younger than she is. She is a very articulate and attractive media subject. However, if you know Katie, she will not be swayed by this allure from the national media. She is grounded and has already made inroads with the senate GOP establishment leadership and will be rewarded with surprisingly powerful committee assignments. She will settle in to being in Washington as a Senator for Alabama rather than a show horse.

Tuberville is now our senior U.S. Senator. When he ran and won two years ago, most of us thought it was a whim, something he wanted to do in his later years. When you first meet him, you can gather that he is a very patriotic fellow. He is doing this for the right reason. He truly wants to serve his country.

Tuberville, from the get-go, fell in love with politics. He campaigned. Especially, one-on-one. But, when he got to the senate, it has been like Katie bar the door. Folks, he likes it and the other Republican senators like him. He has really fit in. He has the brightest, happiest contented smile on his face. He looks 10 years younger than his 68 years. He is always around his GOP senate buddies. He votes totally with he Republican caucus and does not seek fanfare. He knows the golden rule of politics, "Your word is your bond," and, "You dance with those who brung you."

He knew the Alabama Farmers' Federation (Alfa) was an integral part of his election. His first allegiance was to gravitate to committees that could help Alabama farmers as well as Alabama military veterans. He has put together a good staff. It will not surprise me if Coach runs for another six year term in 2026.

The aforementioned Alfa Farmers' Federation is the most important lobbying group in the state with our two U.S. Senators. Alfa early and ardently supported both Tommy Tuberville and Katie Boyd Britt. Their endorsement of Britt and Tuberville were pivotal and instrumental to their wins. Both know it.

Another young man named Paul Shashy was an integral part of both Britt's and Tuberville's campaigns.

We may be in better shape in the senate than some think.



Tommy Tuberville

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



Justice Will Sellers

One hundred years ago this month, delegates from various parts of the old Russian Empire met in Moscow to create the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The world would never be the same.

Prior to this declaration, an internal conflict pitted a variety of groups with differing political ideologies against each other. At the cost of more than 10 million dead, the communists emerged as the victor. Under Vladimir Lenin, they consolidated power to create the first communist state; an experiment that would fail almost 70 years later.

The political theories of Marx and Engels as interpreted by Lenin were applied in ways that were never intended and created an economy devoid of practical experience. As pointy-headed intellectuals, Marx and Engels theorized an idea of history that saw capitalism losing steam as workers gained power and created a totally egalitarian society. These theories made for interesting discussion among academics and theorists but should never have been taken seriously as a basis for government. It would be akin to founding a new political system based on a combination of Aesop's fables and Mother Goose.

But Lenin as an idealist believed the doctrine, and it became for him a religion based on a binary concept of society as either capitalist or socialist. If the end of history was the decline of capitalism, why not accept the inevitable, skip a view steps, accelerate the process, and embrace a form of socialism that was bound to occur anyway?

This belief set the stage for the most brutal concentration of power that left countless millions dead all in the name of achieving a workers' paradise. If you must break eggs to make an omelet, then to create a communist society, you had to murder upwards of 60 million people. But, thought Lenin and his successors, the achievement was worth the sacrifice...of someone else.

As with many other utopian dreams, nothing was based on any rational experience. Lenin failed to consider human nature and that various groups might take exception to his goals and objectives. In a modern contorted version of the divine right of kings, Lenin's anointed vision served as the basis of his ideas and could not be questioned. Anyone standing in the way was banished, if not summarily executed. Rather than advancing, history was retreating.

Consider the sharp contrast with the founding of the United States.

Here, the experience of colonists formed the basis of America. Rather than discard the English system of government, we embraced what worked, modified faulty systems, and exchanged only the King and Parliament for a President and Congress.

Unlike the British experience as conveyed to the new world, Russia never really experienced an Enlightenment that supported liberty and freedom. Indeed, Russia is a sad history of a firm dictator issuing decrees without any thought of getting consent, much less considering the consequences to his subjects.

Lenin and his ilk easily slid into this role, but initially with peasants experiencing freedoms they'd never possessed, there was a certain euphoria about this new state. They subscribed and could see that their lives might be improved. And, with any change or conversion, the newness creates an

### A Birthday No One Celebrates

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excitement that something different is happening. Peasants previously under the yoke of their masters were liberated and their labor marshaled to support the new system. But this did not last forever. Once they tasted a little freedom, they wanted more. But with all things being equal and scarce, freedom was apportioned and limited.

Working for the common good was a great motivating factor and created an initial enthusiasm. But in the USSR, under communism, the common good was decided by others. Any sense of individuality, creativity, or ambition was subjected to state control, reducing liberty to the lowest common denominator.

People from other countries flocked to see this new workers' paradise where greed, profit, and selfishness were eliminated and subjugated to a new vision. But just like Russia under the Tsars, what people saw was filtered and limited; the reality was much different.

The USSR would have its apologists who would celebrate the collective factories and farms and dream of a new world order. But under the surface, all dissent was barred, fear ruled the day, and any disagreements were met with severe punishment and, in many cases, disappearance and death.

Once Lenin died and Stalin muscled his way to the top, a killing machine that far surpassed anything seen before assassinated all rivals, banished dissidents to Siberia, and systematically starved untold millions.

But elite intellectuals who knew no distinction between theory and practice praised Stalin's achievements. The USSR was on the cusp of something great, and people across the world were invited to get on board. But then, Stalin allied himself with Hitler, which ended most optimism about the future of Stalin's regime.

And even when Stalin joined the Allied cause, the reports of the brutality of the Red Army not only to the Nazis but to their own soldiers were unbelievable. After the war, the rest of the world knew something was wrong when Soviet prisoners of war committed suicide when faced with repatriation.

During his concert in Moscow, Paul Robeson was shocked when he learned of Stalin's elimination of intellectuals. Other activists also realized the workers' paradise was a myth.

After visiting the USSR, United Auto Workers union leader Walter Reuther saw clearly that the American labor movement needed to stay clear. To his credit, he disabused any labor leaders of any miracle in the USSR. He saw firsthand the exploitation of the Soviet workers and anchored labor to a democratic society.

Ronald Reagan would be criticized for calling the USSR an "evil empire" and was deemed by detractors to have an inordinate fear of communism. As president, Reagan would pursue an aggressive policy of luring the USSR into a competition they could not win. The Berlin Wall fell soon after, the USSR dissolved, and Reagan's critics were silenced when his assessment was vindicated.

The birth 100 years ago of the USSR is reason to reflect on the indomitable human spirit that cannot be contained by systems of government that do not foster liberty under the rule of law.





Rob Tate

# ROBSERVATIONS...by Robert Tate

## Deal Of The Century

When the Brittney Griner trade with Russian arms dealer Viktor Bout was announced, there was a legitimate flurry of conversations both positive and negative.



Brittney Griner



Viktor Bout

Like most, I have my opinion about the deal. If someone asks me, I have no problem saying that I disagree with the deal, as it played out, for several reasons. A basketball player for an arms dealer, I do not think so. And although both people arguably hate America equally, the decision to go ahead with the trade, while leaving former Marine, Paul Whelan, to rot in jail for a crime that he did not commit, kinda makes me sick to my stomach. To me it is proof that President Biden, whoever is really pulling the strings in this administration could care less about Whelan since he clearly does not check off any of the “woke agenda” boxes.

I know that a lot of people out there hate Donald Trump and in no way, as I have said in the past, am I to be considered a “forever Trumper.” I still supported his Presidency and I like much of what he has said in the past. Love him or hate him, he is a smart guy. Running again in 2024? That is for another day. But one thing he said in the past about making a deal is, “You have to be willing to walk away from the table.” You have to. There are times when negotiating with someone, their intransigence is a sign of their arrogance and you must be willing to get up and walk away.

Had President Biden’s deal included Whelan and all (if any) other Americans detained in Russia, I would feel much better about it. Griner alone? No. Not even close. No matter how many people cried and put her jersey number their uniforms, if one American dies because of the weapons Bout is probably going to sell, you cannot convince me the deal was worth it. There is a good chance that at some time in the future, American soldiers will come into contact with an enemy supplied with weapons sold by Bout or some terrorists in the U.S. will kill some Americans with his wares. Would it be worth it then?

For some reason, Democratic Presidents seem to have a lock on these really bad deals. The Griner/ Bout deal pales in comparison to President Obama’s Taliban for the Army Sergeant Bowe Bergdahl trade back in 2014. That was a real winner. Let me refresh your collective memories. In 2009, Bergdahl deserted his post and defected to the Taliban. There he was held until 2014 when President Obama affected a trade for five Taliban leaders. Yes, five, count them, five Taliban leaders for one soldier who deserted his post. “Rob, how do you know he deserted? I think he was simply captured.” Uhhhhh, he left a note behind saying he was defecting. So, in all of Obama’s infinite wisdom, who did he let go out of Guantanamo for one Bowe Bergdahl?

**1. Mohammad Fazl** – Fazl served as Chief of Staff of the Taliban Army. He was associated with terrorist groups opposing US and Coalition forces. According to documents from the Joint Task Force Guantánamo, Fazl is “wanted by the UN for possible War crimes including the murder of thousands of Shiites”. The document stated Fazl has become a recruiting symbol for the Taliban.

**2. Khairullah Khairkhwa** – Khairkhwa was the interior minister under the Taliban. He helped found the Taliban in 1994. He was directly associated with Osama Bin Laden and Taliban Supreme Commander Mullah Muhammad Omar. Likely involved with militant training, he was also “a narcotics trafficker and probably used his position and influences to become one of the major opium drug lords in Western Afghanistan”, and probably used profits from drugs to promote Taliban interests.

**3. Norullah Noori** – Nori served as the governor of Balkh and Laghman provinces in the Taliban regime. He was a senior Taliban military commander in Mazar-e-Sharif. Nori is “wanted by the United Nations for possible war crimes including the murder of thousands of Shiite Muslims” along with Fazl. According to Barnett Rubin, they were “responsible for ethno-sectarian massacres in northern Afghanistan” along with their enemies.

**4. Mohammed Nabi Omari** – Nabi was the Taliban's chief of communications. Nabi had “operational ties to Anti-Coalition Militia (ACM) groups including al-Qaida, the Taliban, the Haqqani Network, and the Hezb-e-Islami Gulbuddin”. He also “maintained weapons caches and facilitated the smuggling of fighters and weapons”.

**5. Abdul Haq Wasiq** – Wasiq was deputy chief of the Taliban regime's intelligence service. Wasiq had direct access to Taliban and Hezb-e-Islami Gulbuddin leaders, and was “central to the Taliban’s efforts to form alliances with other Islamic fundamentalist groups to fight alongside the Taliban against US and Coalition forces after the 11 September 2001 attacks”.

By now, everyone reading my column probably knows I am a WWII history buff, and I decided to take a look at these five Taliban leaders and compared them to leaders within the Third Reich who held similar positions within the government and military. Each Nazi listed is comparatively the same as the Taliban member paired with same number.

- Wilhelm Keitel** – Field Marshal and chief of staff of the Armed Forces High Command 1938-1945
- Wilhelm Frick** – Reichs Minister of Interior (1933-1943) and Reichprotector of Bohemia-Moravia 1943-1945.
- Arthur Seyss-Inquart** – Governor of Austria and Reich Commissioner of occupied Holland or Hans Frank – Governor General Poland (Responsible for ¾ of the Jewish deaths in that country).
- A cross between:**
  - Albert Speer** – Chief architect and Minister of Armaments.
  - Josef Goebbels** – Reichsminister of Propaganda. He had control over all news media, art, and public information in Germany.
- Wilhelm Franz Canaris** - a German admiral and the chief of the Abwehr (the German military-intelligence service) from 1935 to 1944.

Let’s say the year is 1943 and we were in possession of these Nazis. Do you think for one second we would have released them back into the fight for the freedom of one soldier? Especially one who had defected? Again, let me answer for those who may be struggling with this one. “NO!” I heard some folks on the news talking about how prisoner swaps have happened throughout history in time of war and that is true. No doubt. But I defy somebody to find me an actual historical case where during a time of war, five senior enemy leaders were traded for one soldier.

You wanna know the problem with catch and release? Try this on. Today, these Taliban guys are all part of the new government which today by the way, have announced that no women in the country will be allowed to pursue an education beyond the sixth grade. That didn’t take long did it? So if you are asking, “Where are they now?”, here is the answer. Fazl - Deputy Defense Minister; Khairkhwa - Acting Minister of Information and Culture; Noori - Acting Minister of Borders and Tribal Affairs; Omari – Since August, the governor of eastern Khost province; Wasiq - Acting Director of Intelligence.

So, this leaves us with the Griner/ Bout deal. Reports have come out that Bout has already gone back into business. Heck, why wouldn’t he? I almost puked when the National Security Council Coordinator for Strategic Communications John Kirby tried to justify the swap by saying that Bout would have been released in 2029 anyway. Yeah, Herr Kirby, another seven years. Why can we not all just admit that this deal stinks and Biden got it wrong, yet again? I would say the President should be ashamed but he has no shame.

I read an article about Griner the other day that I have to admit was the first that I saw that put a real, unique face on her. My level of sympathy and respect actually jumped a couple of notches. The article said that while she was on the airplane coming home, the only thing she wanted was to talk. That’s it. No crazy demands, nothing but to talk. She said for the past 10 months she had listened to nothing but Russian and just wanted to talk. I really liked that. Then it said she took the time to memorize everybody’s name on the airplane and have direct conversations with each of them. She spent most of the 13 hours on the plane just talking to people. Again, I really liked that a lot. It showed a side of her that no other article I have ever read did.

So, as an American I am glad to see Griner back home with her family. But certainly not in the manner in which it occurred and not without Whelan or any other American illegally detained in Russia. The deal should have been, “You want Bout, you will release all of these Americans. If not, take note of the Mistle Toe dangling in front of my backside as I head out of the room. Call me when you are serious about negotiating.”



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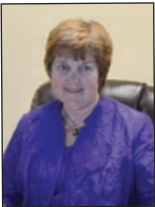
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### January 2023 Contributing Writers:

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Ronald A. Holtsford

## Is It Good to Think About Any Legal Issues This New Year?

*Is it good to think about any legal issues for the New Year?*

**Without specifics about yourself I'll make this answer generic in a personal and in a business sense.**



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### FINANCIAL ESTATE PLANNING

I presume you looked at your financial estate planning (401k, mutual funds, stocks and bonds, life insurance, etc) which is important as there are some changes such as to an inherited IRA. Ask your investment professional. You should also think about your legal estate planning. After all you are a year older; you may have gotten married, had a new child, had a child reach the age of majority (19 years), gotten divorced or suffered the death of a spouse or even a child. You may have a child graduate, enter the workforce and be off your payroll. Even if the child is off your payroll you may keep them on your health insurance until they reach age twenty-six (26) as a buffer or necessity if you still have a family plan but it may be that you decide not to continue to carry the young adult child if the plan has changed and the cost can drop significantly. Your financial estate planning goes hand in hand with your legal estate planning and you should discuss that with your lawyer, not that he or she will try to advise you on whether your investment advisor is steering you correctly but rather the impact of your financial worth on your legal estate.

### TAXES

For 2023 the gift tax exclusion moves up one thousand dollars from last year to \$17,000.00 a person, as a gift (child, grandchild, etc.) not requiring the filing of a Gift Tax return or up to \$34,000 to a person if both you and your spouse gift to the same person once per year. There is a lifetime basic exclusion and generation skipping tax (GST) limit of \$12.92 million in 2023. There may be a tax advantage for the wealthy in that and if this seems to be something that might be helpful to your financial planning you should seek the advice of an accountant or other tax/ financial professional (may include a tax attorney).

For 2022, there was a \$12.06 million total estate tax exemption per individual; 2023 will provide a \$12.92 million tax exemption. The total GST and total estate tax exemption are inclusive in total in that they cannot exceed \$12.92 million. The portable portion mentioned above may be available to a surviving spouse who may be able to combine through election their unused estate credit amounts up to a total of \$25.84 million. See your tax professional after the death of the first spouse if your assets are in the millions. Remember that life insurance is considered for estate tax purposes if you have control over the policy (i.e. ability to change the beneficiaries, cancel the policy, etc). Some individuals have large insurance policies and in the past not inconceivable for high middle class people to have an estate over prior limits but the possibility could even exist with some wealthier individuals. If you die in 2023 with an estate of greater than \$12.92 million (or \$25.84 million for a second to die spouse) then that amount over \$12.92 million will be taxed at 40%.

With President Biden and the Democrats in control of the Senate and Executive branches, there are some items that may well change and as of this writing are speculative. Rather than the annually successive increase from \$12.92 million this year, set to be rolled back in 2026 to maybe \$7.1 million per individual, it is a distinct possibility that things may roll back earlier; but when and how much is anyone's guess. The midterm changes were not the expected bang and of course there is another Presidential election in just under two years. Other items that were thrown around last year included a rollback to \$3.5 million, a 45% tax on amounts greater than whatever the excluded amount is for the year you die or changes to capital gains tax rates.

### LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

With that said you need to pull out your Last Will and Testament and review it. If you have had any life changes (marriage, divorce, death, large inheritance, new child, etc.) a new Will may be in order. If you don't have a Last Will and Testament you need to have a lawyer prepare one as soon as possible. Why do you need one? Because if you don't then the State of Alabama has one for you. Some of the spousal examples under the rules of intestacy (dying without a Will); (1) first \$100,000 to spouse and then 1/2 of the remaining estate to the living parent(s) when there are no children, (2) if children then the spouse gets \$50,000 and 1/2 of the rest, (3) if one or more of the children are not yours then the surviving spouse only gets half of everything, period. This is probably not the estate plan you have in mind. There are internet sites and software programs that can also assist with a Last Will and Testament but there is no guarantee that it will pass muster regarding state rules on probate nor a guarantee that it will do what you want upon your death. The best chance of meeting estate goals is through a lawyer and if you are of moderate means, you may be surprised that it is less expensive than you think. In the long run a Will may save money since an intestate estate when probated requires the bonding of the Personal Representative and an inventory of the decedent's estate. I run into too many old or non-attorney prepared defective Wills when it really counts and there is an attempt to probate the estate. Obviously such probate is not without issue. If you have an out of state prepared Will it should be acceptable for probate since under the Full Faith and Credit Clause (Section 1, Article 4) of the United States Constitution a valid Will prepared in one state is valid in Alabama. There can be issues so a review with an Alabama attorney is always a good thing to do.

### POWER OF ATTORNEY

Aside from the Last Will and Testament you may want to have a Power of Attorney prepared, both one for financial reasons and health. Most prepared these days are durable which require wording that the power of attorney is effective even in your disability or incapacity. Financial Powers of Attorney became a statutory form as of 1 January 2012. Most attorneys have concerns about the filling in the blank and initialing choices format and most now insert tried and true language used in their practices for their many years. A financial Power of Attorney is now by default a Durable power; however I insert the needed language anyway to make sure that there are no questions about it's durability. A Power of Attorney (POA) can be very powerful and placed in the wrong hands can be damaging such as a daughter that is named AGENT and decides to sell your lake house and push you towards moving to an assisted living facility. On the other hand, naming a trusted AGENT and retaining the POA for future needs can be extremely beneficial. The POA can be used so that someone can write your bills for you during incapacity, file your taxes and with health/ Health Insurance Portability and Privacy Act (HIPAA) provisions monitor your care with the doctors and hospital as well as handle medical insurance billing. The POA may also be used to nominate whom you would want as a conservator or guardian should one need to be named for you through a Court proceeding. A health care power of attorney can be used to coincide with the Advance Directive mentioned below should you have need to name another or others to help with health care decisions.

### ADVANCE DIRECTIVES

The final personal document would be an Advance Directive for Health Care, which is composed of a Living Will and Health Care Proxy nomination. It will allow you to make certain decisions about end of life issues should you later become unable to speak for yourself and two doctors have determined that you will likely die in the near future. This is the document that Terri Schiavo DID NOT have and for that reason the court found the testimony of the "husband" who was then living with another woman to be credible as to Terri's final wishes. Hmmmmm. Naming a Health Care Proxy is the same as naming a health care power-of-attorney such as under a POA. The proxy is given limited rights under which situations that they can make decisions. And by the way, the ex-spouse automatically loses that job as proxy upon divorce. That's dodging a bullet!

### MEDICARE/MEDICAID

If retirement is nearing and you will also receive Social Security consider that the 2023 Medicare Part B will move (actually decrease) from the 2022, \$170.10 to \$164.90 per month dependent on whether the senior is subject to the statutory "hold harmless" provision. With higher income brackets so does the cost for Part B increase. If you need nursing home (skilled nursing) care under Part A, days 1-20 are fully covered provided you continue to meet Medicare's requirements for those days; the co-payment for days 21-100 (if you qualify) will be \$200.00 per day (\$194.50 per day in 2022). After day 100 you are 100% on your own unless you have some other means of long term care payment. If you have not already checked on long term health care insurance you should do so now. It not only will cover nursing home care but can also cover assisted living or in home care. If you consider this insurance also look carefully at the options since they may be equally as important as the policy itself. This includes inflation increases which are very important or even the option of continued coverage for a certain amount of time when one with "forgetfulness" forgets to pay the premium.

With the exception of a few states and the District of Columbia, the individual mandate under the Affordable Care act (Obamacare) was changed in 2019 to zero. That of course continues to be contentious in that without the mandate it is argues that the ACA is null. Four states and the District of Columbia have state mandate penalties though Vermont has no penalty attached to their mandate. The time to make health care changes under the ACA ended 07 December 2022 and unless you have a qualifying event or become eligible under Medicaid/ CHIP after the open enrollment period passes this will be the last opportunity until the 2023 period begins in October. Older Americans may be eligible both for Medicare and Medicaid and impoverished Americans may be Medicaid eligible when they cannot afford premiums under Obamacare and some Americans are eligible for insurance from the market place with subsidized premiums.

### BUSINESS ENTITIES

If you are currently in business or considering a business what about entity? A sole proprietorship offers pass through taxation but no limited liability. Your personal and business assets are at risk in a lawsuit. A Limited Liability Company (LLC) or a Registered Limited Liability Partnership (RLLP or LLP) offers the same pass through tax advantages as well as limited liability. A "C" corporation offers the same limited liability but there is taxation on the corporation and taxation on the shareholders. If you are in one of these entities and about \$80,000.00 plus salary talk to your accountant about the possibility of an "S" corporation election. Current tax considerations suggest that pass through entities not involved as professional service businesses (accountants, attorneys, etc) such as sole proprietorships, LLC's, LLP's and S corporations may take an additional significant percentage off their income. Because pass through entities are taxed at the owner's tax rate this will give an additional percentage decrease in taxable income.

In addition to the advantages of pass through taxation and limited liability there may also be some self-employment tax advantages since some of the income can be paid to a shareholder- employee as a profit distribution. The Internal Revenue Service however looks for Shareholder- Employees that pay themselves substandard salaries for their position in order that they can take more from the company as a distribution and save more on Self Employment taxes. The IRS will consider a reasonable income based on IRS summarized factors considered by a Court case from the Eighth Circuit, which advised shareholders to give them careful consideration in establishing their compensation. The factors are:

- (1) Employee qualifications;
  - (2) The nature, extent, and scope of the employee's work;
  - (3) The size and complexity of the business;
  - (4) Prevailing general economic conditions;
  - (5) The employee's compensation as a percentage of gross and net income;
  - (6) The employee-shareholder's compensation compared with distributions to shareholders;
  - (7) The employee-shareholder's compensation compared with that to non-shareholder employees or paid in prior years;
  - (8) Prevailing rates of compensation for comparable positions in comparable concerns; and
  - (9) Comparison of compensation paid to a particular shareholder-employee in previous years where the corporation has a limited number of officers.
- An "S" Corporation election only exists through the IRS and has specific requirements. So you can be an existing LLC, C Corporation, etc. but elect via the IRS as an "S" Corporation. Ask your accountant about whether it is right for your business.

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

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

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

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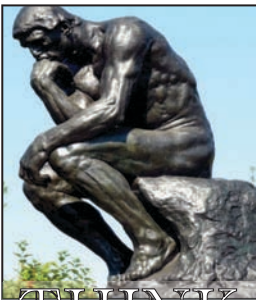




John Sophocleus

Call Her Kat...Privett-Duren, that is  
(Courageous Victim of Auburn Universitys  
Corruption to Remember)

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THINK

Feedback from last month’s postscript compels writing more on Kat Privett-Duren who was the first courageous soul at AU to stand against the malicious administrator recently disciplined in federal court by upholding Professor Stern’s First Amendment civil right. How little local Lee County media covered this unlikely victory against such abusive power is revealing. Helps one understand how wrongdoing of this sort in our city/county government, hospitals, school systems, etc. continues unchecked. The Stern victory has earned enough national attention where accreditation agencies appear to be taking AU corruption more seriously. Little hope for correction from BCA Ivey neglecting her gubernatorial duties over the Board of Trustees; even less hopeful recently installed lobbyist Katie Britt will care about students and taxpayers. On the other hand, little doubt Ms. Britt will make sure her master’s name remains to enshrine Shelby’s corruption and lack of oversight on wrongdoings at AU, most notably a failed banker trustee (who mentored Felon Hubbard) responsible for one of the biggest FDIC bank failures in US history.

My eldest Goddaughter contacted me completely incredulous at her Alma Mater supporting a Dean abusing a so-called ‘witch’ who was among her most cherished professors; by many accounts Kat enjoys a well earned reputé as one of the best instructors in the college. Fascinating my Goddaughter thousands of miles away knew about something unreported/unspoken of in my own college. This was before Facebook decided/managed what information users view. Few things tear at a Godfather’s heart more than a Godchild wanting someone to stop a bully. Kat is indeed of good Spirit, sad how many malicious politburo members like this undisciplined administrator think it OK to use their position and tax-dollars to destroy others of faith they’re too ignorant to understand, don’t use the exact incantations they demand, etc. The trial which landed a decisive blow on this malicious administrator commencing on All Hollow’s [Saints] Eve was a little ‘ironic icing’ on the verdict.

As a fellow victim of administrator abuse and adding insult to injury, when Felon Hubbard minions made sure I was not rehired, it was at a time I wanted to teach this Goddaughter economics. Professor Stern’s efforts to reduce Hubbard minion deleterious impacts on his department as chair allowed teaching my younger Goddaughter years later. Stern’s success shielding his unit from expanding corruption would attract even more abuse and effort against one of the more honest, productive departments known to do sound research on failed command and control policies/programs to improve the general welfare of citizens. Objective economists with an eye to see financial improprieties and request documents and explanation on fraud (some may recall the Gazette column exposing ‘Grand-theft Auto Allowance’ to trump up RSA checks) at AU made the assault on Stern’s First Amendment civil rights all the more pressing. I pray the federal court sees fit to protect Prof. Stern and his unit from further administrative abuse using the colour of authority and our taxpayer dollars to destroy exemplary academics like Kat.

The assault my Goddaughter spoke of against this outstanding English instructor was true and even worse. The most petty act I recall the Auburn Family (a.k.a., Mafia) committed against Prof. Privett-Duran was refusing to release her graduation records for securing employment elsewhere after this malicious Dean took her job, against the better informed department chair’s determination. The group supporting fraud, theft and civil right violations at AU are worthy of RICO investigation if we’re serious about removing enough of the corrupt politburo members to make a difference. Instructors with stellar records like Kat have no problem getting hired elsewhere to illustrate how wrong this malicious (now confirmed by a federal jury) Dean has been. When I was not rehired (thankfully more publicly reported in those days) universities immediately made contacts wanting to hire me... fortunately colluding AU administrators couldn’t hold my Clemson graduation records ‘hostage’ as our ugliest pillagers on the plains did to Kat.

After much effort and explanation I convinced an attorney to take Kat’s case to federal court. God bless attorneys of this sort who go the extra mile to take on these high paid harassing politburo thugs. Difficult to educate (even with Prof. Stern’s help) those outside of the academic industrial complex differences between chair, dean, installed dept. head, instructor, president, professor, provost, etc. We did have the benefit of illustrating just how unusually obscene it was for a Dean to reach down and destroy a highly regarded instructor over the decision of a duly elected department chair and provide sound explanation how this Dean singled out the ‘witch’ he wanted burned... OK, fired. Sadly, the career and life of this accomplished, productive instructor has been irrevocably harmed in this columnist’s observed opinion while the over-paid, malicious, incompetent administrators continue to be a growing parasitic cancer in Lee County.

The best report [11/23/22 LaFayette Sun] I’ve read on the Stern verdict (again, well outside Lee County’s media black-out/underreporting) was penned by John Brice who noted, ‘...financial settlement paid out by AU as compensation for the improper firing of Dr. Katharyn Privett-Duren by Aistrup may have been the past that served as prologue to Stern’s case...’ By some accounts Dean Aistrup’s deposition on his ‘witch-hunt’ was devastating to confirm his malice, yet this Dean was not fired to stop him these past years; certainly a just outcome for one that enjoys harassing and wrongly firing others. AU has a well earned reputé of paying well for poor performing administrators, coaches, dead-wood professors, student advisors/representatives, etc. instead of very publicly removing them as an example for all to observe.

Shepherding attorneys to grasp AU wasn’t simply obviating broadcast of this specific ‘witch-burning’ morass but putting a lid on airing many other things this malicious Dean connected to/exposed throughout our corrupt university is a daunting task. The relentless PR campaign and veneer paid to Matrix type political hacks and columnists on university payrolls seem impossible to overcome at times. If AU had to suffer more substantial settlement/verdict payments or actually begin to air more wrongdoings in federal court, perhaps things would’ve improved. I’m unaware of any settlement offer(s) to Stern, but confident it would’ve been rejected (as me and my bride refused a \$2 million settlement offer from politburo members to avoid property rights being reaffirmed in federal court) without removal of the most corrupt, malicious AU administrators.

Two upcoming cases in federal court promise to shed more disinfecting light on our corrupt Governor, Board of Trustees, President, Legal Counsel,

upper administrator etc. pattern and practice of civil rights violation with glee, greed and malice. In spite of successful efforts to expose and remove this malicious cancer from AU and attenuate further harm, many of these unprosecuted criminal actors/activities remain employed at student and taxpayer expense. Another \$700,000 for this corrupt administrator’s malice (rewarded with handsome paychecks and continued harming and polluting AU) provides further public awareness our politburo and local media are finding harder to conceal.

Some forecast two more civil right lawsuits filed against AU administrators will be similarly successful at curbing ‘Auburn Greed.’ Expect this same malicious administrator (still employed - i.e., not publicly fired for his wrongdoings) to be disciplined again in the federal courts this summer. A much less complex case than the Stern victory, but nonetheless vulgar to a outstanding, productive professor. Those aware what this harasser has done to Professors Privett-Duren, Stern and others are not surprised by serial malefactors undisciplined by our governor, BoT, recent presidents, legal counsel, upper administrators, etc. at AU. The other civil right lawsuit against another Dean (installed now as president, to further blatantly illustrate how corrupt things are at AU) is the longest in waiting a trial date and will illustrate how deep the corruption and outside influence has become to attack sound scholarship and academic freedom/integrity of our most productive, honest scholars and faculty.

I requested Prof. Privett-Duren consider sharing some perspective/thoughts on the recent verdict exposing this malicious Dean in federal court. Honoured this courageous victim provided the following quote:

*“At long last, some justice has been won in the case of Michael Stern’s battle against the corrupt underbelly of a university that I once held in high esteem. For some of us, that justice was not soon enough, nor comprehensive enough, to make a difference. The loss of career, retirement, reputation, and a long-held conviction and faith in AU’s mission statement was irreparable. And, as is often the case with unprincipled systems of governance, we still appeal for the return of fair, honorable, and holistic policies that protect and support the instructors and professors whose lives are/were dedicated to teaching. The world is changing and no longer hides the prejudices and systemic ideologies of “good ol’ boys” within the skirts of bureaucrats and administrators-- nor should it have ever done so. The emperor, indeed, has no clothes. The longer we affect that illusion, the deeper the fracture grows between what our university could have been and what it has become. As part of my agreement within my settlement against Auburn University, I cannot speak to what I have suffered, nor experienced, at the termination of my fourteen years within those beloved walls. I can say that I loved teaching, and that I was once loved by my students, and that my heart will always be just a little broken by the loss of it all.*



Prof. Privett-Duren

*And so, I stand with Michael Stern, and am ever grateful that he had the fortitude to fight the battle that I could not. May we one day see Auburn University brought back around to the noble core that built its foundations. And until then, to everyone still struggling to stand under the weight of an administration that no longer considers its bearings: may the odds be ever in your favor.” - Dr. Katharyn M. Privett-Duren*

It is hard to ‘firewall’ such over-powering corruption within a university in our once lovely, small college town... now overgrown with so many political parasites and government subsidized, unsustainable expansion destroying our once wonderful quality of life. Marguerite Middlemas [4/7/22 Villager] report on Auburn City Council board appointments explained installing Dean Aistrup to fill Mack Lazenby’s unexpired term on the Planning Commission over five other applicants some thought may be of better character and Spirit than one with this (now jury determined malicious) reputé. Public servant, Mayor Ron Anders emphasized the impressiveness of the applicants and the importance of the Planning Commission. Anders was quoted with, “We had three outstanding interviews and I appreciate everyone seeking this position,” and also said, "Planning is so important to our community and there's so much going on and you really have to dig in and want to be a part of it.” Planning in Lee County has been another hub of ‘dug in’ corruption and cronyism created for the Auburn Mafia, many awaiting Felon Hubbard’s return from prison this month. To install Dean Aistrup speaks volumes of what Anders, et al on the Council really want over other applicants.

The most indelible comment I witnessed from this malicious Dean awaiting an Econ Department meeting, “*May the Wings of Corruption Carry You Far.*” In retrospect, I can say Aistrup’s wings have indeed carried him far from continued employment after AU paying settlements and verdicts for his malice to being installed among the Auburn City politburo to further spread corruption and malice as a public servant outside his academic sphere of influence. This malicious Dean clearly belongs with our most antithetical to the letter and Spirit of The Auburn Creed.

In closing, I’m the person who directs much effort getting things in court to solidify the corrupt from the righteous, knowing evil usually prevails in our State and my county. I’m not a good organizer, social media presence, facilitator of ‘Go Fund Me’ type endeavours, etc. I implore those of good ‘Auburn Creed’ Spirit to start a blessed New Year flooding AU with requests to restore this outstanding instructor’s employment and rally to restore Kat’s losses (esp. to her retirement) these past many years. The Auburn Mafia Family does well at paying failed coaches, corrupt administrators, faculty who allow our student athletes to be raped and clustered into sham degrees. Time for the Auburn righteous to make a stand and take care of their own... voters are going to keep installing the Bentley, Ivey, et al types who care more of prostituting wealth transfers than our education, safety and quality of life.

Our Founders Writings Reflect British and Colonial Spellings:

favour  
enterprises  
labour  
honourable

publickly  
defence  
negociation  
expençe

summinaries  
Saviour  
risque  
compleating

offences  
endeavours  
prophane  
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John Martin

After a disputed, bitter, (and in several cases possibly fraudulent) general election this past November, let's take a look at what we might expect for the next two years.

We could ask ourselves, "What happened to the expected red wave? Why did so many Democrats win elections that had been in Republican strongholds?"

The clear evidence points directly to the Supreme Court's overturning of Roe vs Wade combined with large numbers of extreme social hard-liners in many states recently pushing for draconian limits, or even outright bans, on abortions. Some have proposed a nationwide ban. Now deprived of the protection of Roe, women's rights advocates and numerous moderates—ones who would otherwise support free market Republicans—have been frightened into voting for Democrats who would protect their reproductive options. On Quora, Neil Baxter wrote, "...it was likely opposition to abortion **that cost Republicans the last election.**"

In other words, many Republicans have shot themselves in their feet with their anti-abortion mindsets. This is their Achilles heel. If they had been more pragmatic and not inserted their noses into people's private affairs, they would have won enough seats to dominate both the House and the Senate.

A word to the Republicans: Learn how to quit meddling—in both personal and economic matters. Learn how to leave things alone and just get out of the way. **You are supposed to be the party of less government. We have been voting for you to get government off of our backs.** Get off of your high horses and intruding into people's personal matters, and certainly don't criminalize them. Let the women and God decide whether their decisions with their own bodies is murder or not. Understand that **NOBODY** has a right to dictate what a person can or must do with his or her body (Remember the COVID vaccine mandates). Ask yourselves, "What woman would want to be forced to bear the child of a rapist and pass his violent genes onto future generations?"

The Republicans have suffered a hard lesson. In 2024, we will see if they have learned anything.

Now, aside from abortions, let's see how our leaders in Congress have been handling their official duties. I don't trust just anybody to provide an accurate report on this, especially the mainstream media. One of the very few sources that can provide honest and accurate evaluations is [FreedomWorks](#). It ranks our members on the specific criterion that really matters—their **voting records. How they vote is what makes the difference between tyranny and liberty.** FreedomWorks records their votes on key issues every year and judges them accordingly. Their scores rank anywhere from zero percent (totalitarian) to 100 percent (pure libertarian).

**The U. S. Senate's top performer** is Utah's **MIKE LEE**, with a score of 100% for his entire tenure. Today, he is the only one with that distinction. Ron Paul's son, **RAND PAUL** is a very close second with 98.4%. Both made 100% for the 2022 session. The Senate's bottom performer is Arizona's **MARK KELLY**, with a lifetime score of 1.4% and a 0% for 2022. Until recently, America's champion House member has been **JUSTIN AMASH** (MI), who has earned a perfect 100% voting record for ten years (2011 - 2021). In April, 2020, he left the Republicans, joined the Libertarian Party, and became its first member of Congress. He did not seek re-election in 2020, and has now retired.

**The top House members today are Republicans Dan Bishop** (NC), **Lauren Boebert** (CO), **Mike Flood** (NE), **Bob Good** (VA), and **Chip Roy** (TX), all with perfect 100% scores. The bottom House dregs were Democrats Mike Levin (CA), Kim Schrier (WA), Mikie Sherrill (NJ), Elissa Slotkin (MI), and Jennifer Wexton (VA), all with lifetime scores of 2% and 0% for 2022.

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## Our Congressional Report Cards

**For the most part, Alabama's delegation has performed well:**

**In the Senate, TOMMY TUBERVILLE**, our ex Auburn football coach, racked up an impressive **98.5%** since he was elected in 2020—a record unequaled by any Alabama senator since the late Jim Allen, who heroically battled Jimmy Carter's Panama Canal giveaway and passed away in 1978. Tuberville's 2022 performance was slightly less at 91.7%, but still above any other senator from Alabama in recent decades.

**Richard Shelby's** 2022 score was a solid "B" grade at 83.3%, but his decades-long lifetime score was considerably less at 68.8%—a high "D", largely depressed by his earlier experiences as a Democrat.

**Overall, our House members were well above average:**

Our top performer was **BARRY MOORE**, with a lifetime score of 93.3% and a 92.9% for 2022.

**Mo Brooks** was close behind with 88.2% (lifetime) and 92.9% for 2022.

**Gary Palmer** racked up 86.4% (lifetime) and 85.7% for 2022. Jerry Carl earned 83% (lifetime) and 78.6% (2022).

**Robert Aderholt** received 66.3% (lifetime) and 78.6% (2022).

**Mike Rogers** was almost identical with 65.7% (lifetime) and 78.6% (2022).

Our one low score was **District 7's Terri Sewell**. Her scores have been pathetic—9.7% for her tenure and a huge goose egg for 2022. The really sad part is that she just got re-elected by a large margin. What were the brain-dead voters in **District 7** thinking?

Overall, as we already know from past records, the Republicans are far ahead of the Democrats on protecting our sacrosanct Constitutional rights. Nationwide, six Republican representatives and one senator made perfect lifetime 100s, and 36 representatives and six senators earned "A" grades of 90 or above. About two thirds of all of the Republicans made passing grades of 70 or above.

The Democrats, as they have done in the past, failed miserably. Almost none scored greater than 20%, and half of them fell way down into the single digits. Over the last several years, their scores have continued to plummet.

Last year (2022), seventy eight of the Democratic representatives made absolute zero. Ninety three others made barely more at 7.1%. Forty six of their 50 senators also zeroed out. Their top senate score was 16.7% by Bernie Sanders. They keep getting re-elected again and again. About half of the American people have voted to sacrifice their most precious right—individual liberty—for the "free lunches" and other enticements that shackle them into the slavery of an authoritarian state.

If the mindsets of our Democrats and even some of our low-ranking Republicans gain dominance and impose big government oppression, our entire nation could degenerate into a despotic cesspool unfit for any civilized society. There are plenty of past examples all over the world—North Korea, Afghanistan, Iran, Somalia, Yemen, Venezuela, Zimbabwe (formerly Rhodesia), and Post-Apartheid South Africa.

When will this insanity end. Why do millions of people whine about "reparations" for slavery that disappeared more than a century and a half ago and no longer exists, but keep voting to enslave themselves to government masters again and again?

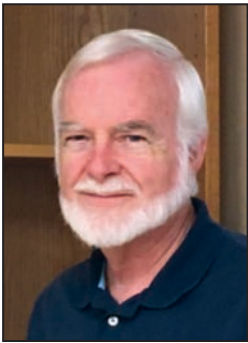
**SOURCE:**

**1. FreedomWorks.**

<https://www.freedomworks.org/scorecard/>

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## Robert E. Lee, Arlington and the Ministry of Truth



John M. Taylor

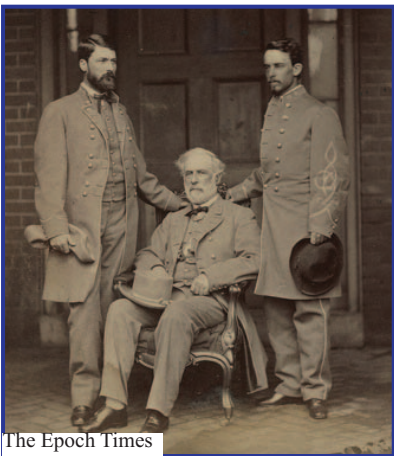
unsavory episode—one involving Robert E. Lee, George Washington, and the Custis family.

Envisioning economic disaster, the Lincoln Administration was determined to deny independence to the seceding Southern States. In some circles, the decision to coerce the States back into the Union caused civility and respect to be cast asunder. One area of disrespect centered on Arlington, the home of Robert E. Lee and his family.

In the early 1800s the mansion at Arlington and the surrounding property (around 1100 acres) was owned by George Washington Parke Custis, "the only grandson of Martha Washington, related to her through her first husband, Daniel Parke Custis." (Brownell) [George Washington helped raise G.W.P. Custis and his sister as his own at Mount Vernon.] Custis and his wife, Mary, had four children but only Mary Anna lived to adulthood. Mary Anna "married Robert E. Lee at Arlington House on June 30, 1831." (Brownell) The Greek-styled Arlington Mansion, which rests on a hilltop with a clear view of Washington, D.C., became the couple's home.

Lincoln's call for 75,000 troops from each State to invade the seceded States spurred Virginia's departure from the Union. After serious deliberation, Robert E. Lee resigned his U.S. commission on April 20, 1861. He loved the Union but he loved Virginia (his country) more. Being descended from patriots, he understood that government at the point of a bayonet was anti-American to the core. Winfield Scott and Abraham Lincoln encouraged Lee to command Union forces, but Lee could not participate in the invasion of sovereign States. This clearly rankled the "nationalists" and created strong enemies for Lee and his family. These animosities eventually lead to the Lee family leaving their beloved residence.

Montgomery Meigs was U.S. Army Quartermaster. Although he spent much of his youth in Georgia, his ancestry was Northern (Pennsylvania). His father was a renowned physician who found his way South. Coming from a wealthy family, Meigs was a staunch nationalist, making him a philosophical enemy of the prevalent Jeffersonian philosophy in the South. As Quartermaster, Meigs sought a large piece of property close to D.C. to bury Union soldiers. This made



The Epoch Times

Arlington a prime target. Using the property as a cemetery would strike a multi-faceted blow to Lee, who dared to side with his State.

"In 1862, a law was passed that allowed commissioners to collect taxes on properties in 'insurrectionary districts' in order to raise money." (Franco) Tax payment was required either in person or via an authorized representative. Mary Anna's poor health did not allow her to make the trip. "She sent her cousin to do so, but as he was not Mary Lee, the payment of \$92.07 was not accepted and Arlington was sold to the government for \$26,800 on January 11, 1864." (Brownell) The federal government unscrupulously "obtained" the property.

After the war, family members unsuccessfully attempted to regain their illegally usurped property. General Lee's eldest son, George Washington Custis Lee, did not give up, initiating a suit in 1873 to get the property back. The case (United States v. Lee) wound up at the Supreme Court and they ruled on December 4, 1882, the property had been illegally confiscated. The dubious manner in which Mary Lee's cousin was denied the ability to pay the tax helped lead to a favorable verdict. The Lee's legally got their property back, which meant the government was trespassing.

Custis Lee faced quite a conundrum—do you have the federal government dig up and re-inter those buried at Arlington and move all of the other illegally established offices on the property or do you compromise? Given the "reconciliation" sentiment at the time plus the nightmare of reinterring those buried at Arlington, Custis Lee compromised, choosing to accept the fair market value of \$150,000.00 from the federal government—the same government that literally stole the property.

This episode in American history would bring shame to anyone with a conscience; however, it is unlikely the "Ministry of Truth" would allow any government school to cover it. Just how would you justify that Arlington National Cemetery originated on stolen property?

(Personal Note: My Great-Great Grandfather on my Father's side was Pvt. Eli Webster Meggs, Pvt., Co. H, 4th Alabama Infantry. Where Montgomery Meigs was a scoundrel, soldiers like Eli Meggs were true patriots. Thank God I have found no family connection to Montgomery Meigs.)

**SOURCE:**

"How Robert E. Lee's Home Became Arlington National Cemetery," by Richard Brownell, May 2, 2018;

"Arlington National Cemetery Was Once the Home of Confederate Army Commander Robert E. Lee," by Samantha Franco, July 11, 2022;

"The Scandalous History of Arlington National Cemetery," by Kathy Benjamin, May 27, 2012.





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## **SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (SSA) SERVICES IN MONTGOMERY**

### **SSI: 50 YEARS OF FINANCIAL SECURITY**

The Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program helps support many American families. As we celebrate 50 years of SSI, it is a great time to briefly share the history of SSI and information on how to apply.

On October 30, 1972, President Nixon signed SSI into law. In January 1974, we began paying SSI to people who met the eligibility requirements.

Fifty years later, SSI remains a lifeline program for millions of people and households with limited income and resources. SSI also helps children and adults under age 65 who have a disability or are blind and who have income and resources below specific financial limits. People age 65 and older without disabilities—who meet the financial qualifications—may also receive SSI payments.

You can let us know that you want to apply for SSI online at: [www.ssa.gov/benefits/ssi/start.html](http://www.ssa.gov/benefits/ssi/start.html). This process only takes about five to ten minutes, and no documentation is required to start. We will need the following basic information about you or the person you're helping:

- The name, date of birth, Social Security number, mailing address, and phone number of the person who is interested in applying for SSI. (Providing an email address is optional.)
- If helping another person, we need your name and phone number. (Providing an email address is optional.)

Once you provide this information and answer a few questions, we will schedule an appointment to help you apply for SSI. We will send a confirmation with the appointment date and time by mail and email (if provided). In some cases, we may call you to schedule the appointment.

If you're unable to begin the process online, you may schedule an appointment by calling 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778) from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. local time, Monday through Friday. You may also contact your local Social Security office. You can find the phone number for your local office on our website.

Once your SSI application is submitted, you can check the status online by creating a personal my Social Security account at: [www.ssa.gov/myaccount](http://www.ssa.gov/myaccount). SSI will continue to support families for many years to come. Please share this information with your friends and loved ones who may need it – and share it on social media.

### **GENERAL ENROLLMENT PERIOD FOR MEDICARE PART B**

If you did not apply for Medicare Part B (medical insurance) within three months before or after turning age 65, you have another chance each year during the General Enrollment Period. The period runs from January 1 to March 31 every year.

If you don't enroll in Part B when you're first eligible for it, you may have to pay a late enrollment penalty for as long as you have Part B coverage. Your monthly premium will increase 10% for each 12-month period that you were eligible for Part B but did not sign up for it. Your coverage starts the first day of the month after you sign up.

To learn more about Medicare, please visit our Medicare Benefits page at [www.ssa.gov/benefits/medicare](http://www.ssa.gov/benefits/medicare). You may also read our publication at [www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10043.pdf](http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10043.pdf).

Please share this information with your friends and loved ones who may need it – and share it on social media.

### **THIS NEW YEAR, LEARN ABOUT SOCIAL SECURITY ONLINE**

Social Security programs touch the lives of more than 70 million people. We work hard to ensure critical benefits and other services are accessible to you. Consider the start of the new year as an opportunity for you to engage with Social Security online. This begins with creating your free and secure personal my Social Security account at: [www.ssa.gov/myaccount](http://www.ssa.gov/myaccount). Once you create an account, you can:

- Apply for retirement, spouses, or disability benefits.
- Apply for Medicare.
- Check your application status.
- Request a replacement Social Security number card.

If you do not receive Social Security benefits, you can use your personal my Social Security account to:

- Get personalized retirement benefit estimates.
- Get your Social Security Statement.
- Get estimates for spouse's benefits.
- Get instant proof that you do not receive benefits.

If you receive benefits, you can use your personal my Social Security account to:

- Change your address (Social Security benefits only).
- Set up or change your direct deposit information (Social Security benefits only).
- Instantly get proof of benefits.
- Print your SSA-1099.

Your personal my Social Security account has a secure Message Center. You can choose to receive the annual cost-of-living adjustments and the income-related monthly adjustment amount online. Unless you opt-out of receiving notices by mail that are available online, you will receive both mailed and online notices.

Your personal my Social Security account offers easy access to features that save you time when you do business with us online. Check out our other resources available at [www.ssa.gov/onlineservices](http://www.ssa.gov/onlineservices) for your convenience. Please share this information with your friends and loved ones who may need it.

### **SOCIAL SECURITY CARDS ARE SAFER AT HOME**

Scams to steal your personal information are at an all-time high. The need to safeguard important personal documents such as your Social Security card continues to be very important.

A Social Security card is not an identification document. In many situations, you only need to know your Social Security number (SSN). Your physical card is not necessary for most business needs.

Do you need evidence for work? There are several documents you can use instead of your card. Other acceptable evidence includes the following:

- Birth Certificate.
- Permanent Resident Card or Alien Registration Receipt.
- Employment Authorization Document.
- Form I-94 or Form I-94A.

You do not need to show your physical card to apply for certain benefits. You can simply provide your SSN for benefits like:

- Housing.
- Health insurance.
- Food assistance.

You should also know your physical card is not required as evidence for the Department of Motor Vehicles or Driver License (REAL ID). The only state that requires a physical card is Pennsylvania. For all other states, other acceptable evidence includes:

- W-2 forms.
- Form SSA-1099.
- Non-SSA-1099 forms.
- Pay stubs.



**Keeping your card at home reduces the risk of loss or theft – and helps you keep your information safe.**

### **ATTORNEY FEE CAP INCREASE**

Social Security Administration Acting Commissioner Kilolo Kijakazi announced a change to the Attorney Fee Cap — the first in 13 years. The maximum dollar amount limit for fee agreements approved under the Social Security Act increased from \$6,000 to \$7,200.

Effective November 30, 2022, we may approve fee agreements up to the new dollar limit, provided that the agreements otherwise meet the statutory requirements.

If a fee agreement is not filed, a representative can submit a fee petition after completing work on your claim(s). We'll review the value of your representative's services—and let you know the fee your representative is authorized to charge and collect.

For more information, please read our publication, Your Right to Representation, at: [www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10075.pdf](http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10075.pdf).



**MACOA continues to serve seniors!**

**The Montgomery Area Council On Aging (MACOA)**  
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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.*

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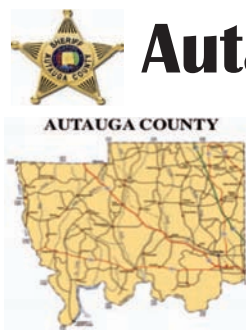
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# In Memory of Sheriff Joe Sedinger



## Autauga Co, Ala.

### SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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162 W 4th Street, Prattville, AL

[www.autaugasheriff.org](http://www.autaugasheriff.org)



Sheriff Joe Sedinger

## Joseph "Joe" Whitcomb Sedinger

SEDINGER, Sheriff Joseph "Joe" Whitcomb, 72, resident of Prattville, AL, passed away on Monday, December 26, 2022.

Funeral services were held on Friday, December 30, 2022 at 11:00 am from CenterPoint Church with Senior Pastor John Schmidt officiating. Burial followed at Rawlinson Cemetery with Prattville Memorial directing. The family received friends at Prattville Memorial Chapel on Thursday evening from 5:00 pm until 8:00 pm.

He is survived by his loving wife of 52 years, Leona Sedinger; daughter, Kristie Carroll (Monty); son, Joey Sedinger (Christy); three

granddaughters, Cyan Edwards, Kai Carroll and Mya Carroll; extended family and friends.

He was a Vietnam Combat Veteran, a Mason for 33 years, with the Sheriff's office for 29 years, with the last 8 years serving as Autauga County's Sheriff.

Pallbearers were Casey Ott, Chris Hill, Joey Sedinger, Ernie Smith, Toby Wilson and Tracy Griffis. Honorary Pallbearers will be the Autauga County Sheriff Deputies. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made in Sheriff Joe's honor to CenterPoint Church, The Montgomery Cancer Center or by donating blood at Life South.

*Our deepest sympathy to his family from the Alabama Gazette.*

## Support YOUR Local Law Enforcement



Sheriff  
Derrick Cunningham



## Montgomery County Sheriff's Office

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Chief Deputy Murphy

## Social Media

### Social Media Search

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## What is Smart911 ?

I strongly encourage all citizens to download the Smart911free app to your cellphone OR register your landline number at [www.Smart911.com](http://www.Smart911.com) to assist first responders in the event of an emergency. There's a misconception that law enforcement can pinpoint your location when you call 911 from a phone; however, first responders can only pinpoint the "vicinity" of your location which is why Smart911 is so important. Smart911 will allow pertinent information to be stored into a profile database so that in the event of an emergency, vital information is readily available to first responders or EMS which could mean life or death!

Again, Smart911 is available through your app store OR by simply registering at [www.Smart911.com](http://www.Smart911.com). I hope you will all take advantage of this beneficial tool!

### Why Should You Sign Up For Smart911



## 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!*



## Lowndes County



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Sheriff Chris West



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## Alabama Highway Patrol



Troopers patrol approximately 69,500 miles of rural roadways in Alabama and are responsible for motor vehicle law enforcement, rural traffic crash investigation, and special duty performance during emergencies.

The Alabama Highway Patrol was created in 1936. Since its establishment, 29 officers have died while on duty.





# Honoring Our Heroes

**Dr. Martha Poole Simmons: A Journey of Service**



## Dr. Martha Poole Simmons



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

## Veterans Celebrating January Birthdays

- |                                     |                                 |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Buddy Martin Wilson... Jan 3rd   | 6. Robert C. Cerha.....Jan 14th |
| 2. Jerry Glenn Wheat.....Jan 4th    | 7. Rosa Scott.....Jan 23rd      |
| 3. Geoff Allen Colt.....Jan 6th     | 8. BillyGene Bonne.....Jan 28th |
| 4. William Randall Ray.....Jan 10th | 9. Harold Howell.....Jan 31st   |
| 5. Joseph Collins.....Jan 11th      |                                 |

## The Invisible Veteran

by Sarge Lintecum

*You can tell her by the twinkle in her eye.  
At parades when the flag marches by.  
She served our country and she served it very well.  
Some have even served a tour or two in Hell.  
She suffered hardship and never ceased to care.  
It gave us strength just to know that she was there.  
She was a leader, you could tell by the rank she wore.  
But she became the invisible veteran after the war.  
She can march, she can fly and she can sail.  
She proved that bravery isn't exclusive of the male.  
She did every job she was asked and more.  
But she became the invisible Veteran after the war.  
Now, it is finally time to right a wrong.  
Honor our sister Veterans, hear her song.  
It's very clear that she's a patriot to the core.  
Don't let her be the invisible Veteran anymore.*



## 1ST LT. JOHN OSEBURN DAVID



1st Lt. John Oseburn David served two years in the United States Army in Korea during the Korean War. His Military Occupational Specialty was Combat Engineer. His military decorations, badges, citations and campaign ribbons awarded included: National Defense Service Medal, United Nations Service Medal and Korean Service Medal.



1st Lt David was born July 10, 1928 to his parents, Louis Fred David and Lorena VanTuytle David in Danville, IL. He was reared there and also in Dayton, Ohio, Montgomery, AL, and Alexandria, LA, where he graduated from high school in 1946. He attended Northwestern State Teachers College at Natchitoches, LA. He transferred to Alabama Polytechnic Institute which is now Auburn University where he graduated with a B.S. Degree in Industrial Design in 1951 with a military commission as a 2nd Lieutenant after participating in R.O.T.C. at Auburn University.

Knowing that he would be drafted because the Korean War was under way,

1st Lt. David volunteered for military service beginning September 5, 1951. His first military assignment was at Camp Carson, Colorado Springs, CO. Next, he went to San Marcus, TX, to attend the Army's Flight School, but because of a problem with depth perception, he did not complete the flight training. He began his service during the Korean War at Pusan, Korea, with the 7th Division. He served in dangerous combat behind the main line of the enemy's resistance.

He served as platoon leader as a combat engineer with the responsibility of de booby trapping tanks. He was assigned to "D" Company, and using a jeep for transportation to sites, he worked on building warming bunkers, built corduroy roads of trees up a mountain and laid mines while under fire from artillery barrages.

On Christmas Day, he was transferred from combat to the 44th Engineers Group to a rock quarry where he worked rebuilding a water tank,

built Quonset huts and built a demarcation depot. He recalls seeing USO shows in a Quonset Hut. He was promoted to 1st Lt as Company Commander. He left Korea and was sent to Seattle, WA, followed by honorable discharge from the Army August 19, 1953 at Camp Breckinridge, Ky.

1st Lt. David returned to Montgomery, AL, where he worked at the AL State Highway Department as a draftsman, at Maxwell Air Force Base as a draftsman, at the AL State Highway Department as draftsman and with the AL Power Company as a draftsman where he became a draftsman supervisor and lighting specialist designing lighting for stadiums, streets and interior commercial projects. He retired from all employment in 1988. While working for the AL Power Company, he attended and graduated from Jones Law School in Montgomery, AL.

1st Lt. David and his wife, Barbara Rose, have been married 40 years. He has three children, six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. For many years, they enjoyed traveling in their RV motorhome throughout the U.S.A. including Alaska and also Nova Scotia, Canada, and they were members of the Winnegbago Travel Club. He has been a member of the Aldersgate United Methodist Church in Montgomery, AL, and a member of the Masonic Lodge working with male youth and a member of the Scottish Rite and Alzazer Shriner in Montgomery, AL.



1st Lt. David's conclusions about his military service are: *"I was bitter because I had seen so many of our American military personnel get killed. Over 2,000 were killed where I was at Triangle Hill. My service in combat qualified me for combat pay. Upon discharge, I became a member of the Inactive Reserve as a 2nd Lt, and I regret giving up my commission. I was honored to have served my country in Korea. I would like people to remember me as being a kind person."*

*Veterans are entitled to a patriotic ceremony at their funerals.*  
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Central Alabama VA Medical Center/Regional Office  
215 Perry Hill Road  
Montgomery, Alabama 36109  
334-272-4670





# HAPPY 103RD BIRTHDAY SGT. JOSEPH COLLINS!



Sgt. Joseph Collins was born January 11, 1920, in the Welona community of Coosa County, AL, and except for the four years that he served with the United States Army Air Force during WWII, he has lived in Rockford, AL, in Coosa County. His parents were William Milton Collins and Jessie Virginia Allison.

Collins attended grammar school in the Richville community and graduated from the Rockford High School living on a farm until he was drafted along with 35 others to serve in the U. S. Army Air Force. On February 14, 1942, he was inducted at Ft. McPherson, a U. S. Army Air Force Base in Atlanta, GA. Then he was sent to Keesler Field in Biloxi, MS, Army Air Force Field in Charlotte, N.C., Army Air Force Base in Meridian, MS, Camp Shelby Army Air Corps Base in Hattiesburg, MS, and then to Camp Kilmer, N.J., an Army staging area. At New York City, Collins embarked on a ship carrying 5500 military personnel with a destination for Glasgow, Scotland, arriving January 15, 1943.



He worked at an airfield, at Polebrook, England, from which the U.S. Army Air Force carried out its heavy bombing group with the Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress. Collins served with the 351st Bombardment Group and spent WWII servicing 45 American planes such as the B-17 with 2800 gallons of gasoline preparing them for combat flights on the German occupied countries of Europe. When WWII ended, Collins sailed back to the U.S.A. from Le Havre, France, and was discharged December 7, 1945, at Ft. McPherson, GA, and four Coosa County, AL, discharged G.I.'s pooled their money and paid a man \$50.00 to bring them home.

After discharge, Collins resumed working on a farm, cutting timber and raising cattle. He worked as a distributor for the Carter Co., a go-cart company, whose products were manufactured in

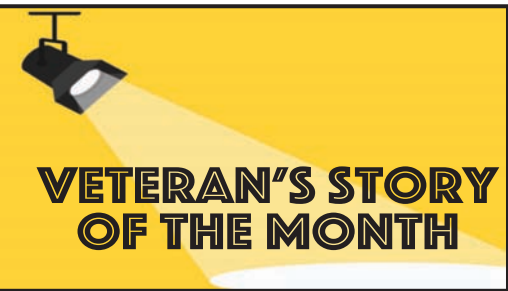
Brundidge, AL, delivering them in Georgia. Collins has served for 45 years as a supervisor for Coosa County Soil and Water Conservation which distributes federal money for conservation projects and is committed to conserving Alabama's natural resources by connecting those who use and work the land to the education, technical know-how and resources that they need. Collins was also involved working with the schools creating greenhouses and providing conservation information.

He and his wife, Elizabeth Hanna, have been married 59 years. Although they do not have children of their own, they have close relationships with friends whose children view them as special parents too. Collins has been an active, faithful member of the Providence Baptist Church. He has enjoyed fox and squirrel hunting.



Collins reflects upon his military service saying: *“On May 8, 1945, on the day that the war in Europe ended, he flew over the heavily damaged areas. Being in the military meant that you got to travel a lot. I got to meet people from almost every state in the union, learn more about how they lived compared to us and learn how to get along with them. I got to wade in the Mediterranean Sea near Marseille, France, after the war was over when we went there to close a base. I got to see cities in Scotland such as Dundee as well as lakes such as Loch Lomond. Back then everything was a secret. Today people are told how many troops are sent to war.”*

Today Collins continues his interest in the U.S. Air Force as each quarter he reads the 8th Air Force News.



## ONE VETERAN'S STORY IN OPERATION RESTORE HOPE

*(Operation Restore Hope was a military operation in 1993 whose mission was to secure routes in Somalia so food and supplies could be delivered to the starving population. Tensions came to a head in what is dubbed “The Battle of Mogadishu” The battle saw 18 US service members killed and another 84 wounded. Along with two Blackhawk helicopters shoot down and pilot, Mike Durant, captured. At the time this was the longest and bloodiest battle for the US since Vietnam.*

**SFC Willie James Smith, Jr. 62**

*(A MOS in the military is a number and letter identifier denoting your skill set/training in a specific job)*

Fort Benning, Georgia. And I signed in as 11. Bravo. (infantry).

**So sometime in your career you were deployed in Somalia in support of Operation Restore Hope correct?**

Yes

**Didn't you become disheartened or your soldiers become disheartened? When you realized that people that you're trying to help are the ones that are fighting you?**

I would say necessarily disheartened, but it was wow, we're here to help and they don't want it. It didn't matter what skin color, all they saw was Uncle Sam. The US Army. I had rocks and everything thrown at me. I've been called the “N” word believe it or not, which was Wow, here?

**Wow, I just, I can't wrap my head around that. So October 3rd 1993, were you on duty when “The Battle of Mogadishu” kicked off?**

Yes, as you know the QRF (Quick Reaction Force) rotates out to ensure were ready 24/7. On that particular day my platoon was tasked as the Special Weapons Unit.

**Do you remember the first intelligence report that came in?**

*(The QRF relies heavily on real time and accurate intelligence)*

That a helicopter had been down.

**Is that all the report consisted of?**

Thats all we knew, that a helo was down and it was in a specific circle in central Mogadishu that was extremely hostile.

**What was your mission objective given to your squad at that moment?**

We were supposed to immediately head to that location and link up with Charlie company and support them with our heavy weapons.They were ready. They had set up roadblocks burning debris, obstacles to prevent us from getting to that location. So with only a company size element, the attachment myself we weren't able to penetrate or continue on because there was too much heavy fire. We had to turn back.

**Was that your orders?**

Yes. There were snipers literally everywhere on the roofs RPGs (Rocket propelled grenades). Just imagine you're basically going into an ambush, no cover and no cover whatsoever. And we were trying to push forward couldn't, We had to pull back to the compound and regroup and that's when obviously we thought that “Hey, this is this is alot bigger than what we thought”.

**So what happened after that?**

Actually, we were all placed inside the vehicles and we moved toward the objective. Then we found out that not only one chopper was down there was a second, the fighting was fierce. We had more protection due to the above our vehicle armament, but there was a lot of RPGs you know, explosions we can hear them. The rounds bouncing off the vehicles as we're pursuing, but we got to a point where we did have to dismount to say about maybe a half a mile to the objectives. Where the two choppers we're down. So basically, we had to disembark and basically go from street to street to the objectives taking on the fire coming from everywhere.

**How long did it last?**

It lasted about eight hours. It seemed like it was an eternity. It took you so much by the time that we mounted you in vehicles to get out to the objectives. security objectives. Get the Rangers out was an eight hour we took about eight hours to do that. Yes.

**So did you guys ever get to the objective? Yes.**

**And was your order secure the objective?**

Yes. My company Alpha Company 214. We were the lead element. And I recall our mission was to go to crash site, Durants chopper. That was my company's mission. We were able to get there but when we arrived, he wasn't there, he had been taken earlier by the Somalians. But it was it was quite a harrowing experience. My company... We lost one, one soldier was killed with several wounded.

**Do you remember the proudest moment you had in the service?**

Well, I'm gonna say that was in Mogadishu, Somalia. Even though the political aspects were hazy, unclear .....But to go in and get your fellow soldiers out of harm and bring everyone back. Dead or alive.. like said we don't leave anybody on the battlefield. That was one of my proudest moments...memories.

**All right, one last questions: And what do you think about the current VA mental health program? The way they approach mental health, and your thoughts about mental health, PTSD, and etc, etc....?**

I had a friend passed away from suicide. In the military. It doesn't matter, combat..no combat, if it was Iraq Afghanistan or Somalia, we all suffer from the same thing. Same things that keep me up at night probably keep you up at night.

I obviously have utilized it and I will say take advantage of the programs.. I think it's deserved for all soldiers and airmen. Whatever military occupation that you would have held, I think it's come a long way. There still of course, many more roads I think need to be traveled but I know when I got out of the service in 2003 there was help for those maybe dealing with issues...Sometimes all it takes is to ask a veteran if they're okay..because sometimes, in the past, I hadn't been.

Once again, thank you for this opportunity to allow me to share my perspective. It doesn't matter what your military occupational skill was, we all shared the same common experience, we'll never be alone.

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- Piece of data
- Baryshnikov's step
- Back wound
- Soft palate hanger
- \*Any high mountain
- Tsar's edict
- Means
- Bishop of Rome's jurisdiction
- Female water-elf
- \*Highest mountain
- \*Sea that is also the largest lake
- A in MoMA
- \*Small island
- Ignited
- Lamborghini model
- Extravagant
- 15th of March, May, July or October
- \_\_\_\_-a-Sketch
- Technology expert
- Novice
- Damage one's reputation
- Lil' Bow Wow's first name
- Bette Midler's movie "\_\_\_\_ Pocus"
- "I'm \_\_\_\_ you!"
- Unit of pressure
- Denver breakfast choice
- Big rig
- \_\_\_\_ de Janeiro
- Excessively abundant
- Ensign, for short
- \*Great \_\_\_\_ Reef
- \*National Geographic \_\_\_\_
- Gibson garnish
- Arabic garment
- D-Day beach
- \*Longest continental mountain range
- Nada
- Energy to motion converter
- Golf pegs
- Red Cross bed
- Follow as a consequence

## DOWN

- Surfer's "man"
- Tel \_\_\_\_, Israel
- Ditty
- Extremist
- Masters without t
- Ghost of Christmas \_\_\_\_
- Miller High Life, e.g.
- Four-eyes' gear
- Bypass
- Uber alternative
- \*The largest continent
- Past participle of "be"
- Remove from political office
- Eyelid infections
- Opposite of nothing
- Burning aroma producer
- \* \_\_\_\_ sphere, the solid earth
- "She is pulling my leg," e.g.
- 9 a.m. prayer
- \* \_\_\_\_ sphere, air surrounding earth
- Sleeveless garment
- Blood of the gods, Greek mythology
- Harry Belafonte's daughter
- \* \_\_\_\_ sphere, all water on earth
- Aretha Franklin's genre
- Type of crime
- Young Montague
- Brown and yellow finches
- Cravat or bola
- Financial gain
- 100 centimes
- "Barefoot in the Park" playwright
- Summer ride
- "Green Gables" protagonist
- Amusement park attraction
- Sturgeon \_\_\_\_ and salmon \_\_\_\_
- Table mineral
- Chow or grub
- Biblical pronoun
- Ready and eager
- \_\_\_\_ sphere, all life on earth

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# Soul Searching

## Your Best New Word For 2023: “Overcomer”

**Yes! In 2023, you can be an “Overcomer”!**



Marcus Luttrell, a former Navy Seal, wrote a book about the deadliest day in Navy Seal history. The book was entitled Lone Survivor and was later made into a very successful movie starring Matt Wahlberg as Marcus Luttrell. Marcus and three other Navy Seals were sent on a secret mission into the mountains of Afghanistan in 2005 to attack top Taliban leaders who were gathering in a small village for a high level meeting. It was supposed to be a quick in and out mission. But things went south fast!

The Navy Seal team was spotted by some shepherd boys and one thing led to another and some 200 well armed Taliban leaders and soldiers came up the mountain after them. A deadly and bloody battle ensued. They radioed for help from a nearby base and 17 Navy Seals and soldiers were sent in after them on a helicopter. As the aircraft neared the rescue spot to evacuate the Navy Seals, the chopper was shot down and all souls on board were lost. Marcus and his team were on their own. During the relentless and heavy firefight, his three Navy Seal brothers were killed too. Marcus was eventually rescued and became the lone survivor of the deadliest day in Navy Seal history. Some 20 Navy Seals were killed that day. Marcus had been shot 11 times, broke his back, his pelvis and his right hand. Also, both his knees were blown out, his shoulder was pulled out of socket and his face was severely lacerated.

When asked how he survived, he said it all went back to his Navy Seal Training on the beaches of Coronado Beach, CA. To become a Navy Seal you as highly vetted and screened before you ever start the six month training which is by far the toughest military training in the world. In the forth week of the first month, you go through what they call "Hell Week". Only 25 to 30 of the 120 men in the class will make it though this week. They are only allowed four hours of sleep in this five day period and are forced to do continual exercises and obstacle courses. They spend a lot of time in the freezing waters of the pacific, and they are always wet, cold and covered in sand. During "Hell Week" they are constantly offered the opportunity to quit by simply walking up to the Dining Hall and ringing a bell located there. They ring it three times and lay their helmets down. They are told that there is no shame, no questions asked. They can go in and get a hot shower, dry clothes, eat a hot meal, take a nap, and then they will give them a bus ticket home. 75% of them will be home by

day three. The ones that make it through "Hell Week" learn to never, never quit. They learn how to be an overcomer!

What are you thinking about quitting today because things are getting tough? Your marriage? Your job? Your education? A friendship/relationship? Some of you are thinking about quitting a dream or vision God gave you? Some may be thinking about quitting life (suicide is never the answer my friend - it is a permanent solution to a temporary problem. Seek wise counsel now). Some quit learning, listening, giving or serving others. Are there some who just might want to quit following the Lord, because it seems too hard to actually live it out everyday? Many have. Whatever you may be thinking about quitting, I want to encourage you and challenge you do be an overcomer! Jesus and the writers of the Old and New Testament have a lot to say about how you can be an overcomer in life. The first step to becoming an overcomer, is to decided in your heart and mind that you are never, never going to quit! Then you must stand on the promises of Jesus and the Bible that claim you can be an overcomer through Christ.

**Here are a few of those promises:**

**"In this world you will have trouble (trials and tests). But take heart (be of good cheer)!"**

***I have overcome the world." - Jesus, John 16:33***

***"For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God." John, 1 John 5:4-5***

***"You dear children, are from God and have overcome these things because greater is HE that is in you than he who is in the world." John, 1 John 4:4***

***"No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him (Jesus) who loves us." Paul, Romans 8:37***

**Through Christ, my friend, you can be an “Overcomer” in 2023!**



**Contemporary Service - 11:00**

**Traditional Service 9 - 9:30**  
**Open Communion**

## Reflections

### Get In Touch With God

By: Michael J. Brooks

Radio signals used to be hard to come by in certain parts of the country.

I’ve always loved the news and talk format, but couldn’t pick it up too well when we moved to a Christian college in a rural area. The nearest talk station was about 30 miles away and the signal was faint. I often joked about living in a “media-free zone.” A dealer in a nearby town recommended a desktop radio antenna that helped considerably, except when someone used the elevator in my building and created static. Later I bought a radio advertised as designed for the “north slopes of Alaska” with greater reception. In those primitive days I’d often use a cassette recorder to tape programs and listen to the cassettes while driving to night classes and on weekends. This worked well until the

elevator static took out 15 or 20 seconds of the recording! I thought about these primitive methods when we drove to Denver last June and listened to Birmingham-area talk radio while passing through Oklahoma and Kansas. It’s a different world today when telephone apps and computer networks broadcast so effortlessly.

Scripture explains that our Creator wishes to commune with us each day, but we often don’t receive too well.

***“Be still and know that I am God,” he exhorts (Psalm 46:10).***

The problem is we’re hardly still. And the chatter of “ambient noise” drives away the quiet needed for meditation. Everywhere we go TVs are blaring in waiting rooms. I overheard a nurse talking with maintenance in a local hospital. She explained that the family was in the cardiac waiting room and the TV wasn’t working, and they were upset. I thought how odd that a family member or friend was in heart surgery, and these visitors were more concerned about “Judge Judy” or whatever else was on TV!

Television can be hypnotic and a timewaster. The new year is a great opportunity to schedule quiet time with God.

Most of us have better success with a regular daily appointment than random appointments when we happen to think about something. A regular devotional time, including Bible reading and a prayer list, can be scheduled in the morning, at noon or at night. I’ve heard it argued that morning is the best devotional time, but I believe the best time depends on one’s work schedule and energy level. It’s more important to choose a good time and a plan and stick to it.

Today cellphones can be programmed to remind us of this appointment and provide scripture readings at our fingertips.

We’ve probably heard enough from radio and TV. Can anything be more important this year than listening to the voice of God? -30-

*“Reflections” is a weekly faith column written by Michael J. Brooks, pastor of the Siluria Baptist Church, Ababaster, Alabama. The church’s website is [siluriabaptist.com](http://siluriabaptist.com).*



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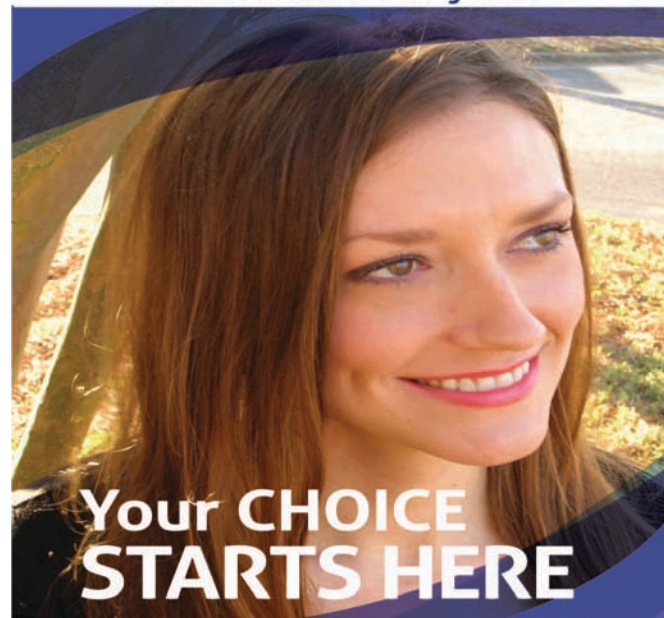
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Judge Peggy Givhan

# Southern Gardening

## Potpourri for JANUARY

### PLANT OF THE MONTH

With the waning days of December, we should look back at all the good things we were given over the last 12 months...good health, love from family and friends, finally a hard enough freeze to kill even the most stubborn of insect eggs. The bitter cold did damage to my Sago palms, but after I prune all the fronds back, new growth will emerge and it will live on bigger and better. It is best to totally cut back all of these to the trunk and not just those that look damaged. The same goes for the aspidistra or iron weed since it too will shoot forth new growth in the spring. Remember if you do not cut back now, but wait until late spring, the opportunity for full regrowth may be lost.

Since tulips have been in the crisper for 6 weeks, these can be planted now. But be sure that you have chilled them for a full 6 weeks before planting, so that means if you started say after Thanksgiving, then tulips need another couple of weeks before planting. If they are planted before fully chilled you risk a bloom which is very short stemmed and a complete waste of your hard earned money. If you cannot remember the exact date they entered the refrigerator, leave them in for a couple of weeks. We do not plant tulips in Montgomery until after January 1st because they may rot in the ground since our soil holds so much moisture and the squirrels eat them. One tip I have found helpful is when I plant any bulbs, I hide the existence of this act from bulb predators with leaves or other mulch. All of my knock-out roses appear to have survived and I will prune them in February. It most probably helped that I had heavily mulched them with pine straw in November. As to dusty miller and pansies, which I left outside during this brutal cold, both are alive and well. It appears that the lantana has survived. I did not risk sudden death for my satsuma and lemons trees, plumbago, peace lily, geraniums and dragon wing begonias, thus my back bedroom resembles a greenhouse.

The herbs that I kept outside in the ground with heavy mulch have survived this extreme cold. These include cilantro, marjoram, mint, parsley, rosemary, and verbena. The jury is out for basil. And so much for the post-mortem of the flowers and herbs at my home.

#### Ironweed (Veronia species)

Sometimes Aspidistra is known as ironweed, but not to be confused with this plant. This is a beautiful flowering tall perennial that is a great butterfly attractor in the garden. It grows from five to seven feet, has emerald green leaves and has a umbrello like clumps of dark purple blooms in late summer and early fall.

Ironweed dies back in the winter and is not an invasive plant. These flowers hold up well in a flower arrangement and once you grow these, they live on. It is native to the United States and will thrive in wet or dry soils.



Gardenia.com

### HAPPY NEW YEAR AND GOOD GARDENING



Gary Miller



I used to write with a very narrow mind when it came to the outdoors. I only imagined my little area when it came to things like weather and the activities that one could be involved in. When it came to the winter months, I never considered that while one area of the country was reeling things in, another part was dusting things off. I never gave much thought to the fact that while the temperatures in my region were keeping me inside, other parts of the country were enjoying the comfortable afternoons and evenings. Once I started traveling more and meeting more people, I began to see things from a wider observation. Now, for instance, as I think about shutting things down for the season, I quickly remember that deer and ducks are just now at their best in several southern states. And my friends in places like Wisconsin and Minnesota are drilling holes in the ice and enjoying some delicious walleye and perch. I see things now from a broader perspective.

Not only have I changed in areas as it relates to the outdoors, but I also view other things differently than I did when I was young and somewhat sheltered in my own wonderful little town. And while there are many things I don't understand and can't identify with; I do think I am better for being exposed to the rest of the world – both good and bad. Some, however, would

Gary Miller has written Outdoor Truths articles for 20 years. He has also written four 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 can be reached via email at [gary@outdoortruths.org](mailto:gary@outdoortruths.org).

disagree. They think it best to stay away from anything that may shed a bad light on whatever it is one is trying to accomplish. In some ways they are right if that individual has not been grounded in some basic truths. But to think that an 18-year-old will not ask hard questions about things they have always been taught as truth, is really sticking one's head in the sand. Truth will never succumb to questions or additional knowledge. It will only be strengthened. And to try to shield individuals from questioning truth says more about what the questioner believes about truth than it does the one asking the questions. Phillip E. Johnson in writing about the creation/ evolution debate makes a great statement. He says, "... people learn the truth best if they fully understand the objections to the truth. If I believe evolution (or anything else) only because "Teacher says so," you could say I don't really believe in evolution. What I believe in is obedience to authority, and in letting "Teacher" do my thinking for me. A democratic education aims to produce citizens who can think for themselves."

My Christian friend don't run from knowledge; even the kind that disagrees with what you believe. Remember the truth found in the scriptures does not depend on ignorance to be valid. Because it is truth, it will stand any test. And while these tests may not add to truth, they will add to your assurance of it.

An arctic cold wave had swept across the country. It was short-lived, but it was brutal. My own temperatures dropped to -13 degrees with the wind-chill. I had no plans of hunting during this time, but I did go hang out in my barn, around my Buddy Heater, on one afternoon. The sun was out but the wind was still blowing, which kept temperatures below zero. Nevertheless, about 90 minutes before dark, 5 doe decided to feed in my rye field. They stayed about 30 minutes before making their way back to some deep hollow, away from the brunt of the wind.

For me, even though I was in the barn and around my heater, I still felt every movement of wind on the areas of my body that were not completely covered with multiple layers. After all, that's what extreme conditions do. They expose the places that have been left without proper attention. They don't cause the places; they only expose them. The health of my faith works the same way.

Normal conditions rarely cause us to give thought as to how our faith is growing. And at times, we can have a false sense of belief concerning our ability to put into practice those things we believe. We say we would react a certain way. Or we think we would respond a certain way. Or we believe our Christian

honesty would uphold under all temptations. But then it is all put to the test.

Something happens that brings extreme conditions. It's a death, a debt, or even a desire, that changes our environment. The temperatures these produce on us expose our weakness and reveal how fragile our faith really is. These changes didn't cause our reaction, they only revealed what was already there.

I've heard many people assert how someone reacts or what someone says under the heat of the moment actually reveals who they really are. I don't believe that. I believe they only reveal who we are capable of being left to ourselves without the Spirit of God growing us and making us more like Christ.

That's why we must be unashamed of our faith but also humble in it. A boisterous faith can lead to a condemning one. A condemning one can lead to a prideful one. And pride always come before a fall.

So, live in humility and when the extreme conditions come, let them reveal to you the areas that are still under the construction of the Spirit. And let them remind you how utterly dependent you are on the guiding hand of God.



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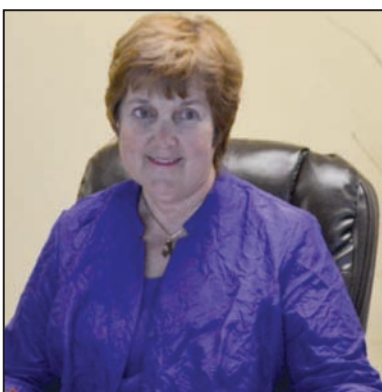


# Home Town Community News

## NOTICE!

Please send Patricia your family and friends:

**BIRTHDAYS, ANNIVERSARIES, WEDDINGS AND EVENTS to:**  
**alabamagazette@gmail.com**



**Patricia Killough**  
Community Editor

### HAPPY JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Steve Campbell Jan 1st  
 Barbara Harrington Jan 5  
 Sam Cassels Jan 8  
 Mary Ellen Millis Jan 8  
 Scott Mills Jan 8  
 Sarah Morgan Smith Jan 8  
 Bobby Mills Jan 9  
 Sue Woodall Jan 11  
 Carson Lane Abbott Jan 12  
 Liz Braswell Jan 12  
 Brenda Moseley Jan 12  
 Shirley Kirksey Jones Jan 13  
 T.J. Mills Jan 13  
 Bob Maddox Jan 13  
 Tiffany Andrews Jan 14

John Black Jan 14  
 John T. Killough Jan 14  
 Ann Takacs Bugg Jan 16  
 Joy Flemming Jan 18  
 Jane Russell Jan 21  
 Julio Vazquez Jan 21  
 Pam Higgins Jan 23  
 Jason Selvage Jan 23  
 Tina Campbell Jan 24  
 Katie Scarlett Boyd Jan 25  
 Mary Beth Wadsden Jan 25  
 Sophie Boyd Jan 27  
 Darrell Self Jan 28  
 Doris Miller Jan 30  
 Hannah Johnson Jan 31



**Happy 94th  
 Birthday  
 Joyce Moore  
 (Grandma)  
 December 3rd,  
 2023**



### Jan and Wayne Morris 50th Wedding Anniversary Celebration



April, 1972 - April, 2022

50th Wedding Anniversary Party was held in their home on Sunday, December 11 2022. Family and Friend enjoyed celebrating these two wonderful people and their life milestone.



**Happy 50th Anniversary  
 John and Donna Russell!!  
 January 20th**

**Happy Anniversary  
 Bob and Betty Crowe!!  
 January, 22 2023**

*If you would like a birthday, event, wedding, death or birth announcement placed in the Gazette, please send your submissions.  
 Alabama Gazette, 12 E. Jefferson St., Montgomery, AL 36104*

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

Pickett, Rachel C. 80 ..... November 27  
 King, M.D., Davis Roland 73 ..... December 02  
 Sanford, Billy Newton 75 ..... December 02  
 Turner, James Ralph 73 ..... December 02  
 Carr, Mary Louise Grayson 101 ..... December 04  
 Miller, Romulus Zachery 84 ..... December 04  
 Waring, Ret. Maj USAF, Richard Ivan ..... December 04  
 Belsterling, Pamela Kelley 59 ..... December 05  
 Campbell, Elaine M. Welch 94 ..... December 08  
 Stearns, Kenneth Lyle 93 ..... December 08  
 Roy, James 78 ..... December 09  
 Vinson, Frances Angelini 94 ..... December 10  
 Adkins, Bob 84 ..... December 12

Henderson, Dorothy Louise 73 ..... December 12  
 Vaughn, Patricia "Patsy" Davis 90 ..... December 14  
 Powell, Diane Crawly 82 ..... December 15  
 Clayton, Ouida Faye Atkins 84 ..... December 19  
 Lushington, Jerry A. 91 ..... December 19  
 Spiro, Walter "Papa" Adrich 95 ..... December 23  
 Boothe, Tamelia "Tammy" Beth 62 ..... December 25  
 Mainor, Barbara Watters 97 ..... December 25  
 Jordan, William "Bill" W. .... December 26  
 Fain, III James "Jimmy" Clyde 63 ..... December 29  
 Boyd, Amy Floyce 85 ..... December 31

### In Loving Memory of: Alex Lafayette Holtsford

Alex Lafayette Holtsford, Sr., 91, departed this earthly life on October 27, 2022. Alex was born on May 18, 1931, in Birmingham, but lived the vast majority of his life in Gadsden. He had an honorable discharge from the US Air Force and is a Korean war veteran. He was a wonderful husband, father and role model. He was predeceased by his wife of 62 years, Jean Pruitt

Holtsford. He left behind his loving three children and numerous grandchildren and even great-grandchildren. Alex was a long time and faithful member of the First United Methodist church in Gadsden, Alabama. He served the church in several capacities and was beloved among the membership.

### "Dottie" Henderson

Dorothy Louise Henderson, 73, of Montgomery, died Monday, December 12, 2022, at her home. A memorial service will be held on Friday, December 16, 2022, at 2:00 P.M. at Crossroads Church in Wetumpka.

Mrs. Henderson is survived by her daughter Starla Sullivan; her grandchildren Stephanie Glover and Edwin Sullivan, Jr.; her sisters Patricia Taylor, Jenny Frazier, and Sondra (Harry) Williams; and many nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her father Ralph Meeks, her mother Dixie Meeks, her brothers Buddy Meeks and Billy Meeks, and her sisters Sheila Maggard and Melinda Miller. She worked for over 40 years at Charlie's Produce.

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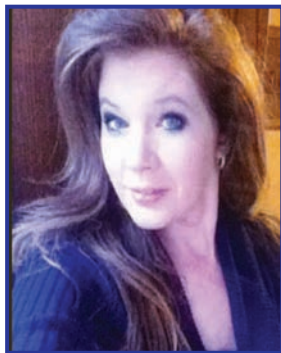
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### In Memory Of

Edward Earl Rogers ..... December 06  
 David Eugene Fredrick ..... December 07  
 Marilyn Diamond Mitchell ..... December 09  
 Vonnie Robert Boswell ..... December 09  
 John Milton (Sonnies) Norris ..... December 11  
 Robert Wayne Glenn ..... December 11  
 Gary Ray Ryals ..... December 13  
 James Ovie Helms ..... December 13  
 Carol Boyd Ford ..... December 21  
 Tommy Watson Wilkins ..... December 22  
 Charles Spencer Morgan ..... December 25  
 Salvatore Giancarlo Cicero ..... December 25  
 Jesse Dean Lett Varner ..... December 25  
 James Edward "Jim" Sepan ..... December 25  
 Jerry O'Neal "Pete" Cantrell ..... December 27  
 Ouida Jacquelyn Keebler ..... December 29  
 Wayne Fredrick Burkett ..... December 30  
 Glenda Lailani Stauch Nelson ..... January 1  
 Zack Godwin ..... January 2  
 James Jerrell Durrance ..... January 2  
 Franklin Timothy Stanley ..... January 2





## Tears & Laughter:

*All resolutions begin in the heart*

By: Amanda Walker

Thirty-two years ago, I lived in Montgomery. I was freshly enrolled as a full-time student at AUM, and a part-time waitress at Country's Barbecue. I was 18.

Barbara, who was 45 at the time, was originally from where I had just left – having graduated from Chilton County High School in May of 1990 – and that commonality is what helped pave the way that allowed me to live with her briefly when I first moved to Montgomery.

The agreement was \$100 a month and a list of things she did not want me doing in her house...and it did not include smoking, even though I was not a smoker. She was. She smoked, unapologetically. If her smoking bothered you, you best not bother her because when she got through cussing about how she could smoke if she damn well pleased...you might have needed a cigarette too. But even smoking, was a habit she would soon kick.

She liked work. She took pride in working. She worked in metal fabrication. She worked her way up to a draftsman. She dressed in jeans and steel-toed boots five days a week.

She had a big backyard that she appreciated. She took care of it. Every Saturday that rolled around she wanted to get up early so we could go out and tend to every plant in the yard. If that meant we had to drive out somewhere to rake pine straw to put around them...then we got in the truck – her truck – and went and got it. And we weren't slow about it because she would say she didn't have all day to mess around in the yard. She also liked to clean the house on Saturdays.

The hundred dollars rent a month she charged included kitchen privileges, but it didn't include cleaning services. I was expected to help, and she had her own definition of doing things right. She was proud of her home. It was to her an accomplishment. A dream come true of sorts. I knew her previous life had not been easy. Old pictures told a story, and she wasn't shy about it. Life had made her tough. This second phase of her life was different, yet the toughness remained.

After tending the yard and cleaning the house, she liked to grill on Saturday evenings. Just before dark. Not after dark, because after dark she wanted to eat and watch TV, or talk back through her memories – there were good times mixed within her tragedies. Life had not been dull.

She would buy dresses and keep them in their plastic covers. Sometimes she would try them on. She would parade through asking for my youthful opinion. She looked forward to still another phase in her life, after she retired, when she could finally wear dresses. I always thought the dresses represented a softness she wanted to eventually put on too.

She had not long married for the second time in her life. Dave was a quiet, soft-spoken man. A veteran who had served in two of our nation's wars. She kept their wedding pictures on the wall.

Barbara was anything but quiet. for years after I had moved on and distanced myself from things once familiar in my past...I had wondered about her. Her influence stayed with me. I admired some of her toughness, whether I ever managed to mirror it or not.

I also saw through some of it. She gave me back all of the rent money I had paid her when I left. She had saved it for me.

Barbara was one of the many people who left us in 2022. I never thanked her...for the money, the advice, or her example. If you are still searching for a resolution, there is always not allowing a simple thank you to go left unsaid.

Amanda Walker is a columnist and contributor with AL.com, The Birmingham News, Selma Times Journal, Thomasville Times, West Alabama Watchman, and Alabama Gazette.

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9	2	8	5	7	1	3	6	4

*The Value of a Woman.*

..  
*Be very careful if you make a woman cry because God counts her tears.*



## TRISSTON'S TIDBITS

*Beautiful Blessings*

By: Trisston Burrows

Ms. Wheelchair America/  
Alabama 2005

Happy New Year!

As one year draws to a close and a new year begins, Numbers 6:24-26 is on my mind and heart. It says, "The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace."

Considered to be one of the most beautiful blessings in the Bible, and perhaps the most widely used benediction, this verse is found tucked away in a book of the Bible that many believers may not actually be too familiar with.

The book of Numbers was written by Moses, and in this book is found the narration of about forty years of Moses' life. It is titled Numbers because two censuses are included (see Numbers chapters 1 and 26). Though the censuses taken are unique to this book in the Bible, it also has overarching themes beyond the numbering of the Israelites.

In Numbers, we find the concepts of being in the wilderness, God's faithfulness, and human disobedience. It is in the early part of this book that we come across the noteworthy blessing.

Overall, the first line in this blessing means that when God will "bless and keep you," He will provide for and protect you. What an amazing blessing! When we say this blessing over someone, we know that we are speaking God's good provision in their life and God's defense over them. This is a powerful blessing that calls upon God in mighty ways to meet our needs.

Beyond the first line of this blessing – the Lord keep you and bless you – which communicates and asks for God to provide for and protect his children, we discover more about who God is.

When God makes his face shine upon someone, it is a receiving of God's favor. God wants his children to have his favor in their lives. Further, this blessing requests and speaks over someone God's grace, and peace, and that God would remember the one being blessed. This blessing was spoken by God and shows us exactly what he wants for his children; peace, and grace, and goodness all of their days.

What an amazing God who desires to bestow this great blessing on his followers. This blessing is a remarkable indication of how deep God's love and care for believers goes.

So, as we enter a new year, remember that God desires to bless, protect, provide for, and grant peace and favor to those who follow him. God loves you....and so did I!

*Many Blessings!*

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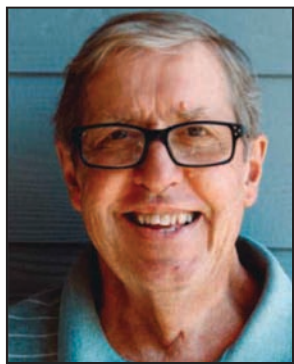
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# Southern Cuisine

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



*It's that time of year again. Time to start heating the house. To heat a house built in 1830, takes some ingenuity. You try to warm the house using the least amount of energy as possible. Though it is not a small amount of energy to heat the house, we try to use the energy to heat the house as resourcefully as possible. Which we have found out, is to do as many things as possible using the heat you are generating. Our best method is to use the heat we use for cooking, to help heat the house. The first thing is do all the major cooking, in the winter. To us the major cooking is canning. We save up all the fruits and vegetables during the summer. By the time winter comes, we have our three freezers full of prepped figs, bell peppers, pears, tomatoes, pecans and any other fruit and vegetables we happen to come across through the year. Everything is stored in plastic zip lock bags. Most of the time they are quart size bags, to make it easier to prep a recipe that will fill about nine mason jars. So, when winter comes and the temperature drops, we look at the weather forecast and plan for at least three or four days of cold weather. While I am writing this article, the forecast is for the coldest winter in years is approaching. The house will be warm for weeks with all the cooking we have planned.*

## Banana Nut Muffin Snacks

### INGREDIENTS:

½ cup butter (one stick)  
1 cup sugar  
2 eggs  
3 large very ripe bananas, mashed  
2 cups sifted all purpose flour  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
½ teaspoon salt  
½ cup chopped pecans (walnuts, or other preferred nut)

### DIRECTIONS:

Pre-heat the oven to 350 degrees. Cream the butter and sugar thoroughly. Add eggs one at a time, beating after each additional egg.

Add mashed bananas and beat well. Sift flour, soda, and salt together. Add to butter, sugar, banana mixture mixing well.

Stir in nuts. Scoop the either mixture into a greased and floured mini-muffin pan. Number of muffins depends on the size of your mini-muffin pan. The amount of cooking time depends on your oven and how big each muffin pan is. Don't over cook them.

Experiment with pans and doubling the recipe.

Recipe makes one 9x5x3 loaf pan but up to sixty to one hundred twenty snack size treats



We make mini snacks in a cupcake pan that are the size of a silver dollar. If you want to serve them at breakfast, just defrost what you think will be enough. It only takes a minute to defrost the snacks. It is easier to heat and eat the mini snacks than a whole loaf. We make about 280 to 300 silver dollarsize banana nut snacks at a time. We fill a plastic container with a lid with the snacks and keep them in the freezer.



One of the fruits we save throughout the year are bananas. We buy a bunch of bananas for snacks, cereal and as an ingredient in a recipe. We always have some bananas left over and when they are good and ripe, we freeze them. And this year we have a bunch of frozen bananas.

## Cheese Oyster Roll

### INGREDIENTS:

2 eight ounce blocks of cream cheese  
2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce  
¼ teaspoon garlic powder  
½ small onion, grated  
3 tablespoons mayonnaise  
1/8 teaspoon salt  
2 cans of smoked oysters drained  
Chopped nuts or parsley

### DIRECTIONS:

Cream together the Worcestershire, cream cheese, garlic powder, onion, Mayonnaise and salt.

Spread on waxed paper about ½ inch thick. Chill for about one hour. Place drained smoked oysters on top of cheese mixture and roll up, trying not to roll the waxed paper into the roll.

Once you have the cheese mixture rolled, take one end of the roll and start to roll it into a ball. Roll the entire ball in chopped parsley or nuts.

This method of rolling will spread the oysters better through the ball

Chill 24 hours before serving,

Serve with crackers the cheese ball freezes well



The house is nice and warm after we make about 240 mini banana muffins. It is coming up to lunch time and you want something room temperature or cold to serve with lunch. Also try to cut down on the sugar consumption. A hors d'oeuvre that can keep your guests happy and staying around the kitchen if they want to help will do the trick. Try something savory and not sweet.

Remember that the overripe bananas have the best taste when used in a recipe. Banana nut bread is always a favorite for breakfast or just for a snack. We do not make a loaf of banana bread. If you defrost a loaf of banana nut bread and it doesn't get eaten, you are throwing away good food.



## Moo Goo Gai Pan

*I have had some request for recipes of Chinese food. Even though I would not consider this as Southern Cuisine, there are many Chinese restaurants and at least one in every small town in the South. Even a mall gas station close to my house sells egg rolls. If you have watched the movie "A Christmas Story" here a recipe that fits right in this article.*

### INGREDIENTS:

2 Tablespoons olive oil divided  
1 Pound chicken thighs or breasts cubed  
Salt and pepper  
3 large carrots sliced  
8 ounce mushrooms sliced  
8 ounce water chestnuts  
1 cup snow peas  
1/4 cup chicken broth  
2 Tablespoons soy sauce  
1 Tablespoon brown sugar  
2 cloves garlic minced  
1 Tablespoon hoi sin sauce  
1 teaspoon sesame oil  
1 teaspoon cornstarch  
1 Tablespoon water  
Chopped green onions and sesame seeds for garnish

### DIRECTIONS:

In a large skillet add the olive oil and turn to medium high heat. Salt and pepper the chicken and cook in the wok until cooked throughout and no longer pink. Remove and set aside on a plate.

Add a tablespoon of olive oil and carrots and sauté until almost tender 1-2 minutes. Then add the mushrooms and sauté for 1-2 minutes. Add in the water chestnuts and snow peas and sauté for a minute more.

To make the sauce, whisk in a small bowl the chicken broth, soy sauce, brown sugar, garlic, hoi sin, and sesame oil. Combine the cornstarch and water in another small bowl and whisk into the sauce.

Add the chicken back to the wok and pour the sauce on top and let simmer until it starts to thicken. Serve with rice, either white or fried rice.



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