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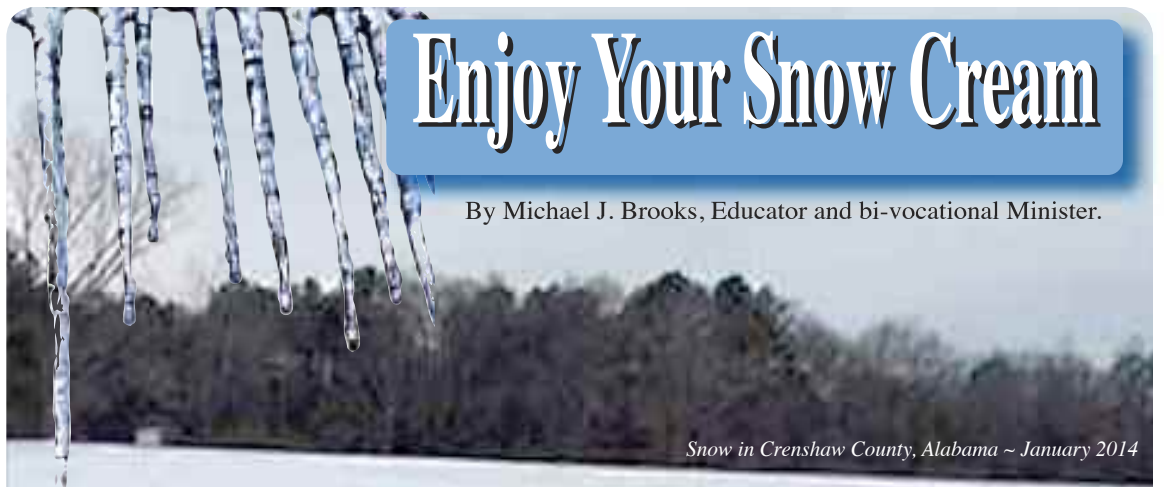
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## Enjoy Your Snow Cream

By Michael J. Brooks, Educator and bi-vocational Minister.

Snow in Crenshaw County, Alabama ~ January 2014

A colleague told about her daughter scooping up the snow in her hands and eating it. Her mom told her not to do this since the snow had dirt and grass in it. The little girl, recently diagnosed with diabetes and pretty adept at watching carbs, said, "But mommy, snow doesn't have any carbs!" Her mom relented and told her to enjoy this treat.

This story reminded me of a childhood long ago when we were warned not to eat snow cream--a concoction our parents made with snow, sugar and milk. The Russians had been doing atmospheric nuclear testing and our scientists told us the snow might be contaminated.

We were in the midst of what was known as "the Cold War" with the Soviet Union, and the nuclear arms race consumed our nation's attention. We heard lurid tales of World War III which might not last more than a few hours. Some folk built fall-out shelters in their backyards.

Fortunately the hands on the doomsday clock have been pulled back a bit. It was a touching indication of decreased tension when former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev was among the mourners at President Reagan's

funeral in 2004. These two leaders made our world safer.

Today we face new threats. Rather than a nuclear conflagration destroying our nation, we're more concerned about random acts of terrorism designed to dispirit us.

Border security is a concern as we think not only about those disrespecting our nation's laws, but also about the ease of terrorists accessing our country.

We face economic fears with a depressed job market and stagnant wages.

We read about China and India growing strong in the world's economy and perhaps eclipsing us in productivity. And there is the ever-present fear of running out of oil. Energy exploration is a paramount concern as increased gasoline prices take a larger share of the family budget.

It occurred to me that not much has changed since my childhood. We still have sobering threats against our way of life and we still need stalwart leaders skilled in diplomacy and filled with wisdom.

Before entering the Promised Land, Joshua told the Hebrew nation, "Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither

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**SHERIFF  
D. T. MARSHALL**

This a partial repeat of an article that I wrote a year or so ago. People are fed up with crime and even though crime is reported to have dropped from last year, it is still there. Most law enforcement officials will tell you that the greatest percentage of the crime is committed by a very small percentage of criminals. They are repeat offenders who continue to commit crime, time after time. They get arrested, make bail and are out doing the same thing time and again. Their crimes finally catch up with them in the court system and the Judges do their part and send the criminal to prison but before you know it, they are back out on the street, committing crimes all over again.

To me, the real problem is the overcrowding prison system in Alabama. There is not enough room to keep these criminals locked up and they are released on Parole or some type of do good program. Most of them just wind up back in prison for committing another crime and they are quickly released because of the overcrowded conditions. The only real solution is for the legislature to ask the voters of Alabama if they are tired of this revolving door in the prisons and ask them if they are sick and tired of being victimized by these career criminals. They have to find a way to build and staff more prisons and to pass legislation for truth in sentencing. If a criminal is given 1, 2, 10 or even 20 years in prison, he or she should do that time. This is basically the way the federal system works and it does a pretty good job. The Alabama Legislature needs to quit fighting with each other and tackle this problem. Put something before the law abiding citizens and allow them to decide!

Have you ever wondered why a person is arrested, sometimes for a serious crime such as Robbery, Rape or Murder and is released very shortly after the arrest? The answer is in the Law. Except in Capital Cases, and for a few other charges such as Parole Violation or Contempt of Court, every defendant is entitled to bail. The laws concerning bail can be found in the Code Of Alabama in Title 15 and you can easily look them up on the internet using the key search term Code Of Alabama.

I am not an Attorney and I do not want anybody to interpret this article as legal advice but more of a general guide of what bail is and what happens when you are arrested. Let's start with the definition and purpose of bail as defined in Title 15. "Bail" is the release of a person who has been arrested and is being held in the custody of the State of Alabama or one of its subdivisions for the commission of a criminal offense. The primary purpose of bail is to procure the release of a person charged with an offense upon obtaining assurance, with or without security, of the defendant's future appearance in court. Basically that simply means that bail is allowed to release a person from jail but ensures that he or she will show up for court.

Many people think that when a person is arrested, he will stay in jail for now on, but an arrest is simply one of the first steps in the criminal justice system. An arrest is made, usually with a warrant or Grand Jury indictment, and the person then goes to jail. Except in a few cases, he makes bail and begins the judicial process of appearances before several levels of Judges. He may appear before a Municipal Judge for charges that violate a Municipal ordinance or for a traffic offense charged under the municipal traffic code.

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**Chief Derrick  
Cunningham**

He may appear before a District Judge for violation of a misdemeanor charged under the State code, usually committed outside of the city limits, for a preliminary hearing on Felony charges, or for traffic offenses charged under the State code. He may appear before a Circuit Judge for a number of reasons, mainly for all Felony charges that have been indicted by the Grand Jury.

Once a person has been placed in jail, there are 4 ways, other than escaping, to be released. The first is cash bail which is when the defendant or some person on behalf of the defendant pays the bail with money. This is done Monday through Friday in the Circuit Clerks office in the courthouse. The jail cannot, by law, take a cash bail.

Property bail is when a defendant is released on bail by a person putting up his or her property to ensure the court that the defendant will appear for the entire time until the case has been disposed of. If the defendant does not appear for his hearings, the person who put up his property could lose their property so I think that before I put up my house or land, I would have absolute faith in the person I was getting out of jail. The qualifications for property bail are that each surety be a resident of the state, and an owner of real property in the state and that the property pledged shall be worth, exclusive of all encumbrances and homestead exemptions presently against the property, the amount expressed in the bond. In other words the property value must be at least equal to that of the bond. To use your property to bail a person out of the county jail, you must bring your current "Montgomery County Valuation Notice" which shows your property description and the appraised value of your property. Every person listed on the notice must sign the bond. You can only use your property as surety for one person at a time and then for only a total of four people during a year and you cannot charge a fee to get them out of jail using your property.

A professional bail bonding company can bail a person out of jail. They will charge you a fee, usually between 10% and 15% of the amount of the bail and, depending on the company, they may require some type of collateral. The fee charged is money that they keep for taking the liability that they assume by getting a defendant out of jail and ensuring that he will appear in court. The telephone numbers of the bail bondsman companies in Montgomery are listed in the jail and you have to decide whether to use your free call to call a bondsman or a family member at the time that you are booked in.

The last legal way to be released from jail is by the courts, ether because the case has been disposed of or the courts may allow a defendant to be released pending a court date, usually with certain restrictions. The Montgomery County Community Corrections Authority is usually the conduit that is use by the courts to keep track of a person who has been released without having to post bail, however if a defendant does not abide by the conditions of release, he or she will be rearrested and proper charges will be made.

These are the four ways to be released from jail and I hope that I have been able to explain why so many people are arrested and are released so soon after they have been charged with a crime. Even though a law enforcement officer may want to keep a person in jail, they have a set bond schedule that they have to follow when a warrant is signed on a defendant. There is a range

that is set out in the Alabama Rules of Court and in order to go above the maximum set out in the schedule, they have to appear before a judge and explain why a person should have an excessive bond set. Often, the judge will agree with the officer and allow an excessive bond, but the defendant will have a bond hearing at some point and many times the bond is then reduced. Last year the bond schedule set out in the Alabama Rules of Court change the amount of bail to a higher amount.

Here are some of the bonds allowed by the bond schedule:

<b>Capital Felony</b>	<b>\$50,000 to No Bail</b>
<b>Murder</b>	<b>\$15,000 to \$ 75,000</b>
<b>Class A felony</b>	<b>\$10,000 to \$ 60,000</b>
<b>Class B felony</b>	<b>\$ 5,000 to \$ 30,000</b>
<b>Class C felony</b>	<b>\$ 2,500 to \$ 15,000</b>
<b>Drug Manufacturing and Trafficking</b>	<b>\$ 5,000 to \$1,500,000</b>

As you can see by the bond schedule, a person could easily make a bond for Murder or any other felony, especially if he or she had a friend or relative who owns property. The law says that a person is presumed innocent until convicted in a court of law, but at some point, enough is enough and after a person has been arrested over and over again for a felony, there should be an allowance made in the bond schedule for a stiffer bond, but then again, I enforce laws, not make them. I understand the frustration that victims feel when they have lost a loved one during a crime or they have been a victim of a criminal who has offended time and again.



Spring will soon be here and we will be hosting several events for the community, so keep watching for our announcements for: **DEPUTY DAVE FAMILY AND FRIENDS DAY, ANNUAL EASTER EGG HUNT, KIDS AND SENIOR FISHING RODEO DAYS,** and other upcoming events.

If you are hosting events and want to have the Sheriff's Office attend, please give us advanced notice in order for us to properly plan our calendar because we want to be there for you.

**To plan an event with the Sheriff's Office, call Chief Cunningham at 832-1646.**







# Robservations...by Robert Tate

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

## I AM NOT A CONSPIRACY THEORIST

*"Popular support is the first element which is necessary for the creation of authority. But an authority resting on that foundation alone is still quite frail, uncertain and vacillating. Hence everyone who finds himself vested with*

*an authority that is based only on popular support must take measures to improve and consolidate the foundations of that authority by the creation of force. Accordingly we must look upon power, that is to say, the capacity to use force, as the second foundation on which all authority is based."*

*Adolf Hitler: Mein Kampf*

Really, I'm not. Really. Just because I do not necessarily believe Lee Harvey Oswald worked alone I am in no way a leaning forward, the-government-is-behind-every-bad-thing conspiracy theorist. I do, however, like facts. Not the kind of made up facts too many politicians and so-called journalists like to indulge in, but the kind of indisputable facts that are, uh, indisputable. Whatever conclusions we draw based on facts is up to us. But conclusions based upon lies spells danger to the impartation of truth.

Likewise, I value the importance of doctrine. Although the most boring job I ever endured was that of a doctrine analyst, I still appreciate doctrine. Why? Because doctrine gives us insight to what people, nations and religions really think regardless of what comes out of their mouths. So whether it be Christian doctrine, Islamic doctrine, Jewish doctrine, US doctrine, communist doctrine or whatever it may be, if someone says something completely contrary to their stated doctrine, you had better have your thinking cap on. If their words and doctrine are in disagreement, they both cannot be true. It pays to understand and know doctrine.

This leads me to a very delicate subject, one that some people are going to dismiss, ignore or embrace. Not being a conspiracy theorist, all I can do is present facts as I see them. Here goes. Back on 17 July 2008, a campaigning Barack Obama gave a speech in which he said, "We cannot continue to rely on our military in order to achieve the national security objectives we've set. We've got to have a civilian national security force that's just as powerful, just as strong, just as well funded." ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tt2yGzHfy7s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tt2yGzHfy7s)) Wh-wh-what??

I am not willing to engage in questions about the President's birth or nationality. At this point they are counter-productive and quite honestly, there are simply no known facts to keep this debate open. The President Obama quote I mention above from 2008, however, can in no way be disputed. It is fact, he said it and he believes this anti-American abomination to be true. It is not up for question and if anyone thinks it is, please go back to sleep and wake up 100 years from now. In his own words, our President believes that we need a civilian police force just as strong as our military. His words, not mine. Does anyone out there find this disturbing? Please tell me in what universe do we need a national police force on par with the US military? So where does this lead us?

Those who know me know my love of military history, especially WWII history. Going further, my main interests surround the German Luftwaffe in North Africa and the Combined US/RAF Bomber Offensive (CBO) against Germany. Loving military history and understanding a little history of the Nazi Party (the National Socialist Party), I always find it funny how people on both sides of the isle liken the other side the Hitler and/ or the Nazis. 99% of the time, this is utter nonsense and immediately kills any cogent arguments one may have had. More than once I heard people compare George Bush to Adolf Hitler. Really? Not even close people. So I am very careful and rarely make modern comparisons to Nazi Germany. I am prepared here to make an exception to my own rule. And before any of you think I am comparing President Obama to Uncle Adolf, don't be daft. There is NO comparison between the two and I am NOT making one so deal with it. I am, however, willing to say that the idea of a national police force on par with the military is a very National Socialist idea.

Anyone who has done any study of the Nazis understands that there were several distasteful groups associated with them. You of course had the Gestapo, the SS and within this last group existed many other groups. Because of a lack of space, I recommend you read information on the history, background and growth of the SS within Hitler's Third Reich. There is no way I could do a service to its history in this short amount of time. It is quite convoluted, confusing and to be honest boring as heck. Entire books have been written about this subject. But for a very short synopsis, the SS or Schutzstaffeln was first formed as early as 1923

before Hitler's Munich Putsch. Newly reformed in 1925, the SS were given the task of protecting senior leaders of the Nazi Party at rallies, speeches and other public events. At this point, the SS was actually subordinate to Hitler's Brown Shirt thugs (SA- Sturmabteilungen). Heinrich Himmler took over the SS in 1926. The SS became a powerful force that also served as Hitler's body guard and a force that managed to exert as much political influence in the Third Reich as Germany's regular armed forces. The SS could eventually be broken down into two main groups; the non-combat arm called the Allgemeine-SS and the feared military arm, the Waffen-SS.

After doing some reading on your own, understand that the SS is exactly the same thing President Barack Obama asked for and said we need way back in 2008. A civilian protection force, on par with our military is guess what? The SS. A civilian police force specifically created and designed to protect government buildings and people is guess what? The SS. There is NO difference. In function and concept, members of our own government see nothing odd about this anti-American ideal. Enter the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). DHS

*"On purely practical grounds it is impossible to build up a national defence organization by means of private associations, unless the State makes an enormous contribution to it."*

*Adolf Hitler - Mein Kampf*

Again, I am not espousing any clandestine government actions, but I do like facts. Again, because of a lack of space, I urge you to go online and look at the organizational chart for the Department of Homeland Security. Look at the organizations under the DHS banner and then look at the facts below. In the last 18 months, DHS has purchased the following:

- More than 1.6 billion bullets (the equivalent of a 24-year Iraq war)
- 2,717 Mine Resistant Armored Protection (MRAP) vehicles
- 7,000 assault rifles (now termed personal defense (PDW) weapons)
- \$500,000 worth of fully automatic pepper spray launchers and projectiles that are designed to be used during riot control situations. ([infowars.com](http://infowars.com))
- Social Security Administration (SSA) asking for 174,000 rounds of hollow point ammunition. <http://www.snopes.com/politics/guns/ssabullets.asp>

*"I have already described how practical experience in our young movement led us slowly to organize a system of defence for our meetings. This assumed the character of a military body specially trained for the maintenance of order, and tended to develop into a service which would have its properly organized cadres."*

*Adolf Hitler; Mein Kampf*

- Seeking to acquire 723,000 hours of armed guard services to protect government buildings in Arkansas and other areas. ([infowars.com](http://infowars.com))
- \$80 million dollar outlay on armed guards to protect government buildings in upstate New York (Neil Cavuto, Fox News)

As I look over these numbers, again I must stress that there are answers here that are unaccounted for. Also, look up information on the Federal Protective Service, a sub-agency of the DHS that operates under the banner of the National Protection and Programs Directorate on the DHS organizational chart. Some of their reported hiring goals are interesting. Likewise, simply ask the question as to "why" DHS needs this much firepower.

I am not willing to cry "helter, skelter - the sky is falling" but all I want to do is point out that there are those out there, who for whatever reason, want significant change in our country. Change, folks, is not always a good thing. I believe a desired doctrine of having a civilian police force stronger than our military is a dangerous precedent and history I believe clearly backs this up. When any society has such a militant police force whose goals are not primarily wars abroad but the controlling of its own citizens within, democratic principles and values become hostage to ungodly ideals. I am also not saying that this is the direction we are necessarily going, but look at the "doctrine" espoused by our President back in 2008, look at the facts that are out there and then make a decision for yourself.

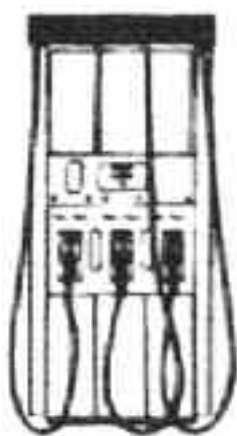


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# HOUSE-PASSED FARM BILL VICTORY FOR ALABAMA

## LONG-NEEDED REFORMS TO FARM AND FOOD STAMP POLICY INCLUDED IN BILL

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Martha Roby (R-AL) today applauded House passage of a new five-year Farm Bill, highlighting the significant victories for Alabama-specific agricultural products and the inclusion of long-needed reforms to federal programs that rein in spending.

The Farm Bill passed the House of Representatives today by a vote of 251 to 166. All seven members of the Alabama House delegation voted in favor of the bill.

*"After three years of hard work, today the House finally passed a Farm Bill that provides certainty for our nation's farmers and institutes money-saving reforms to agriculture and nutrition policy that we've needed for some time," Rep. Roby said. "This bill is a win for Alabama farmers and foresters. It is also a win for taxpayers. The Farm Bill replaces outdated policies left over from the Pelosi-led Congress and represents a positive step toward fiscal responsibility."*

Rep. Roby has served the last three years on the House Committee on Agriculture. Despite her recent move to the House Appropriations Committee, Rep. Roby continued to serve on the Conference Committee tasked with working through the differences of the House and Senate versions of the Farm Bill.

The previous Farm Bill was passed in 2008 and expired in 2012, with temporary extensions causing America's farmers to operate with significant uncertainty. Failure to pass the Farm Bill would not only put the nation's agriculture industry at risk, but it would also doom the first major reforms to the food stamp program since the mid-1990s. Because food stamps are an "autopilot" mandatory spending program, revisions to the nutrition title are necessary to secure changes in the program.

*The Farm Bill contains reforms to the food stamp program that will save taxpayers \$8 billion by:*

- Ensuring illegal aliens cannot fraudulently obtain food stamps by requiring the use of E-Verify - a provision personally championed by Rep. Roby;
- Instituting efforts to help food stamp recipients secure employment through job training and other services;
- Closing the LIHEAP loophole which allowed states to game the system and artificially increase benefit levels; and,
- Cracking down on trafficking and fraud, including closing a loophole that allowed lottery winners to receive food stamps.

*On the agriculture side, the bill includes cost-effective reforms, as well as provisions of particular benefit to Alabama farmers and foresters. Specifically, the bill:*

- Strengthens crop insurance by allowing farmers to invest in their own risk management policies;
- Repeals outdated programs and consolidates duplicative ones, eliminating nearly 100 programs or authorizations;
- Boosts conditions important to Alabama's \$21 billion dollar forestry industry relating to the EPA's regulations on forest roads and expands the use of forest products;
- Includes a provision Rep. Roby advocated for to reduce the amount of land allowed into the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), restricting the increasingly-frequent practice of paying landowners to let fertile cropland go unplanted for years; and,
- Contains another provision championed by Senator Jeff Sessions (R-AL) that lifts restrictions on irrigation access for Alabama farmers.

Overall, reforms contained in the new five-year Farm Bill save taxpayers more than \$23 billion.

*"The United States needs nutrition policy that makes sense. Food stamps have played and will continue to play an important role in taking care of our most needy Americans. But the program exists to help lift up those who have hit bottom, not to keep them there. That's why it is concerning that over the past five years food stamp rolls have more than doubled," Rep. Roby said.*

*"Like President Reagan said, the success of our welfare programs should be measured not by how many the government can enroll, but by how many families can get off assistance and become self-reliant. Work toward that goal certainly continues, but reforms contained in this Farm Bill are a major step in the right direction."*

For more information contact Communications Director Todd Stacy at 202-226-1567/[todd.stacy@mail.house.gov](mailto:todd.stacy@mail.house.gov) or Deputy Communications Director Seth Morrow at 202-225-2901/[seth.morrow@mail.house.gov](mailto:seth.morrow@mail.house.gov).



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 Loretta Grant

[alabamagazette@gmail.com](mailto:alabamagazette@gmail.com)

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## THE UNCERTAIN STATE OF OUR UNION

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) — This past week I had the opportunity to talk about jobs and the state of our economy with a number of businesses across the Third District.

In talking with the employees and owners of these facilities, one theme I heard at almost every stop was that folks are uncertain. They're unsure of what new government-mandated regulations they'll face in 2014 and long into the future. They don't see what the Federal government is doing to help improve our economy, or provide certainty for our small businesses.

In almost all cases, they're worried about Obamacare and its effects on their jobs, businesses and their families.

Last Tuesday evening, President Obama delivered his State of the Union address to the nation. He spoke about the current state of our country, and shared with America his plans for future initiatives and legislation.

Overall, I was extremely dissatisfied with the

plans the president outlined in his address. I believe these proposals will increase bureaucratic red tape, stifle job creation and create more and more uncertainty across East Alabama — exactly opposite of what folks are looking for these days.

In 2013 the Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare, pushed farther into our lives. Its negative impact on individuals' insurance in East Alabama has driven premium prices up and actual health care coverage down.

But what we still don't know is how these new rates will affect both small and large businesses and their hard-working employees. Folks are nervous, as they should be, and the president has not done much to alleviate these fears.

Another issue vital to bringing certainty back to East Alabama is helping folks find a job in their area.

Despite figures which show a declining unemployment rate, this past December's jobs report was the worst in three years.

The House of Representatives has passed a number of job-creating bills that could help provide some much-needed certainty in our economy. Yet they are going nowhere as they collect dust sitting in the Senate.

These bills would help provide job training, cut red tape, expand American energy options and help create new jobs for Americans.

On a recent Tele-town Hall meeting where I heard concerns from constituents across East Alabama, the sentiment was the same. They overwhelmingly believe Obamacare will have a negative impact on their families, and remain very concerned about the direction of our country.

*As always, I want to hear from you.*

Contact me at [mike-rogers.house.gov](mailto:mike-rogers.house.gov) and sign up for my eNewsletter. You can also like me on Facebook at Congressman Mike D. Rogers, follow me on Twitter, Pinterest, Tumblr and Instagram at RepMikeRogersAL and subscribe to my YouTube page at MikeRogersAL03

## ROGERS PRAISES PASSAGE OF FARM BILL

(Washington, D.C.)—Congressman Mike Rogers made the following remarks today after House passage of the House-Senate Conference Report for the Agricultural Act of 2014, known as the Farm Bill. Rogers supported the bill.

"Agriculture is the largest industry in Alabama and I think this legislation helps give Alabama farmers and our economy some much-needed relief.

"This final version of the Farm Bill provides a five year safety net for America's farmers, ranchers and rural communities as a whole.

"The bill also takes strong steps to close loopholes and cut spending in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), while launching a 10 state pilot program to give states the flexibility to implement work requirements in their states.

"I am pleased the House passed it today and hope the Senate will soon pass it, so the president may sign it into law."

*Rogers served as a Conferee for the Farm Bill and is a senior member of the House Agriculture Committee.*



## Inside the Statehouse with Steve Flowers



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

*Steve Flowers is Alabama's leading political columnist. His column appears weekly in 72 Alabama newspapers. Steve served 16 years in the state legislature. He may be reached at [www.stevflowers.us](http://www.stevflowers.us).*

Senate. The word itself is not something that the average citizen is familiar with or totally knowledgeable of its meaning. A filibuster is simply a fancy word for talking a piece of legislation to death. It is a dilatory tactic that senators use to delay a vote on a bill and hopefully tire out the proponents of a prospective law.

The filibuster is most times associated with the Senate. Under the parliamentary rules of both the U.S. Senate and the Alabama State Senate, the length of time that a senator can debate a bill is longer than the time limits allowed in the House of Representatives. Therefore, the filibuster is primarily orchestrated in the Senate. Our forefathers designed these rules to allow the Senate to be the more deliberative body. They wanted the upper chamber to be more like the British House of Lords.

The ability to filibuster has long been a part of Senate history. The best depiction of the senate filibuster is the scene portrayed by Jimmy Stewart filibustering for hours on the floor of the U.S. Senate in the famous movie "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington."

The legendary South Carolina Senator Strom Thurmond holds the record for the longest talk-a-thon on the floor of the U.S. Senate. Thurmond stood on his feet for a talking record of 24

hours and 18 minutes against the Civil Rights Act. Some of the topics he used in his historic filibuster were historic documents. He read from and recited the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights and President George Washington's farewell address.

The South has had some legendary and colorful political characters. Georgia had Gene Talmadge. Louisiana had Huey Long. Mississippi had Theodore Bilbo. We had Wallace and Folsom. Strom Thurmond is South Carolina's contribution to the southern political folklore of our greatest politicians. Indeed, none of the above can match Strom's endurance and longevity in the southern political arena.

Strom was born in 1902 in Edgefield, South Carolina. This small hamlet had amazingly produced several South Carolina governors before Strom. The most famous of which was the legendary populist "Pitchfork" Ben Tillman.

Strom studied at Clemson University and was first a teacher and superintendent of education. He then became a lawyer and quickly became a Circuit Judge. In 1947, he was elected Governor of South Carolina. He became a national figure a year later. In 1948, when Harry Truman insisted on promoting civil rights as a major plank in the Democratic Party platform, most of the southern delegates walked out of the Democratic Convention. They joined hands and created the Dixiecrat Party. Gov. Strom Thurmond became the presidential candidate of the Dixiecrat ticket. Thurmond and the Dixiecrats carried the

Deep South states. However, Truman prevailed over Republican Thomas Dewey and captured the White House.

Strom was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1954. In 1964, he led the Republican Revolution in the South. His change to the Republican Party paved the way for the South's transition to the Republican Party. He literally unscrewed his desk from the senate floor, picked it up and moved it from the Democratic side of the aisle to the Republican side of the aisle. His dramatic move was the beginning of the end of the Democratic South. The rest is history.

His ability to pick up and move a 200-pound antique senate desk illustrated his uncommon energy and legendary fitness. Strom did hundreds of sit-ups and pushups every day. He neither smoked nor drank. He did, however, like women. He fathered children into his mid 70's and had a penchant for fondling women in the senate elevator.

Strom served as Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. His tenure on the Armed Services Committee, coupled with his incomparable seniority allowed him to bring home the bacon to South Carolina.

He retired from the U.S. Senate in 2012 after having served a remarkable 48 years. Strom Thurmond was the oldest person to have served in Congress and was a Senate member longer than anyone else in U.S. history. He died at the age of 101 in his hometown of Edgefield.





**Zack  
Azar**

# Woods & Waters with Zack

## POST-SEASON SCOUTING IS THE MOST VALUABLE SCOUTING TO DO

Well, it's February. Deer season is over and the cold weather makes the spring turkey season seem like an eternity away. However, for the diehard whitetail hunter, there is no better time than now to begin preparing for next deer season. Why start scouting this early, months before the season even opens? Post-season scouting is the most valuable scouting I do. The sign is all there waiting for me -- the trails, the rubs, and the scrapes. And now I can roam at will, explore those bedding areas, follow those scrape lines, hike every trail to see where it goes and where it comes from and all the while, not worry one bit about spooking deer because the deer will have eight months to get over it. That is the beauty of post-season scouting. Plus, post-season scouting will help you locate new spots to hunt next season. Now, with all of the knowledge from the recent deer season still fresh on your mind, it's time to get out and try to fill in the missing pieces with some post-season scouting.

Most deer hunters tend to use the same patterns, year after year. Think about it - we have our few favorite stands, we travel to them using the same paths, we park in the same places and then we wonder why we don't see more deer. Did it ever occur to you that the deer have patterned you? Well, they do. Post-season scouting will allow you to find new areas to hunt and give you time to trim shooting lanes and erect stands in these areas. It also gives you a chance to re-access your current stand locations. There will be stands on the property where deer sightings were few and far between, so these stands should be moved. There are probably other stands that simply weren't hunted. Maybe these need to be re-located also. The ultimate goal is to have numerous stands on your hunting property, so that you can hunt regardless of the wind direction. With this in mind, be sure to take a good compass with you when you're scouting for new stand locations.

Before you head out to your hunting area, you need to have a topo map, an aerial photo or simply a hand drawn map of your hunting property. You will use this to keep track of all of your findings while you scout. In addition to scouting on foot, trail cameras can add a new dimension to your gathering of information. In my opinion, they are a must! They can be set up along heavily used trails, key feeding areas or areas of rutting activity and the pictures you get will really compliment your on-the-ground efforts by giving you an idea of how many and what size deer are using the area. These pictures also show you what deer survived hunting season. On your map, you will mark food plots, logging roads, creeks, and other notable areas, like pine thickets or swampy areas. I use Google Earth and print out my own map. So, with trail cameras and a map in hand, it is time to get started.

While you're scouting, mark every trail, scrape, rub, bedding area and food source. If it's deer sign, you should be marking it on your map. Once you've made several post-season scouting trips into the woods with your map, you will soon begin to see a pattern develop. While post-season scouting, it is also essential for you to also make notes on your map for likely places to hang a stand. As I mentioned earlier, make sure you have numerous stand sites picked out that will allow you to hunt no matter which direction the wind is blowing. I mark the trees I want to put a stand in with a piece of surveyors ribbon.

While post-season scouting, I look primarily for signpost rubs. We have all heard the saying that "Big bucks might rub small trees but little bucks don't typically rub big ones." In reality, the saying should go "Big bucks rub small trees and sometimes

small bucks rub big trees." In most cases, mature bucks are responsible for starting the larger rubs that get a hunter's blood pumping. Once a large rub is made, however, it is common for a number of bucks to visit it, large and small, in order to leave their own message to other deer in the area. If you encounter a large rub that seems to be used year in and year out, chances are it is more of a sign post for most bucks in the area, rather than the mark of a giant buck that has been around for years. They indicate continued and dependable places for bucks to travel or hang out.

Deer have several "check in" points in a particular area that they visit with some regularity to leave their scent mark, letting other deer know that they are around. Think of it as a message board where people occasionally check in to leave a message for others to see. You see these in grocery stores or on college campuses where people can post information about current events, needing a roommate, or items for sale. In a whitetail's world, the bulletin boards take the form of rubs, primary scrapes, and licking branches.

At this point you are probably asking how you can use this information to your advantage? What not to do is set up your ambush point over the large rub. Although it might seem exciting thinking about a giant buck coming in and working the rub right in front of you, the odds of that happening are slim to none. Instead, do your best to learn where the deer are coming

from and at what time they are visiting the rub to leave their mark. Probably the best way to do this is with a trail camera positioned over the rub. Not only will it tell you what time the deer are visiting the area, it will tell you what direction they are coming from. You can use this information to establish ambush points heading to the rub, where you'll stand a much better chance of seeing the buck on his feet.

A buck's rub route leaving its core in the evening, usually winds through several doe use areas before ending up at a night time food source. Then it leads through other doe use areas as the buck moves back toward its core area in the early morning, before daylight. You should be able to find several rubs along the evening rub route; and possibly scrapes in the transition zones near food sources, along field edges, and near doe core areas.

While you are scouting, you may also find doe use areas with old and new rubs and scrapes; take note of where you find them. Once you find the doe use areas, or a food source, and the rub route, it is a matter of back-tracking the rub route of the buck to find its core area. If you want to be sure of finding the buck's core area now is a good time to go into it, even though you may spook the buck. By the time hunting season rolls around, the buck will have forgotten about your intrusion and it will have begun using its preferred bedding areas on a regular basis again.

Shooting a mature buck is not easy to do, but post-season scouting can level the playing field by giving you a good idea of where he sleeps, eats, breeds and travels. I don't know of a single successful hunter who does not count post-season scouting among his most valuable tools. Spend time studying what you have learned through post-season scouting and you'll be surprised at what this will mean come hunting season. Next month, turkey season comes in on the 15th in this part of the state. We'll look at some tips and tactics to help you bag that big gobbler. Until then, be safe in the woods and on the water. And if you get an opportunity, take a young person hunting or fishing.



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**Sports Editor,  
Ed Jones**



# BOWLED OVER!

Montgomery will officially be one of the four new destinations for a Division 1, NCAA approved college football game for the season of 2014. The "Camellia Bowl" will be held in Montgomery's historic football stadium, Cramton Bowl. Montgomery has been promoted down through the years by the exposure that the "Blue-Gray Game" provided with its national television network affiliations. The Camellia Bowl will take up Montgomery's banner and promote the city in the same

manner. The game itself will be held either December 20th or December 23rd next year. It will come with all the trimmings of other bowl games - a parade, a big banquet, media press conferences, constant local and national media coverage, etc.

Even though this writer is in favor of less, not more, as it pertains to the total number of NCAA approved bowl games. We in Montgomery should get behind the Camellia Bowl and help it be successful. "The Bowl", as it is known in Montgomery, has been recently given a facelift. It is as modern and adequate as most bowl game sites. We need at least 20,000 seats filled in order to properly finance the game. We also need that kind of attendance to show the national media that this is a proper venue for an NCAA bowl game. The money is in the TV contract.

The participants in the game will come from the Sun Belt conference and from the Mid-Atlantic Conference. For instance the two teams could be Troy versus Northern Illinois. How the teams are to be selected will be determined by other bowls that have contractual agreements with teams in these same conferences. Good football is played in both the MAC and the Sun Belt Conference. Therefore we will be blessed with a good game on the field. What we can not determine at this point is the support that the game will get from Montgomery and the surrounding areas. Hopefully that will come as the Camellia Bowl Committee begins its promotional campaign.

Now, lets take a long look at where we are regarding the total number of bowl games that will be played in 2014. To me it is staggering. This past year we had 35 bowl games counting the national championship game. In addition to the four team play-off to determine the national champion, the NCAA approved four new bowls. Along with the Camellia Bowl, there will be the Boca Raton Bowl, the Miami Bowl and the Bahama Bowl. One can guess where these other three bowls will be played. The final dates and other considerations for the 2014 bowl games will be determined at the Football Bowl Association meeting in Las Vegas on April 22-24, 2014. Did you know that there was a Football Bowl Association within the NCAA? As fanatical about college football as I am, the association was never part of my football vernacular.

Well, lets just count up the total number of games created by the bowls for 2014, including the three games necessary for a four team play-off for the national championship. Those three games for this illustration will be counted as

bowl games. Unless existing bowl games are eliminated, this will give us 41 bowl games involving 80 teams. This means that out of the 127 teams playing Division 1 football, 63% of the teams will be guaranteed a bowl game. That is astonishing. Only 47 teams will not be in a bowl game. Remember when bowl bids went out to teams in the top twenty that had distinguished themselves with outstanding records? In order to fill 41 bowl games with 80 teams, the NCAA will probably have to change its policy of allowing teams that only have only six wins to be eligible for a bowl.

Last year eight teams played in bowls with only six wins. There were only eleven teams with just six wins in the entire country. That means that three teams were left out of the bowl picture with 6 - 6 records - Troy, Florida Atlantic and Texas State. Is the NCAA going to allow teams with losing records to fill some of these bowls next year? They may have to if there are only eleven teams with a 6 - 6 record as was the case last year. Wow, 41 bowl games in 2014 as compared to 35 bowl games in 2013. My wife, Betty, will really be mad with me from the second week in December of 2014 until the second week 2015. If Old Dominion is playing Idaho in the "Rink-A-Dink Bowl", she will find me in front of "The Big Eye" watching the pre-game show throughout the post-game show. This is a major problem at my house!



*Site of the 2014 "Camellia Bowl", Montgomery, Alabama*

In this writer's opinion, no team should be invited to participate in a post season bowl game sanctioned by the NCAA without a winning record. That would mean that the cut-off would be a 7 - 5 record, except in some cases where a team was permitted to schedule 13 games. For instance, Colorado State played in the New Mexico Bowl with a 7 - 6 record because they were willing to play Hawaii. The NCAA allows a school to schedule 13 games if it will play Hawaii, either at home or in Hawaii. Why? It is difficult to find teams that are willing to go to Hawaii because of the cost of the trip. Hawaii does not mind playing in the states.

That's how they recruit the mainland. It is surprising that more big time programs don't play in Hawaii. It's a win, there is a bowl-like atmosphere for your players and coaches (plus wives) and it can be a good recruiting tool. Who doesn't want to go to Hawaii? When Alabama went on probation the last time, Athletics Director Mal Moore scheduled Hawaii and acted like it was a bowl game. That was brilliant!

Now, what is the answer to the proliferation of bowl games that the NCAA has had the wisdom or the ignorance to sanction? It would be the recommendation of this writer, if I could get the proper audience, to reduce the number of bowl games by one each year until there are only 30 bowl games. This would not include the four teams and three games required to determine the national champion. This would allow for each slot filling every bowl game to have at least a winning record as discussed above.

What about the national championship? The BCS for the most part is now a dinosaur, but for the most part it eventually pitted the best two teams in the country. I'm not sure Auburn could have beaten Southern California in 2004, but I sure would have liked to see the game. Oklahoma provided little opposition. So, there were just a few times that this writer did not think the BCS method did not do what it was designed to do. However, it was a complicated process.

What we have in place now is a step in the right direction. Even though my personal preference will eventually involve an eight team play-off, which I have written about in great detail in past issues of The Alabama Gazette.

For now we must be satisfied with the four team concept that the NCAA has adopted for the present. The unknown factor is just how will these four teams be selected and how will they be seeded. The NCAA has appointed a "committee" to study the rankings as they unfold week after week. There has to be some computer input as well, gaging strength of schedule, injuries, weather, etc.

This committee is made up of former football players, former coaches, former athletic directors, other men of football knowledge and Condoleezza Rice, who is probably the smartest member. The first meeting of this committee occurred during the second week in January. Their meetings will become more frequent as the season gets underway. There was much anguish and nashing of teeth with the old BCA system. The team ranked third had a legitimate beef about the final selection of the best two teams in America. The "Final Four" as we shall call them, chosen with puffs of smoke emanating from their eventual "master" location den, will probably satisfy those who were dissatisfied with being third in the past. But will it satisfy the followers of teams four and five. Of course four will be happy that they made it, but unhappy that they will have to play the number one team in America in the first round of the play-off. Team five is going to be just as unhappy in this system as team three was in the BCS system. Team one will play team four. Team two will play team three. The winners play for all the marbles. Obviously, from my vantage point there can never be a perfect system. The closest we can come in our lifetime is to see the four team play-off expanded to an eight team play-off. This will come. Maybe my plan will be adopted in a few years. Under my eight team play-off plan, the number nine team "Ain't gonna' have no gripe". I like it. Bring it on!

## THE SPORTS PAGE

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**Ronald A. Holtsford**



The National Security Agency not only intercepted the telephone calls of suspected terrorists but also collected in bulk the logs of telephone calls and emails of ordinary citizens. Monitoring also included the personal cell phone of our ally, Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany. Apparently the monitoring of Merkel has gone on for many years during her ascent to the Chancellorship.

The earliest overreach that I am familiar with is by United States President Abraham Lincoln during the War Between the States. Lincoln suspended the Writ of Habeas Corpus against citizens. The Writ of Habeas Corpus is procedural so that a criminal suspect is given the reasons for his or her arrest. Lincoln felt that suspension of the Writ was within his powers though it is only a power of Congress. Several were arrested on suspicion of favoring the Confederate States. In the case of one citizen in Maryland that was arrested by military authorities, Chief Justice Taney of the United States Supreme Court ruled that Lincoln had overstepped his authority. However, Lincoln disregarded the Chief Justice's ruling and continued to suspend the Writ on his own authority. Lincoln was in fact defiant during a public speech on Independence Day suggesting that the suspension of Habeas Corpus was necessary during the rebellion of the Southern States.

A mere five years later a new United States Supreme Court essentially supported Taney's position saying that only Congress could suspend Habeas Corpus and that no civilian could be tried in military court.

During World War I, in Schenck v. United States, Justice Holmes of the United States Supreme Court used the phrase, "clear and present danger". Schenck, as a member of the Socialist Party sought to print and mail to American conscripts a leaflet with a message that the Thirteenth Amendment was violated by the

## THE NSA HAS UNCONSTITUTIONALLY MONITORED THE TELEPHONE AND EMAIL LOGS OF AMERICAN CITIZENS AND BREACHED THE TRUST THAT WE SHOULD HAVE IN OUR PRIVACY.

*Have there been other times when the actions of our Government overstepped it's bounds?*

conscription act and that conscripts were treated little better than convicts. Schneck had three charges against him including violation of the Espionage Act of 15 June 2017. Schneck argued his rights under freedom of speech. In Holmes opinion, he used the words, "clear and present danger" because America was at war and needed men to fight. Holmes further said that a man that falsely shouted "fire" in a theatre was not protected by his freedom of speech when he would surely cause a panic. The Espionage Act punished not only conspiracies to obstruct but also to actually obstruct. Holmes saw that success was not a necessary element of such a crime.

The final apparent injustice against American citizens was the imprisonment of Japanese Americans during World War II. When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor there were about 112,000 people of Japanese ancestry that lived on the West Coast of the United States. Seventy thousand were United States citizens. About five thousand refused to swear allegiance to the United States and to renounce allegiance to Japan. Several thousand evacuees requested repatriation to Japan. Many lived near military or sensitive installations and there was evidence of disloyalty among some.

In *Korematsu v. United States*, Korematsu Constitutionally challenged the relocation of himself and others of Japanese heritage and the relocation in camps. The relocation of Japanese was affirmed in *Korematsu* and Justice Holmes said, "... because Congress, reposing its confidence in this time of war in our military leaders- as inevitably it must- determined that they should have the power to do just this. We cannot- by availing ourselves of the calm perspective of hindsight- now say that at that time these actions were unjustified."

Several of the Justices dissented though in a minority. Justice Jackson wrote, "A citizen's presence in the locality, however, was made a crime only if his parents were of Japanese birth. Had Korematsu been

one of four- the others say being a German alien enemy, an Italian alien enemy and a citizen of American born ancestors, convicted of treason but out on parole- only Korematsu's presence would have violated the order."

Balancing the civil liberties and Constitutional rights of American citizens against real and perceived threats is often tough to do. I will not be happy if I ever learn that my telephone conversations are recorded or listened to. However, I am not terribly upset over a brief screening at the airport if I am kept safe on my flight. I also don't care that captured enemy combatants might be kept at Guantanamo as I know that some of the really bad guys are removed from causing trouble again. I also don't care if water boarding is used on captured enemy combatants if it saves American lives. That is what counts in my book.

We expect to exercise our civil liberties and to say what we want (to a point). We also want to feel safe in our homes and at public places and to feel like when we go to bed at night that there is a great likelihood that we will awake the next morning.

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

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

**Stop Common Core in Alabama**

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*Submitted By Sharon Sewell  
Alabamians United for Excellence  
in Education [www.auee.org](http://www.auee.org)*

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

My grandson's image is imprinted on my heart. He is so beautiful. Joy abounds. Just being around him creates waves of energy for all in his world that never seem to end. Being around my grandson is an incredible experience.

How cool is it to know such joy, such energy, such hands-on exploration of his world, such curiosity? He is the epitome of all I believed as a teacher.

When he finally tuckers out, his little body unwinds until deep breaths enfold him in peace with great content.

Being a mom is the greatest thing I've ever been. Being a grandma is such sweet icing on the cake of motherhood. Many things may come and go, but being a mom and now a grandma permeates my being to the core. That toddler is forever embedded in my soul.

Spending time with him reminds me of my love for children and why I taught school for 32 years. I began my career in deaf education, at one time working as a parent/infant trainer with the Alabama School for the Deaf and Blind. Winding my way through my career brought me to my final destination; teaching second grade before I retired.

Teaching was so special. I loved it. I loved working with children, parents and other teachers. It was an experience that taught me so much about life and relationships, the good, the bad and the ugly.

I'm also a product of life-long learning. I love to read. I love to research. I love to know what is going on. My desire to acquire knowledge and to understand is not a switch I can easily turn off and on. Usually when I learn one thing it leads to something deeper which leads down one path or another and before long I am surrounded by printed articles, jotted notes, taped messages and scribbles on post-a-notes. And so it has been with education reform in Alabama and across the nation.

Education reform was nothing new in my life as a teacher. What happens day in and day out of a classroom is still of interest to me as a retired teacher. My grandson will be in a classroom some day. Because of him I want to keep up with what is going on. What I have discovered is a far cry from what I want for my grandson. What is going on makes me cringe.

Why do I cringe? After all the research and all the emails and phone calls made, I find that very few parents know what is happening in classrooms. I find that many teachers are afraid to speak about what

is happening in their classrooms.

I'm discovering that students, especially the gifted and special needs children are losing ground. Messages from teachers and parents on a facebook page I monitor tell me a different story than what I interest groups saying.

The amount of testing being done in classrooms is causing frustration and anxiety among students and teachers. Seasoned teachers who know the difference between what was taught before and what is being taught now are leaving the profession. If you are reading this, you must ask yourself, "Why?"

Please go to this website [www.auee.org](http://www.auee.org). The facebook page mentioned is linked to that site. If you do not know what is going on in classrooms across Alabama and across our nation, you need to learn. My grandson will not be engaged in classrooms using the latest and greatest because it is not great. It is very different. His natural curiosity and zest for learning will be crushed. I will do all I can in my corner of the world to protect him from things which I cannot support nor condone. He was made for greater things than what I have researched. This newest reform will "collide" with many parents, teachers and students long before it runs its course. Please help me stop it.

# I AM A GRANDMA



# Bench-Bar- & Beyond

## COUNTERINTUITIVE THOUGHTS ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE

By Judge Dale Segrest



**Judge Philip Dale Segrest**

*Want to know more about the author or to comment on the column:*

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The tremendous increase in the rate of incarceration that has occurred over the past forty years or so strongly indicates more crimes are happening. Our next few columns we will explore some of the implications. In an earlier column we pointed out that there is no "cause" for crime. There is a cause for proper behavior. The cause for proper behavior is adequate moral formation. We also pointed out that the traditional family was the beginning point of moral formation and that the breakdown of family cannot help but have impact on moral formation and ultimately on criminal activity. All of this background information points to an additional counterintuitive point: the solution to crime will not necessarily result from more law enforcement or more money spent for law enforcement.

And while the escalation of crime may be associated with family breakdown, the answer to crime does not lie in an attempt to rejuvenate the traditional family by forcing parents to live together unwillingly. In my career as a judge, I believe that I saw instances in which moral formation almost happened in reverse. The actions of an abusive father and an immoral mother seemed to result in children whose conscience was plugged in backwards. They could not feel good about themselves unless they were doing something bad!

In addition to family, the peer group is very important in moral formation. Children develop and mature in relationships with people other than immediate family members. As the children grow older, their peer group plays a larger and larger role in their moral formation. Inevitably, this means that

community and the peer group are extremely important in the determining whether individuals will engage in criminal activity. Like poor parenting, the peer group can certainly result in something less than desirable moral development. Who the kids hang out with makes a difference.

The place where most individuals encounter the peer group is in school and the educational system. That is often where children meet the other children with whom they will develop relationships. And the schools themselves clearly have a role to play. The learning process plays an important role in moral formation. The prisons are filled with individuals who have performed less than adequately in school. Often illiteracy is a problem and clearly there is a positive correlation between lack of linguistic skills and criminal behavior. But schools cannot provide the values, and emotional attachment to values that need to be instilled by family, church and community in general. Moreover, the inter-actions with other students-the peer group- is just as instrumental in moral formation as inter-action with teachers

The important point in this discussion is that family, church and community must build moral citizens. That is the only answer to crime. Only by reinforcing the values that were traditionally instilled by caring parents and by surrounding developing children with a community that cares and that will instill positive values, can we hope to overcome criminal behaviors. Church and religious groups have a strong role to play in this process. It is a role that religion has traditionally played. In a sense, the

increased rate of incarceration represents as much failure on the part of the church and religious organizations as on the part of law enforcement courts. It is not enough for the church and community to condemn evil, through the work of law enforcement. The traditional role of the Judeo-Christian heritage has been the advancement of positive good, and creation of strong citizens. The condemnation of evil does not solve the problem and bring about the solution.

The basic premise of this column is that we must find positive ways of dealing with all of the individuals in our society. A caring community social structure that supports families, churches and schools is the ultimate answer to the problem of crime. Law enforcement is very important, but is not the answer to the greatly increased rate of incarceration. No amount of emphasis on law enforcement and incarceration will provide a meaningful solution to the problem of crime. We actually must "accentuate the positive" if we are to "eliminate the negative." We'll develop further ideas related to this counterintuitive observation by exploring the ways that we incorrectly measure the success of the struggle against crime, and deal with offenders in the next few columns.



*Marcia Chambliss*



## BARACK OBAMA: PRESIDENT OR EMPEROR?

*"I've got a pen, and I've got a phone. And I can use that pen to sign executive orders and take executive actions and administrative actions that move the ball forward."*

**Do you fully understand what your president just told you?**

Regardless of your political ideology, these words uttered by any elected official, and especially by a president of these United States of America, should send a chill down your spine and sound danger sirens across this nation.

For those not sharing my conservative philosophy and seeing nothing wrong with our president's recent remarks, I ask just one question: **What would be your reaction if this sentiment were expressed by a Republican president?**

What would we have heard from the mainstream media had President George W. Bush uttered these same words that are in complete defiance of our Constitution and separation of powers? Can you imagine the headlines and the outrage from the left-leaning media outlets?

Instead, Governor Chris Christie's "Bridge-gate," a contrived "War on Women," and the antics of Justin Bieber dominate the news. I'm certainly no fan of Governor Christie but whatever the level of dirty politics surrounded a bridge closing in New Jersey pales in comparison to a sitting president indicating that he plans to subvert Congress should he not get his way.

We are now experiencing the presidency that our Founders feared, and it provides the best example

of why they were so careful in drafting our Constitution so as to avoid the concentration of power that existed in England with King George.

Perhaps the Republican members in Congress think he's a king because pushback over these remarks is slow in coming. I imagine it's because the GOP leadership thinks that the mainstream media won't "like" them should they challenge his comments. But here's a news flash – the media never has liked conservatives or the GOP and they never will.

Admittedly, I saw a Facebook post from Speaker Boehner's office in which his staff asserted that President Obama may have a pen and a phone, but they have the Constitution; however, the use of the Constitution by the GOP-led House hasn't been exactly a high point under Speaker Boehner's leadership.

Conservative radio host Mark Levin was correct in his assessment of President Obama's remarks but the mainstream media has ignored them.

"He's just announced that he is going to assume lawmaking powers. He does not recognize the majority in the House of Representatives. I don't know how much more clearly he can say it. You know what this is folks? This is a gradual, quiet coup. That's what is taking place. It's gradual. It's quiet, in the sense that it's non-violent. But it's a coup!"

Levin went on to acknowledge that the constitutional crisis we are facing doesn't involve the number of executive orders issued, but rather the content of those orders. Orders issued from the executive branch as an end-run around Congress

when legislation fails to pass is in direct conflict with the constitutional manner in which our government was designed to operate. Three equal and separate branches were established to prevent the threat that our current president has now verbalized, and if our citizens on either side of the aisle cannot see this danger, we are in worse trouble than ever imagined.

The Affordable Care Act rollout was disastrous with more uncertainty to come, the IRS is poised to intrude further in our lives, the murders in Benghazi are given little more than lip service, and the United States is no longer in the top 10 ranking of the world's freest economies\*, with government spending on the rise while property rights decrease.

At the risk of repetition, I have to ask yet again: Are you willing to get involved in our political process? Will 2014 be the year for Americans to say "enough" and truly mean it by electing representation nationwide who care more about liberty than their political power? Or will we continue with the re-election of the same political ruling class and expect different results?

\*2014 Index of Economic Freedom: Five Points You Should Know, The Foundry blog, Heritage Foundation, 1/14/14.

*Marcia Chambliss is the Alabama State Coordinator of Smart Girl Politics, a 501(c)(3) non-profit dedicated to the education and training of activists and candidates, and Smart Girl Politics Action, <http://sgpaction.com/>, a 501(c)(4) which focuses on conservative issues. She can be reached at [Marcia@sgpaction.com](mailto:Marcia@sgpaction.com). Her views do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Smart Girl Politics Action.*



# Community Lifestyles

## Montgomery County

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

## Autauga County

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## Elmore County

Surrounding Town and Communities:  
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they also make many efforts to give back to the community in other ways. Last year, DeRamus Hearing Centers gave away free hearing aids to twenty plus seniors who could not afford them. These hearing aids were not given to people at events; they were given simply because DeRamus Hearing understood the frustrations these people were going through not being able to hear their loved ones.



DeRamus Hearing Centers is all about giving back to the local community. Easter Seals of Alabama recently announced DeRamus Hearing Centers as Employer of the Year for everything they do locally. They buy local, advertise local, bank local, and hire local. Not only does DeRamus Hearing Centers keep their business local,

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through their own community-minded initiatives like their recent Veterans Day Giveaway Event, DeRamus Hearing Centers is committed to fostering communication and giving back to the people of Alabama. DeRamus invites you to get back into the conversation, starting with a free hearing screening and private consultation at one of their offices.

For more information, call 334-262-7553, go to website: [www.deramushearinginc.com](http://www.deramushearinginc.com), or come by DeRamus Hearing Centers, 2809 Chestnut St., Montgomery.



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**Director: Dr. Lisa Olenik Dorman**  
**Assistant Director: Jessi Andrews**

Please contact us if you are interested in joining our team or in learning more:  
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## The Education Station... By Bobbie Ames

### THE TRANSFORMATION OF AMERICAN CULTURE: 1900- 2014

At the turn of the 20th Century, Americans believed in eternal life, in Eternity. They believed that life continued beyond the grave. Perhaps not everyone believed in the depravity of man, of the necessity of Redemption, but the culture reflected the Moral law and Biblical Principles for living one's life on earth. There was a universal hope of Heaven. This was true from the earliest beginning through the Founding of America and beyond.

This was the world that I was born into in 1930. American Education affirmed that we were "human;" meaning body, mind, and spirit. Bible reading was a part of daily school life throughout elementary school. I first encountered the theory of Evolution in a textbook in the grammar grades. My teacher, Mrs Louise Beals, of Washington, North Carolina, assured us that this was a "theory being floated around by unreliable scientists who couldn't prove it." We were quite satisfied, and dismissed the "strange theory" from our thoughts. I never had a teacher in elementary school who did not have a deep faith and exemplary character. Little did I know that John Dewey had already boldly written in "The New Republic" (1922) and later reprinted in "Education Today," (1940) "We make a religion of our education, we profess faith in its possibilities, we point with pride to its advance." The religion that he defined had no place for the Supernatural. The Humanist Manifesto identifies Education as a "religious experience."

By high school, Evolution had gained a small following in the Southern States. By the time I reached my Methodist College in 1948, the "strange theory" of my childhood years was now taught as Fact, as was the "old earth" millions of years theory that was so necessary for Evolution to be taught. While many of us were strong Christians we were not equipped to debate or refute our professors. We had no Apologetics taught in our youth groups at church at that time. Many of us did not believe the theories, but many had their faith shaken.

What was hidden beneath this pagan thought that would transform education throughout the country in half a century? I will submit that the teaching of Evolution cut to the heart of our Judeo-Christian faith as it attacked ORIGINS. Are we created by God to be His image bearers? Or are we an outcome of a series of accidents and chance? Psalm 130:14 clearly states that we are "fearfully and wonderfully made."

Humanists see man differently. The Humanist sees himself as a child of the Cosmos, and one who has faith in man as the measure of values, the measure of all things. One of the leading humanists in the early 1900s, Stanton Hodgkin, wrote that public schools would take the place of the church in America, and that those schools would be based on the religion of Humanism. His writings so impressed Curtis W. Reese that they were included in his published collection of "Humanist Sermons."

All of the teaching of my early years about "the regenerated heart's role in living out one's life" was now challenged by higher education circles in colleges and universities. To them, the heart is no more than a collection of muscles, right? Based on that, emotions are simply reactions to chemical

interactions. Yes, Pagans have nothing to offer but distractions from the Truth. The fundamental cornerstone of true education is to know who we are, who we really are...that we are made in God's image with the capacity to know Him and to know Truth, thus able to live it out in relation to Him and to each other. Our view of Origins, and of Eternity, will determine how we invest our lives.

The modern culture reflects sin's hunger, which is never satisfied. The entertainment industry tracts sales of video games and hardware. Sin's hunger drives children and adults to entertain themselves with increasingly violent and immoral sexual content. Information from a study by the National Institutes of Health, an arm of the U. S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, focused on "Impact of Electronic Media Violence: Scientific Theory and Research." The study showed that:

1. **Children in the U.S. spend an average between 3 and 4 hours a day viewing television.**
2. **More than 60% of programs contain some violence, and about 40% contain heavy violence.**
3. **Children spend increasingly amounts of time on video games, most of which contain violence. Video games are in 83% of homes with children.**
4. **Most of the games are violent. 94% are rated as violent by the game industry.**
5. **Video games use peaks during the middle childhood years, ages 8-10.**

As children experiment with these things in search of their own identity, the world offers nothing but distractions from the Truth. The fundamental cornerstone of true education is the recognition of who we are, and of our being schooled for our Providential mission on this earth. That makes all the difference in our quality of life.

American Education in the public schools has offered a substitute for moral absolutes. Henry Nelson Wieman, a signatory for the "Humanist Manifesto II", defines Religion for the Humanist mind: "Religion, then, as the word here is used, will mean a ruling commitment practiced by a community of individuals to what they believe creates, sustains, saves, transforms, human existence toward the greatest good."

In the preface of the Humanist Manifesto II, Paul Kurtz wrote, "Humanism is a philosophical, religious, and moral point of view." He further declares that it "rejects orthodox and dogmatic positions." His idea of Utopia, is the new world community of Humanism fulfilled.

Just as Britain has abandoned Christianity, America is in severe crisis as well. Recent research claims that the majority of Americans do not profess a personal faith in Christianity. How will the pulpits of our

land respond to this urgent call? What will be the answer to Abortion, Euthanasia, Drugs, Crime, Pornography, Violence, Immorality, if not repentance? What will it take to rebuild family life, when the divorce rate has more than doubled since 1960.

The spiritual fallout has taken its toll on academic achievement and general knowledge of history and literature and the world around us. Don Feder, in his book, Pagan America, quotes a National Endowment for the Humanities study: 68% of high school seniors don't know when the Civil War occurred. two-thirds can't identify the Reformation, and 64% can't identify the author of "The Canterbury Tales." Clearly our schools have failed their primary function to educate.

The great stories of Literature that reflect human greatness are being lost to this generation. The rise and fall of cultures throughout the centuries have powerful lessons to teach us. And underlying them all, the study will reveal if the nation has one God or many gods. Cultures reveal their religion.

The American Humanist Association has a religious tax exemption with the Internal Revenue Service. According to our friend, Dr. David Noebel, an IRS agent verified this as a 501-c-3 status and gave Dr. Noebel the actual federal ID number as proof.

In closing, let me say that there is no such thing as "value-neutral education." Many people do not want to take the time to be informed on the crisis in Education, because they do not want to be involved; they do not want to be disturbed. The Humanist worldview is not only real, it is the greatest threat to liberty, and it has gained many disciples in high places. Only through God's intervention, can this Republic be restored. Who side are you on? Do you have on your armor? Are you ready for battle? The children and families of this nation need you. NOW. Please, don't let them down.

#### Books referenced in the article:

**Your Origins Matter**  
Henry Morris III  
Institute for Creation Research, 2013

**A Jewish Conservative Looks at Pagan America**  
Don Feder,  
Huntington House, 1993.

**Clergy in the Classroom**  
David Noebel, Summit Press, 3rd Ed. 2007



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# Pike Road News



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## PIKE ROAD FIREFIGHTER BLAKE GREEN SELECTED AS FEBRUARY GIVING OUR BEST

The Pike Road Fire & Rescue is pleased to announce that firefighter/EMT Blake Green has been selected as the February "Giving Our Best" recipient.

Firefighter Green joined the department as a volunteer seven years ago and was one of the first employees hired by the department in 2011. He was selected as the "Giving Our Best" for his compassion and overall contribution to the department and the community.

Firefighter Green's level of caring goes past those in need of immediate medical assistance, he watches out for what transpires to citizens after the fire trucks depart the scene. He recently responded to a call to assist someone with low blood sugar. It was clear the person lived alone and had not eaten properly. Firefighter Green reached out to the family afterwards to share his apprehensions and make sure the persons' essentials were met. Firefighter Green goes above and beyond to make sure the citizens of Pike Road receive the best fire/medical services possible.

Green is one of the first firefighters to arrive on the scene and ranks among the top in call responses. He is eager to participate and contributes in a positive manner. He is knowledgeable regarding firefighting tactics and principles and applies his knowledge safely, appropriately and effectively. Green completes the fire and life safety inspections for the department.

Green is a 2012 graduate of the Alabama Fire College. He is a licensed EMT, career firefighter, certified firefighter instructor I, fire inspector I and Wildland Firefighting.

Firefighter Green said he loves his job as a firefighter. But he says the best part is not running into burning buildings or putting on his firefighting gear – his favorite thing is meeting small children and watching their faces around the fire trucks. He said, their eyes get big and they are so excited.

Along with his skills as a firefighter and an EMT, Green assists the department in numerous other ways. He is involved in many other fire department and ladies auxiliary activities and events to include: educating area school age children on fire safety, driving Santa to deliver Christmas gifts to area "needy" families, MDA, American Cancer Society, Pike Road Arts & Crafts Fair, Fourth of July parade, 9/11 ceremonies, stair climb to raise money for National Fallen Firefighters Association, annual Boston Butt fund raiser and various community



*Blake Green*

fall festivals and other events.

Green is a resident of the Town of Pike Road. He is an avid AU fan. Green enjoys hunting, playing golf, spending time with his family and volunteering with the fire department.

Firefighter Green is an example of a member who willingly gives to the department and community when called upon. His dedication and professionalism have made him a deserving recipient of the "Giving Our Best." For more information on how you can make a difference in the Pike Road community, visit the Pike Road Fire Department website at [www.pikeroadfire.com](http://www.pikeroadfire.com) or phone (334) 271-1048.


Upcoming  
Town  
Meetings

Monday, February 10

The Pike Road Planning Commission will meet Monday, February 10 at 5:30 PM at Town Hall, followed by the town council meeting at 7:00 p.m. Both meetings take place in the council chamber. Agendas can be viewed here, and videos of all meetings are posted on our YouTube channel.

Beginning Farmer Seminar Series

February 11 • [Click here for details.](#)



Tuesday, February 11

The Beginning Farmer Seminar Series will continue Tuesday, February 11 at 6:00 PM with the topic "Finding Financial Assistance: USDA Loan Programs." The seminar is free and open to the public. For more information, click the logo above or email Maggie Salter with NYFEA.

Town of Pike Road  
Recreation  
Service  
Corps

Tuesday, February 11

The Pike Road Recreation Service Corps will meet at 6:00 PM Tuesday, February 11 at Town Hall. Join us as we plan for ways to increase and improve recreation opportunities in the town! Click the logo above to check out our 2014 goals, or email Willie Madison to get involved.





## John Sophocleus



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

### AFFLUENZA: OUR CURRENT STOP AS WE 'PROGRESS' DOWN THE ROAD OF MADD POLICY...

was only sentenced to probation for killing four people after he lost control of his father's company F-350 truck while speeding and driving drunk. This absurd 'punishment' in relation to his crime outraged the victims' families and left prosecutors disappointed. The 16-year-old offender was sentenced in juvenile court (for this very adult crime) to only 10 years of probation; he confessed to intoxication manslaughter in the reckless crash he caused on a rural Texas road.

Prosecutors sought the 20 yr. maximum in State custody for the killer, but his attorneys appealed to District Judge Jean Boyd arguing the teen needed rehabilitation, not prison, according to the *Ft. Worth Star-Telegram*. If the boy continues to be cushioned by his family's wealth, another tragedy is inevitable, prosecutor Richard Alpert said in court. Alpert was quoted with, "There can be no doubt that he will be in another courthouse one day blaming the lenient treatment he received here," in the *Star-Telegram* who also reported authorities said the teen and friends were seen on surveillance video stealing two cases of beer from a store. Little doubt defense attorneys also considered blaming this store's failure to prevent these affluent thieves from acquiring this killer's input instead of also holding these young criminals accountable for their actions in aiding and abetting the killings.

The killer teen had seven passengers in his father's F-350; speeding with a blood-alcohol level three times the legal limit, according to testimony during the trial. The truck slammed into four innocent people, recklessly killing youth minister Brian Jennings, 43; Breanna Mitchell, 24; Shelby Boyles, 21; and Shelby's 52-year-old mother, Hollie Boyles.

Judge Boyd said programs available in the Texas juvenile justice system may not (seems she was too busy to inquire or verify) provide the kind of intensive therapy the teen could receive at the rehabilitation center near Newport Beach, CA promoted by the killer's defense attorneys. I forecast 20 years in prison to keep this killer off our roads may be intensive enough to proffer the result his parents clearly failed to accomplish. Instead, these affluent parents pick up the tab for the Newport Beach stay at a price of more than \$450,000 a year for treatment to accomplish their end of delaying maturation by further insulating this despicable killer from his actions. Dare I type those suffering loss of the four souls (listed above) would be better served with this sum?

Perhaps the victims of 'Killer Teen' will receive a more socially productive result in a civil trial to bankrupt these failed parents and his father's company thus allowing their wealth and assets to move toward those who lost and make way to other construction companies with better ethics. The hope being there won't be anyone else affluent and foolish enough to pay Killer's \$450,000/yr. bill to stay in Newport Beach and he'll be correctly resentenced to 20 years. This would keep one less killer animal off the Zoo our roads have become where he may possibly mature; indeed much more difficult to begin so much later in life after Killer's 16 years of poor parenting.

Scott Brown, Killer's lead defense attorney, said he could have been freed after two years if he received the 20 year sentence. Attorneys aren't allowed as much influence over future parole hearings to garner as handsome a paycheck for their services from Killer's affluent parents. Nothing like adding this insult to the loss of those in grief and despair citing how sentencing for affluent killers (and other property crimes) are let off, as others convicted of victimless crimes must serve all/most of the assigned sentence regardless of good behaviour and overwhelming evidence of rehabilitation. Brown asserted Judge Boyd "fashioned a sentence that could have him under the thumb of the justice system for the next 10 years," according to the *Star-Telegram*.

Relatives of those further victimized by Killer's recklessness found little solace in Brown's assertion. Eric Boyles (who lost his wife and daughter) said the family's wealth helped the teen avoid incarceration. "Money always seems to keep you out of trouble,"

Boyles said in the *Star-Telegram* report. "Ultimately today, I felt that money did prevail. If you had been any other youth, I feel like the circumstances would have been different." Other quotes included Shaunna Jennings (the minister's widow) who said her family had forgiven the teen but believed a sterner punishment was needed. "You lived a life of privilege and entitlement, and my prayer is that it does not get you out of this," Mrs. Jennings said. "My fear is that it will get you out of this."

The expert defense witness psychologist testified Killer suffered from "affluenza," growing up in a house where the parents were preoccupied with arguments which resulted in divorce. *The Star-Telegram* reported this expert (Gary Miller) said the father "does not have relationships, he takes hostages," and the mother was indulgent. "Her mantra was that if it feels good, do it," Miller said. "Affluenza" is the inevitable result of MADD policies, the ultimate in 'feel good' politics over rationally written laws and their enforcement. This sort of political sophistry may provide immediate 'warm fuzzies' trumping up DUI rules, rehabilitation sentencing, etc. to increase government revenues, empower more bureaucrats and redistribute wealth to politically connected facilities. It does little to deter destructive driving outcomes which take lives, mind, body, spirit and property. Too bad mothers went mad instead of using rational anger to advance strong sentencing of reckless drivers (which may include their own children) who harm others - **PERIOD**. Drunk or otherwise, the result is the same. The immediate gain of removing reckless drivers who kill (or damage w/o making their victims whole monetarily) is thinning out the Zoo our roads have become with too many killer animals of this sort subsidized to drive without bearing the costs/consequences proffering our current unsafe result.

Sadly, Texas is not alone in this Zoo outcome which seems to be alive and thriving well here in 5th placed Alabama (immediately below 4th placed TX) as recently reported by Larry Copeland in *USA Today* which provided statistics affirming we also have some of the worst drivers in the States. This was NOT always true from my observation. When I first arrived in Alabama (leaving SC's recently mandated auto insurance to observe reckless driving subsidized there) it was not the morass I've witness these past several years. Teen drivers seemed sorry about their recklessness, didn't quibble about their fault and their insurance companies PAID... the more likely result when insurance is not mandated and there is more competition against poor performing companies who do not pay claims - i.e., more difficult to collude without the government enforced cartel.

Today, the more politically connected insurance companies seem more interested in 'framing' instead of paying victims and manipulate the process to subsidize reckless drivers, exacerbating the Zoo result Alabama drivers suffer today. I'll simply call them "Framers" who give to powerful politicians' campaigns, spend money advertising on the media owned by the politician(s), etc. The big insurance outfits (I'll call them ZooWreck) also promote the Zoo result supporting underwriters like Framers who facilitate wealth transfers in their favour when successful at getting others to pay claims which are ZooWreck's responsibility. As Obamacare - Medicare/Medicaid pays for increasingly more reckless driver injuries (esp. the really big bills incurred which end in fatality or long term intensive care) do you really think ZooWreck will offer lower premiums in such an uncompetitive environment proffered by Republicrats like Mike Hubbard?

Sad how quickly most forget big government 'Mother Hubbard' is responsible for mandating auto insurance (AutoObamacare) in our State as they applaud his (and Gov. Bentley) call for amnesty from federal medical Obamacare. All this means is a high end 'public servant' like Hubbard was not paid enough (by the Affluenza type 'mental health' special interest and others who lobbied for/plan to benefit from Obamacare mandates) to also advocate for this similarly deleterious policy. Gov. Bentley appears to be a 'high-end political prostitute' trainee learning the 'oldest profession' from Byrne, Hubbard, et al type 'public servants' on the BCA corporate welfare tit impeding our State economy.

In short, the days of our once functioning uninsured motorist and jurists who went after those who don't pay for reckless results are over. We now have Hubbard's AutoObamacare mandates which increased premiums to where 1 in 4 motorists decided to be uninsured. This result pleases prostitute politicians who enjoy the benefits of selling out Alabama consumers and boast more revenue to big government cronies who receive more revenue from police writing tickets to those without insurance instead of doing the more difficult job of making cases against reckless drivers. The increase in uninsured motorists gives Hubbard the green light to spend even more State resources to verify insurance and enforce the cartel he's created as the madness continues and proliferates with higher premiums and unpaid claims.

Yet again, MADD policies carry the day as judges and juries succumb to parents (which includes immoral fathers, not just mothers) doing anything to continue insulating the despicable children they've spawned and created; further increasing the likelihood they'll never be a positive part of society. From my observations, I long for the pre-mandated days when insurance companies paid their responsibilities and passed on increased premiums to those who earned them. Perhaps I'm spoiled to still have my first vehicle and until recently still drove my second vehicle (a quarter century and 300,000 miles) until stolen by a Lee County jury refusing to discipline a reckless driver I'll call 'Lightening Teen' and his insurance company.

Lightening Teen was racing with another reckless driver I barely missed (thanks to the amazing braking system on my Charger Daytona) who made an illegal left turn in front of me. Lightening, more interested in the race, simply followed directly behind the car he was racing and smashed into my vehicle when making his illegal left turn. When a "Framers Insurance" adjuster (who came to total my vehicle) made the connection he'd also wrote-up Lightening Teen's vehicle, he said he thought it'd flown off the road at highway speeds and hit a tree or power pole.

Just as Killer Teen's father did all he could to manipulate the jurist for his child, the same was true for Lightening. The Lee Co. jury let Lightening off so my insurance paid \$4,000 in towing, medical bills, loss of vehicle use and \$49,000 for my vehicle so other responsible drivers who actually pay their inflated insurance premiums subsidize the jury's decision to let Lightening off. The only reason to take a case to court (when you know you're going to get paid anyway) is to at least incur some cost on reckless drivers and get them to lie on the stand where they're disciplined at the more important final judgment.

The next (most recent) illustration was when a driver I'll call 'Screaming Teen' smashed her mustang convertible into the rear of my bride's Impala as I was almost stopped to avoid another reckless driver who (in my opinion) was also responsible for my being struck. Screaming Teen apparently was ranting on a cell phone about her boyfriend's (in the passenger seat) haircut in preparation for military service. Thankfully, this soon to be soldier had the presence of mind (at highway speed) to pull up the emergency brake in between the seats to lock the rear wheels and reduce the vehicle from further acceleration while Screaming was still on the gas pedal. Framers again refused to pay - actually said they'd pay a third and asked my bride (in writing) to commit insurance fraud to also submit a claim with her insurance for the rest. She refused and turned it over to the State Insurance Commissioner copied to Speaker Hubbard. Both did nothing. Little wonder since it was Framers/ZooWreck type insurance bureaucrats suborning insurance fraud in writing; but we still wonder how the vehicle was totaled (using their absurd 1/3 'fair' market evaluation unable to provide a comparable vehicle for the this amount) WITHOUT having to turn in the title or any other verification of being a total loss. The Alabama Insurance Commissioner was disinterested in that fraud as well... yet another State agency to dissolve. Do insurance companies really require anymore government advocates once Mother Hubbard type political hacks mandate so much market power in their favour?

Continued on page 17





Judge  
Peggy Givhan

# SOUTHERN GARDENING

## FEBRUARY POTPOURRI - by Peggy Givhan

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### BACKYARD FRUIT PRUNING WORKSHOP TUESDAY, FEB., 25TH

Although there may not be much landscape work to do during the winter, February can be considered an important and critical time for taking care of fruit crops. Pruning your fruits in February each year will ensure healthy plants and increased production and fruit quality.

Once fruit trees and small fruits have been planted, training must begin. Since fruits are being grown for the production of food, all growth must be pruned properly to maximize production and to ensure the plant is strong enough to hold the weight of the fruit. Young plants are typically pruned and trained for the first several years primarily to develop the plants' proper shape and size. Once flowering and fruiting begins and is allowed, usually in the third or fourth year, some additional pruning is done to help

prevent the breakage of limbs.

For established fruit trees, the first pruning cuts should be to remove any sucker growth that may have sprouted below the graft. Next, all diseased and damaged wood is taken out. Then as you look at the fruit tree, cut out all growth that crosses or rubs other branches. And since fruit develops where it gets adequate sunlight and air circulation, areas that are thick in growth or crowded must be thinned or opened up to allow more light and air movement.

More information and hands-on demonstrations of training and pruning techniques will be taught at an upcoming workshop for the public. Fruits to be discussed: muscadine grapes, blueberries, blackberries, peaches, apples, citrus, figs and even kiwi.

### Backyard Fruit Pruning Workshop

Hosted by the Alabama Cooperative  
Extension System

Tuesday, February 25, 2014,  
9:00-11:00 a.m.

Gaines Smith's Orchard,  
2228 County Road 40 West,  
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The fee is \$5 and pre-registration is  
required for all participants.

To sign-up or for more information,  
contact the Autauga County Extension  
office at

334- 361-7273. Pre-registration is  
required by Friday, Feb. 21st

Mallory Kelley is a Regional Extension Agent for  
the Alabama Cooperative  
Extension System serving East Central Alabama.

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# Soul Searching

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THE MARSHALL MOMENT

## Making the Most of Our Mistakes

There isn't any other subject I could write about more universal than this one. We all make mistakes, an error, a blunder or simply an unintended action. Perhaps we make so many because the opportunities abound every day. Most of us are not proficient in other languages, but even professional translators make mistakes. In the era of international business there are plenty of chances to get something wrong.

When GM tried to introduce the Chevy Nova into South America, they neglected to notice that in Spanish "Nova" means "No go." Needless to say, sales were poor for a car that wouldn't go.

When Coca-Cola was introduced in China, their attempts at finding a phonetic equivalent in the Chinese language resulted in a drink called "bite the wax tadpole." Pepsi didn't do too well either with their Chinese advertising. Their "Come alive with the Pepsi Generation" slogan translated into "Pepsi brings your ancestors back from the grave."

The point is we all make mistakes, some of them more public than others. But we're in good company when we make mistakes. We may try to deny it. We may even call it something other than a mistake. "If a driver makes a mistake, it's an accident. If a teacher makes a mistake, it's a new theory. If a barber makes a mistake, it's a new hair style."

But when we try to deny our mistakes, that is when the trouble really begins. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 10:12, "If you think you are standing strong, be careful not to fall." Often we think we stand – and that's our first mistake. When we think we're doing all right, we stop being cautious, and we start making mistakes.

In Psalm 30, David admitted: "When I was prosperous, I said, "Nothing can stop me now!" When things were going great, I thought I had it made. Nothing can touch me! I will never be moved!" But then in the next verse David admits the real truth: "Your favor, O LORD, made me as secure as a mountain."

Peter is one of my favorite disciples. He was a guy that made mistakes – and Jesus still loved him. That should be an encouragement to all of us. Paul admitted very openly his own fallacies when he wrote, "I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway." (Rom. 7:19) We all struggle like that. Even when he knew what was good and right, Paul still made mistakes and choose to do the wrong things. His only salvation from such a dreadful cycle was Christ – and the same is true for us. So when we make mistakes, we need to understand that we are in good company.

So we might ask, "What do we need to do to learn from our mistakes?" Mistakes can be beneficial if used correctly. Someone said, "Mistakes are the portals of discovery." Post-it notes were invented by mistake. Teflon was a mistake. The discovery of America was actually a mistake of direction." Thomas Edison is famous for his tolerance of mistakes. Did you know it took him 10,000

attempts to create the light bulb? One day a reporter asked him, "How many times are you going to fail at creating the light bulb?" Edison's reply was, "Son, I haven't failed! I've simply discovered another way not to invent the light bulb." Now for some of us, that path can be a long one. But whether it is cars, light bulbs, math tests or marriage, building our faith or building our family, we can be better if we learn from our mistakes. They don't have to stop us in our tracks.

Thankfully, God is in the restoration business. He uses our mistakes and failures to bring about His intended results. It's often through our mistakes that He is able to teach us and to transform our character, but only if we will let Him. In spite of how Peter had embarrassed himself and let the Lord down when he denied Him, Jesus still had use for him. In John 21 we find the wonderful conversation where Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him three times. You will recall three in the Bible represents maturity of thought or perfection. Jesus wanted to be sure Peter meant it this time. After each affirmation, Jesus told Peter to "feed His sheep." It was the Lord's way of putting Peter back to work a new, stronger follower.

The Lord knew Peter's heart and still had work for him to do. The same is true for us. No matter how we may have let the Lord down, if we have a heart of faith, there is still a place for us in His Kingdom work. Tend to the Lord's work for you in your home, in your church and in your workplace. Never forget God is a restorer. One of the most important verses in the Bible is Romans 8:28, "God is able to work in all things toward that which is good for those that love Him."

If we truly appreciate the meaning of grace and the completeness of forgiveness, we have no reason to wallow in the misery of our mistakes or presume there is no hope. We can learn from them and find meaning in life and faith. Satan is the only one who wants a believer to keep reliving past mistakes. God is a healer. If there are mistakes of life which are unconfessed to the Lord, you need to stop and do that right now. Once forgiven, use them as a positive reinforcement to right living and appreciation of the power of grace.

No one has to live in the "if only's" of life. If you are a person with concerns too big to deal with alone, perhaps your Pastor, good Christian friend or a counselor can help you find the path to forgiveness and wholeness of life. Not all mistakes for sure are of huge proportions, but all are worth paying attention to. We learn from them and grow through them. Either we let them direct our paths or we make new ones away from them.

Don't forget, Peter went on to become the pillar of the early Christian church. Through his mistakes, he learned to walk with Jesus, and he was able to teach others to do the same. If we grasp onto Christ, and give our lives to Him, He promises us that His Holy Spirit will dwell within us. And when we have the power of the Holy Spirit, all things are possible – even moving forward after our mistakes.

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**Dr. John Bitter**  
Editor-Senior Section

# Gazette Seniors...

## HONOR THE "OLD FOLKS"!

**YOU MAY BE  
OVER THE HILL**  
... if you're just learning  
that a cat is a puzzle for  
which there is no solution.

As we enter into the 2014th year on the Christian calendar, we might want to give some thought to the Ten Commandments that emerged in that faith; and especially to the fifth one, the one that relates to honoring one's elders, more specifically "thy father and mother;" the reward for which tended to be a long life. But with the advent of Obamacare, long life is beginning to look more like a curse than a blessing.

All of which is a roundabout way of broaching the subject of elder abuse, and the showing of a little more respect for the elderly.

Last year, and the year before, after many futile attempts by the Alabama Silver-Haired Legislature to better serve its constituency, landmark legislation on this subject was enacted in Alabama.

Two years ago our Legislature passed what has become known as "The Elder Justice Act," and last year it gave us legislation entitled the Protecting Alabama's Elders Act, which created criminal penalties for abusing, neglecting and scamming senior citizens.

Alabama's Criminal Code now deals specifically with inflicting pain or bodily injury on senior citizens; and sets forth some serious penalties for not honoring one's elders. For example: intentional abuse or neglect that causes serious physical injury to a person sixty years of age or older, is a Class A felony

and could get the abuser anywhere from 10 years to life in duration vile. Now that's getting serious.

For lesser transgressions in this domain, one could get from two to 20 years in prison; and for just being reckless about one's abusing; up to a year in prison could be earned.

And for those thieves and con artists who swindle or steal from senior citizens, penalties ranging from one to 20 years are now on the books.

To its credit, Alabama is on the forefront of doing something about elder abuse, and its citizens have a diligent legislature, a hard-working Silver-Haired Legislature, and Republican Governor Robert Bentley to thank for it.

To make it work, now, is for Alabama's senior citizens who are being abused, or know of seniors who fall into that category, to come forth and speak out about elder abuse.

Abusing one's elders is a vile, cowardly act, and should be dealt with vigorously and swiftly. Senior citizens who are being abused, or anyone who knows of a senior who is being abused, should waste no time in reporting this transgression to the proper authorities.

This new year should be a year dedicated to insuring that the abuse of our senior citizens is dealt with forthrightly and swiftly. So, when you see, or know of, elders who are being abused: Don't just sit there; do something!

## WHAT'S THE FUSS?

Many of the "older generation" find it difficult to grasp the significance of the myriad of disputes that arise every time someone recites the "Pledge of Allegiance."

For those of us who trace our steps back eight or more decades it seems rather difficult to comprehend all the unrest that occurs whenever a group of Americans gathers and someone calls for recitations of the "Pledge."

We don't understand the fuss. We've been pledging it as far back as we can remember and it just seems like the proper thing for Americans to do. It is our flag.

It is our country, and despite what some political leaders seem to think, we like to view our nation as indivisible.

And we're certainly in accord with the idea of "liberty and justice for all." That's what many donned the uniforms of our various armed forces to do: defend this stuff.

Most of us take the Pledge at face value: We're pledging our allegiance to our country; just like it says.

Now some may get a little uneasy about the under God part that President Eisenhower stuck in there to appease some religious pressure groups, so we just don't utter those words during our recitation. Simple. We don't take to the

streets in protest. We don't rend our garments. We don't shout down the folks who are pledging. We just keep quiet.

After all, we're just announcing that we support our flag and what it stands for.

Another of the things it stands for is the right of a few lawyers to pocket a good retainer, as free Americans defending crack pots who don't view the pledge as we do. That's what our flag represents to us. Granted, the fuss some folks make is a bit of a nuisance, but it keeps the dissidents and those who prefer not to earn their keep off welfare. There's no end of attorneys pestering boards of education over it; which also keeps judges on the bench. So, it's not a total loss. And our flag waves majestically over one and all.

Americans should have the right to announce to each other, and to the world, that, as Americans we are pledging to be faithful to our flag and to the nation that it represents; that's it, pure and simple.

So why do so many people want to complicate the matter? It's a fine pledge, and despite what our politicians do to the contrary, it's a fine country. So, let's pledge our allegiance to flag and country and forget about the nonsense.

**Who knows how much longer  
we'll enjoy this opportunity?**

## PETS ARE GOOD COMPANY

Dogs, cats, birds, goldfish, turtles-- the list goes on—all can play a significant roll in bringing a ray of sunshine into the life of a senior citizen; especially one who is traveling down that terminal path by himself; or herself.

But. For the most part, including a pet in the senior's household can provide many benefits, the most significant of which is companionship.

One must think that there must have been divine reasoning for the creation of the various types of animals—especially household critters like dogs and cats. And keeping company with the old folks was probably one of His reasons for their creation.

**Critters often make better  
friends than humans.**

## AFFLUENZA: Continued from page 14

More injured by Screaming Teen, the brain injury (evidenced by the huge head rest indentation) reduced ability to accomplish work which requires peak load mental focus to about 70%. Thankfully (beyond the neck damage and permanent ear ringing which is maddening at times) it is not very bothersome on endeavours which do not require great thought. Again, Lee County jurists didn't discipline Screaming Teen only awarding twice what Framers offered which didn't even pay lost earnings. Again, it doesn't make sense for individuals like me to waste my time and money in the courts, but at least it imposes some cost on reckless drivers since Hubbard type politicians are more interested in campaign contributions, ad revenue, govt. receipts from red-light cameras, ticketing safe drivers who simply pay, etc. Furthermore Framers must spend time and money to defend their reckless drivers attempting to please ZooWreck bigwigs.

I include the Affluenza episodes I've witnessed to illustrate how our affluent teens are similarly treated in Alabama. I make no claim damage/loss I've suffered can compare to Killer Teen's devastation in Texas - the loss of youth minister Brian Jennings alone is greater than the sum of all my positive contribution to society. Nonetheless, the smaller things no longer accomplished (even by poor example like myself) add up as good folks adjust under Hubbard's Alabama AutoObamacare that Framers/ZooWreck types respond to and successfully manipulate toward these easily predictable results. The fact that I still can not find another Charger Daytona for \$49,000 I've held these past years speaks for itself - I'm not certain I'd bother buying if I did... it would



John by the 1969 Mark III

simply be another nice vehicle in our barn no longer driven in fear of being another casualty of Affluenza theft.

I no longer make unnecessary trips, most notable every 28 day donation for cancer patients. Much more involved than simply giving blood, it requires a specific trip to meet one's appointment and takes several hours out of one's day to accomplish - time I'm much less able to afford post injury. I relished taking one of our nice vehicles (1969 Mark III was a favourite) as a treat while sharing my blessing of good health with others. Now, I only give blood when I'm past the 56 day interval and happen to be passing LifeSouth with 40 minutes to spare. All our nice vehicle stay in barn; occasionally run; rarely driven; untagged and untaxed. Dare I type I paid more in tax per day than most any other Lee County driver for the dozen or so days a year I drove that beautiful Mark III to donate. Needless to say I also don't insure it (at what would be just under \$30,000 today) since it is no longer wise to drive it on our Zoo roadways which no longer respect life, liberty and property.

My reduced income (by over \$12,000/yr.) means less contribution and no unnecessary trips to our Church foodbank - something I also miss, but much like getting used to living in an inferior house (with only one bath, no dining room, etc.) one adjusts from once having a nice home. This is how an economy contracts when productive people who've had their health, home, time, vehicles, etc. wrongfully taken, simply quit participating to support thieves - esp. 'public servants' like Messrs. Barron, Bedford, Hubbard, Riley Seigleman, et al types. It is clear men of this character and integrity can not understand this economic reality which sadder still pales in comparison to the detriment of our Holy Spirit and the general welfare to ourselves and our posterity. In closing, I'll make 'a call to arms' for others (as affluenza proliferates) to donate to cancer patients, churches, food banks, etc. as those like myself are taken out of the pool blessed with the health, wealth and time to do so.

## Wetumpka Tea Party

### ALABAMA HOUSE DISTRICT 31 CANDIDATE FORUM

**TOPIC:** Common Core: "Follow the Money" Ann Eubank from the Rainy Day Patriots has an excellent presentation on the costs of implementing Common Core in Alabama. You will be amazed when you understand who is dolling out hundreds of millions of dollars in support of Common Core and why it is completely unsustainable for our state. You won't want to miss this one!

**The Wetumpka Tea Party  
meets at 6:30 the third Monday  
of each month.**

**Becky Gerritson**  
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### Trisston's Tidbits...

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

## "BE MINE"

Every year, thousands of heartfelt messages are inscribed upon the most beautifully decorated Valentine's Day cards. At any drug store, you'll find them neatly displayed on the greeting card isle in every conceivable category. They come in all shapes and sizes. Most contain flowery words and the romantic prose but, none of them can drive home the message more poignantly than the simple invitation to "Be Mine." Now talk about NOT mincing your words!

That rather bold command is undoubtedly an earnest expression of an inward desire to claim one's love interest.

I have to confess, the Cinderella in all of us gals would gladly pass up the lace trimmed box of chocolates, the long stemmed roses, and even the glass slipper to hear that no nonsense invitation coming from the heart of our Prince Charming!

Most assuredly, many well-known greeting card companies have hired the best and most prolific writers in an attempt to try to come up with new and more innovative ways to say those three longed for words... "I Love you." Yet none of them can come close to the most beautiful expression of love ever recorded in history. *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever should believe on Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life."* (John 3:16)

**For God Himself is LOVE! (John 4:16).** His love is unconditional and all encompassing. He longs to embrace us and hold us close to His heart as He softly whispers "Be Mine."

Would you like to receive a very special Valentine this year? The truth is...it has already been sent to you. It arrived "Special Delivery" two thousand years ago by way of God's only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. He longs to bring his message of love to you and transform "all your days" into Valentine's Day!

**Happy Valentine's Day and Many Blessings!**

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## HOUSE CLEANING

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References available

### Recipe for: *Meaty Slow Cooker Jambalaya*

1 pound skinless, boneless chicken breast halves - cut into 1-inch cubes	1 cup chopped celery
1 pound andouille sausage, sliced	2 teaspoons dried oregano
1 pound Black Forest ham, cut into cubes	2 teaspoons dried parsley
1 (28 ounce) can diced tomatoes with juice	2 teaspoons Cajun seasoning
1 large onion, chopped	1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 large green bell pepper, chopped	1 teaspoon file powder (optional)
1 cup chicken broth	1/2 teaspoon dried thyme

- Mix chicken, sausage, ham, tomatoes with juice, onion, bell pepper, chicken broth, celery, oregano, parsley, Cajun seasoning, cayenne pepper, file powder, and thyme in a slow cooker.
- Cook on Low 7 to 8 hours.

Allrecipes.com

### Recipe for: *The Ultimate Chili*

1 pound lean ground beef	1/4 cup red wine vinegar
salt and pepper to taste	2 tablespoons chili powder
3 (15 ounce) cans dark red kidney beans	1 teaspoon ground cumin
3 (14.5 ounce) cans Mexican-style stewed tomatoes	1 teaspoon dried parsley
2 stalks celery, chopped	1 teaspoon dried basil
1 red bell pepper, chopped	1 dash Worcestershire sauce
	1/2 cup red wine

- In a large skillet over medium-high heat, cook ground beef until evenly browned. Drain off grease, and season to taste with salt and pepper.
- In a slow cooker, combine the cooked beef, kidney beans, tomatoes, celery, red bell pepper, and red wine vinegar. Season with chili powder, cumin, parsley, basil and Worcestershire sauce. Stir to distribute ingredients evenly.
- Cook on High for 6 hours, or on Low for 8 hours. Pour in the wine during the last 2 hours.

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Patricia Killough



# HOME TOWN COMMUNITY NEWS

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

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

## February Birthdays



- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Sara Margaret Auerbach | Mike Green             |
| George Evans             | Nancy Rabren           |
| Mary Johnson             | Susan Terrell          |
| Ellen Saddler            | 16 Joan Kirk           |
| 2 Thelma Alexander       | Clark Jones            |
| Brewer Box               | Randy Smith            |
| Helen Cutts              | Brunies Cauthen        |
| Shelby Smith             | 17 Brian Betz          |
| Alvin Turner             | Chuck Glasscock (52nd) |
| Frances Yedmans          | Kathi Farley           |
| 3 Del Atkinson           | Willa Faye Munson      |
| Enoch Chalker            | Gene Smith             |
| Pam Daniel               | Alice Tyson            |
| Sybil Foshee             | Jean Warren            |
| Gay Hayes                | 18 Chip Norris         |
| Helen Lankford           | Kermit Paramore        |
| Genye Messick            | 19 Chuck Lear          |
| Wayne Robinson           | Dawn Johnson           |
| 4 Paige Box              | Anita Jones            |
| Helen Rahn Millican      | 20 Ann Moore           |
| 5 Peggy Agent            | Todd Windham           |
| Walter Friday, III       | Zac Perry              |
| Jean Fuller              | 21 Alyssa Lear         |
| Beth Norris              | Jessica Burgess        |
| Haywood Sellers          | Jerrell Campbell       |
| Lila Webster             | Hugh Gordon (88th)     |
| 6 Amanda Edwards         | Jane Russell           |
| Morgan Lee Madison (3rd) | Shirley Yarbrough      |
| Donna Spradley           | 22 Ellen Adcock        |
| Pat Veazey               | Jean Finlayson         |
| 7 Rhonda Black           | Earl Gray              |
| Mary Helen Fleming       | Willie Stephens        |
| Shelvie Freeman          | Tim Meadows            |
| Rick Marshall            | Hettie H. Harrington   |
| Rodney Powell            | 23 Dorothy Bennett     |
| Wanda Stephens           | Virgil Culpepper       |
| Edith Upchurch           | Thelma Nelson          |
| 8 John Barnes            | Nathan Horsley         |
| Helen Burch              | Ann Spheres            |
| Claudine Nobles          | 24 Katherine Andrews   |
| Helen Oates              | Cheryl Jarrell         |
| Sharon Owens             | Bobbie Rahn            |
| Janet Phillips           | 25 Bettye Garlington   |
| Abigail Roux             | John Higgins           |
| 9 Lori Meadows           | Lewis Mulleck          |
| Lucille Wilson           | Shanny Sansom          |
| 10 Jim Soule             | Willie Pearl Shepherd  |
| Jeanne Villar            | 26 Erma Dillard        |
| 11 Glen Hataway          | Cassidy Gwin           |
| Steve Law                | Dean Moore             |
| Earline Wood             | Sandra Poundstone      |
| 12 Jean Cantey (85th)    | Carolyn Watson         |
| Chas Hammock             | 27 Portia Goss         |
| 13 Susan Gambrell        | Evans Hartzog          |
| Dot Hill                 | Jamie Hall             |
| 14 Nancy Andrews         | Mary Horton            |
| Carolyn Bowden           | Carol Spencer          |
| Michael Coker            | 28 Joy Carlisle        |
| Lyda Crowe               | Freeman Carroll        |
| Drew Martin              | Mary Daniels           |
| Hamil Martin             | Weldon Payne           |
| Joy McCalman             | Charlene Schofield     |
| Dorothy Sparrow          | Helen Turner           |
| Zac Swearingen           | Mary Vann              |
| 15 Mildred Durden        | Freddie Oswalt         |
| Juanita Miers            | 29 Mandy Azar          |

### EAGERTON FAMILY REUNION

Descendants of the Herbert Eagerton family met on January 11, 2014 for a great family reunion at the invitation of Sam & Mary Ann Holland of Scottsboro, Alabama. They gathered at their vacation home or "Grandad's" Golf House" in Shoal Creek in Birmingham. What a lovely secluded setting with a beautiful golf course.

Present were Mary Ann's sister, Sue Ellen Ware and family from Huntsville and Auburn, and her brother, John Harris from Florence, Alabama. The Hollands daughter and son-in-law, Julie & Vic Griggs along with children, Holland and Tess were there. They reside in Scottsboro.



Eddie Eagerton and Cheryl Eagerton Cardwell

There were about 30 in attendance. What fun the Eagerton's have when together with lots of laughter, love, food and fellowship. How blessed we are!!

## YARD SALE

### WOODLAND UMC

Friday, February 28th - 6:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.

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### Sympathy to the families of...

- Ashe, Joy Kathleen (Lee) (31) .....died January 2, 2014
- Davis, Crowell Everett (85) .....died January 4, 2014
- Poundstone, Wylie Dixon .....died January 5, 2014
- Whatley, Carl Leroy (82) .....died January 7, 2014
- Tucker, Billie Raye Little (59) .....died January 8, 2014
- Marzella, Lawrence D. "Larry" (92) .....died January 15, 2014
- Shellman, Edna Till (89) .....died January 17, 2014
- Godfrey, Gordon F. (98).....died January 19, 2014
- McInnish, William Slagle (65) .....died January 20, 2014
- Bingham, Jerry Mack, Sr. (67).....died January 21, 2014
- Byars, Walter Ryland, Jr. (85).....died January 23, 2014

## Happy Anniversary

- |                                   |                                |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 John & Greatha Findley (68th)   | 20 Chuck & Susan Gambrell      |
| 11 Ralph & Jessie Southern (68th) | Hayden & Dee Ward              |
| 14 Clark & Anita Jones            | 21 Tom & Bettye Garlington     |
| Josh & Jamie McCandless           | Gilbert & Ethel Sellers (58th) |
| Randy & Tammy Smith               | 28 Pat & Butch Moseley (55th)  |



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# OPTIMISM

**'Expect The Best'**

## WELCOME to the first edition of Optimism!

Would you like to become healthier, wealthier, thinner and more appealing to the opposite sex? Would you like to live longer, be happier and laugh more? Could you benefit from less stress, less anxiety and fewer worries? Well, if so, scientific studies show that it would behoove you to begin seeing the glass as half full... in other words you need to become an Optimist!

The goal of this new monthly publication is to help you see life in a different way...it's to help you see life through rose colored glasses, and by doing so begin to impact your life and the lives of others in positive ways that you may have never dreamed possible.

Optimism is defined as the tendency to expect the best possible outcome or dwell on the most hopeful aspects of a situation. It is confidence, it is the ability to see the best in all things. It is a philosophical belief that good triumphs evil and that our existing world is the best of all possible worlds.

Synonyms for optimism include idealism, certainty, confidence, trust, enthusiasm and happiness.

Antonyms for optimism include depression, uncertainty, doubt, fear and unhappiness.

This list of synonyms and antonyms alone should push us all to make becoming more optimistic a high priority. Whom among us wants to be known as a depressed, uncertain, doubtful, fearful and unhappy person? These are not traits one usually aspires to be associated with.

On the other hand, who wouldn't like to be considered idealistic, certain, confident, trustful, enthusiastic and happy?

The good news for us all is that optimism can be learned and improved upon with practice. So everyone, from the person that sees the glass as half full to the die in the wool pessimist that believes a leopard can't change its spots can be more optimistic with a little training.

Optimistic people don't go chirping recklessly through life, they are not in denial about the world's harsh realities, they are not unbearable Pollyannas wondering around with their head in the clouds.

Rather, optimists are individuals that approach life with a sense of possibility and an expectation of positive results. They are resilient and know how to bounce back from adversity. As Winston Churchill once said "An optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty."

In the coming months Optimism will guide you through a journey that will ultimately lead you to greater happiness, better health and stronger finances. You will learn tactics to lower stress, decrease anxiousness and eliminate fears. You will evolve into an optimist; a person that other people seek out, that other people look to in times of adversity.

This month's issue will focus on optimism and relationships. We figured, with Valentine's Day on the horizon why not give our readers some valuable insight on how seeing things in a positive light can lead to more fulfilling relationships.

To get started on this journey spend a few minutes taking the optimism quiz on page 23....see where you currently stand... challenge yourself to improve even if you rate yourself an optimist.

Then read on...enjoy...learn and smile.

We look forward to sharing this journey with you so please send your comments, questions and optimistic stories to **OptimisticBen@gmail.com** or through regular mail to The Alabama Gazette at: **alabamagazette@gmail.com**.

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## "A Walk In The Park"

*Many in this world are full of gloom,  
They shout from rooftops of impending doom.*

*Yes, it is certain there is evil to be found,  
The sins of man are all around.*

*One could focus solely on the fact,  
That humans are imperfect and not fully intact.*

*But this would be shortsighted and certainly sad,  
For life offers much more than that which is bad.*

*A quick walk through the park can open ones eyes,  
To all that is good that is below the skies.*

*A baby bouncing on his mothers knee,  
An acorn beginning to sprout into a tree.*

*Young boys running, laughing and having a ball,  
As their little sister primps her new doll.*

*Dad pushing his daughter on the swing,  
Leafs turning green in observance of spring.*

*Grandpa and grandma holding hands,  
While two young lovers make life plans.*

*Yes, if one wishes he can dwell on the worst,  
But in my opinion this man is cursed.*

*For me I will choose to search high and low,  
For the goodness in people that is certain to show.*

*I will look for the silver lining in every grey cloud,  
And I will remember this to which I have avowed.*

*I will strive to help those in need,  
And I will push the young and help them succeed.*

*I will shout words of encouragement to one and all,  
I will be at the ready to catch those that fall.*

*I will count my blessings for they are immense,  
I will come with courage to the down troddens defense.*

*Yes this is a wondrous world that we call earth,  
Now let's all move forward and show our worth.*

B. Waugh- The Optimist

## jumpstart

### Five Strategies to Jump Start Your Optimism Journey!

- 1) **Avoid Negative Environments:**  
Seek the company of positive individuals. Stay away from the constant complainer.
- 2) **Celebrate Your Strengths:**  
The key to high achievement and happiness is to play out your strengths, not correct your weaknesses. Focus on what you do well.
- 3) **Take Care of Your Spiritual and Emotional Well Being:** Read inspirational material every day. This can be different for each person....read what inspires You. Read what You enjoy.
- 4) If you find yourself judging others that don't fit your ideal of who or what they should be, stop yourself. Then think of all the things about you that you feel are less than perfect. This will remind you that we are all just humans and our flaws are as beautiful as our talents.
- 5) Resist the urge to compare yourself with people you feel have better life circumstances. Their journey is not your journey and your journey is not theirs.

HAPPY VALENTINES  
FEBRUARY 14TH

"TELL SOMEONE YOU LOVE THEM!"

*Love is patient, love is kind.  
It does not envy,  
it does not boast, it is not proud.  
It does not dishonor others,  
it is not self-seeking,  
it is not easily angered,  
it keeps no record of wrongs.  
Love does not delight in evil,  
but rejoices with the truth.  
It always protects, always trusts,  
always hopes, always perseveres.  
Love never fails.*

1 Corinthians 13: 4-8

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Anna Waugh

## Optimism and Relations: Swiffer Your Differences Under the Rug...

Everyone is asking, "Have you seen the new Swiffer commercials?" These commercials star Morty and Lee Kaufman a couple in their nineties. These commercials show a Morty and Lee cleaning their cabinets, floors and walls with

dry and wet Swiffers. What sets this commercial and this couple apart from others is that their words are unscripted. They are speaking to each other in the same way they talk to each other every day with kindness and consideration. This Valentine's Day they will celebrate their 45th wedding anniversary. And good news for the romantic in all of us: The couple is just as in love in real life as they are in the commercial. But what is their secret to keeping their bond strong for 45 years?

Both Morty and Lee were widowed in their early forties. Each had children of their own. The two

met when Morty's son was in Lee's summer reading class. Morty came in for a required parent-teacher conference and knew right away that he wanted to get to know Lee better. He eventually scheduled a second conference not to talk about his son's reading but instead to ask Lee out. From there the romance blossomed. According to Morty and Lee they both attribute the secret to so many years of wedded bliss to having entered into marriage with a good attitude and an optimistic outlook. This makes it easier to compromise. As Morty states "No difference of opinion is that important as to interfere with our love for each other."

Both look for the good in the other person rather than dwell on the things that annoy them. They are more relaxed and willing to put aside difference because they realize at the end of the day what really matters is how much they care for each other. This optimistic outlook has enabled them to see the joy in trying new things together. Morty had always enjoyed the opera, but Lee had never really been a fan. She decided that if opera was something Morty really

enjoyed then it was worth giving it a try. For over 40 years now they have both enjoyed the opera and have a group of friends that go with them as well. Their optimistic outlook has helped them to see all the good that life has to offer – it was not always easy and they both could have made the decision not to remarry. But as it turns out their optimistic personalities allowed them to take a leap of faith and start a new life together. As Morty says "You gotta be optimistic." And as amazing as it seems this couple is just as in love today as they were 45 years ago. As Lee says "You gotta stay optimistic so that you can enjoy whatever it is that you're doing." They both are optimistic about their future and plan to enjoy each other's company for many more years.



Lynn Straughan

## HOPE! Quotes that give you hope!

Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement.  
Nothing can be done without hope and confidence.  
- Helen Keller

Pessimism leads to weakness, optimism to power.  
- William James

Perpetual optimism is a force multiplier.  
-Colon Powell

For myself I am an optimist-it does not seem to be much use to be anything else.  
- Winston Churchill

You'll never find a rainbow if you're looking down.  
- Charles Chaplin



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## Quiz: How Optimistic Are You?

- You're stuck in traffic on the way to work. You...
  - Turn up the music. You'll get there as soon as you can.
  - Scold yourself for not getting up earlier in the morning.
- Your manager invites you to an important meeting at the last minute. You think...
  - Wow, my hard work must really be paying off!
  - Uh oh...did I do something wrong?
- You spill your coffee all over your new white shirt. Your first thought is...
  - Laughter. It's just a shirt.
  - Despair. That stain will never come out.
- You walk by some co-workers who are talking about getting together after work, and as you walk by they ask you to join them. You think...
  - Sweet, something to do tonight!
  - They probably just invited me because they felt bad.
- You got tickets to a show for you and a friend, but your friend doesn't like the band. You think...
  - Go anyway...you can still have a great time alone.
  - Sell the tickets. You wouldn't have fun by yourself.
- You're leaving for a vacation, and after a rushed morning you miss your flight. You think...
  - Well, it can only go uphill from here!
  - This trip is off to a terrible start.
- You made plans to spend a day at the beach with friends but it might rain. You...
  - Bring along some board games and fun activities, just in case... but you're going anyway!
  - Cancel the trip. It will definitely rain and ruin the whole day.
- Your friend asks you to run a marathon with them, but you've never done one. You think...
  - Sounds like an awesome challenge!
  - Sounds cool but there's no way I'd ever be able to do it.
- You drop your very expensive camera. Your reaction is...
  - I just need to be more careful with my belongings.
  - You yell out a series of curse words.
- It's Daylight Savings time! Your first thought is...
  - Awesome! It's going to be light out when I leave work!
  - Noooo...I lose an hour of sleep in the morning.

If you selected mostly "a" responses, you are very optimistic!  
If you selected mostly "b" responses, your optimism could use a little work :). Try looking back at the "a" responses and next time you find yourself in similar situations to these, or in any situation that arises in which you find yourself experiencing a pessimistic reaction, try to see it from the other side. There is always more than one way to look at a situation and something that may appear to be negative can always be viewed in a positive light.

Source: Quiz: How Optimistic Are You?

I Free People Blog <http://blog.freepeople.com/2013/03/quiz->



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