

Inside the Statehouse with Steve Flowers

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

www.steveflowers.us



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Benefactor or Ideologue

Over the years, I have discussed my observations and concepts of the two different roles or routes taken by a U.S. Senator or Congressman during their tenure in Washington.

One clearly chooses one of two postures in their representation of you in Washington. Our delegates in D.C. are either benefactors or ideologues.

The role of benefactor is much better for any state, especially Alabama. This public figure is not only a benefactor but also a facilitator and a statesman. In other words, this person is interested and diligent in bringing home the bacon to the Heart of Dixie.

The perfect example of a benefactor, facilitator, and statesman senator is our current senior U.S. Senator Richard Shelby. No senator in Alabama history has brought home more bacon to our state than Senator Shelby. He has helped Alabama more during his 34 years in the Senate than any other Senator.

The second role is the ideologue. This politician sees his or her role as a zealot on issues. The ideologue is more interested in advocating for popular social and non-economic issues with no regard for the state's financial interests.

Beginning in the 1930s and extending for 30 years through the 1960s, we had two of the greatest U.S. Senators in history. Lister Hill and John Sparkman were giants in Washington and were erudite diplomats for our state. They can be aptly described as benefactors, facilitators, and statesmen for Alabama.

During the 1970s and 1980s, we had two well-respected and effective senators in "Judge" Howell Heflin and Richard Shelby.

Upon the arrival of Jeff Sessions in 1996, as the state's first true blue Republican, we witnessed the portrayal of our first true ideologue. Sessions was the most right-wing, reactionary Republican in the U.S. Senate. However, he was not a demagogue, he was a true believer and one of the most honest and gentlemanly men I have ever observed in the public arena. He was also well-qualified and prepared to be U.S. Senator having been a U.S. Attorney and Attorney General of Alabama.

Nevertheless, during the 20 years that Sessions and Shelby served together, we had two distinctly different prototypes. Shelby was the benefactor, facilitator, and breadwinner, while Sessions was the ultimate ideologue, conservative, Fox News darling.

Currently, we have one benefactor, Shelby, and one ideologue, Tommy

Tuberville. Senator Shelby recently announced that he will retire after his sixth six-year term at the end of 2022. Alabama is going to be in the proverbial boat without a paddle at that time. We will have negligible power in Washington and, for a state that depends on federal dollars, that is not going to be a good position to be in for Alabama.

A large portion of Alabama's federal largesse dollars goes to the Huntsville area. It is truly ironic that Huntsville is represented by a Congressman named Mo Brooks, who epitomizes the term ideologue and demagogue. Brooks is an embarrassment to Huntsville and the Tennessee Valley. He truly has not accomplished anything of significance to help his district in the few years he has been in Congress. He prefers being a bomb-thrower to being an effective representative. Yet, there is probably not a congressional district in the country that benefits more from federal defense spending than Huntsville and the Redstone Arsenal.

The entire growth and prosperity of the Huntsville area can be attributed to Senator Richard Shelby, with local assistance from Mayor Tommy Battle. Shelby has carried all of the weight for Huntsville, despite Brooks and his laissez faire attitude. In fact, Brooks' total disregard for helping his people or district arguably has been a deterrent and obstacle for Shelby and Battle.

While Brooks has had the luxury of being an irrelevant, right-wing, gadfly who people just laughed at like a crazy uncle they keep locked in the closet, his latest exploits in Washington have made him a national poster boy for right-wing crazy theatrics and reflects poorly on Huntsville and indeed Alabama. Brooks has become a pariah and now actually hurts the growth and expansion of Alabama. Brooks is now in negative territory when it comes to recruiting industry and federal facilities to Huntsville and North Alabama. When industry or national leaders learn that Mo Brooks represents this area, they will run for the hills. Huntsville and the 5th district would be better off without a congressman than with Mo Brooks.

The only savior that the region has is Richard Shelby, and he will be gone as the guardian savior in 20 months. God forbid the ultimate demagogue, Mo Brooks, could run for and win Shelby's Senate Seat. We would have a plague on our entire state.

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Liberty of Conscience Didn't Come Easy

x We take freedom of conscience for granted, but, 500 years ago, accepting and practicing beliefs outside of the mainstream was deadly.

The 1521 Diet of Worms was a legislative gathering held in Worms (one of the oldest cities in Europe) to consider Martin Luther's theology.

The stakes were extraordinarily high as Luther, a mere monk, parried with the leading Roman Catholic scholars of his day. The ramifications of this meeting,

while couched in religious terms, had clear political underpinnings. So much so that Holy Roman Emperor Charles V presided over the "meeting," which allowed the trappings of his office to validate the ultimate decision.

Martin Luther's heretical writings were to be publicly reviewed and examined; and while he was given safe conduct to attend the diet, that he was a heretic was a foregone conclusion. The issue before the diet was not the persuasiveness of Luther's argument, but whether he would recant.

When Luther appealed to his conscience and argued that his conviction about his beliefs was firm and not subject to change, he set himself in the crosshairs of the 16th century religious and political establishment. Heresy and blasphemy were capital offenses. Keeping the doctrines of the Church pure and undefiled was taken quite seriously and anyone advocating a different belief system was considered an outlaw with no legal process available for protection.

Inappropriate beliefs about religion might lead others to perdition, so political power was enlisted to stop errant beliefs and prohibit any doctrine that was not officially sanctioned. But mandating beliefs or emotions fails to consider human advancement in rationally considering ideas, accepting some while rejecting others and developing a personal system of faith and knowledge.

The most critical idea inadvertently let loose by the Edict of Worms was that in matters of faith, people could think for themselves and choose a belief system appealing to the conviction of their conscience. While it would be easy to accuse the Holy Roman Empire of attempting to eliminate competing faiths, protestants held an equally monolithic view resulting in religious wars that seemed to miss the point of the faith each side advocated.

Protestants, while wanting to believe as they wished, were not willing to extend this liberality to others within their realm of influence. The puritan poet John Milton would see his writings banned by Cromwell's Commonwealth, causing him to write one of the first essays against censorship and in favor of Christian liberty. Said Milton, "Let Truth and falsehood grapple; whoever knew Truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter?"

But even in the new world, liberty of conscience was slow to catch on.

The Dutch Reformed Peter Stuyvesant attempted to limit the worship of Quakers within his jurisdiction. Refusing to submit, the residents of Flushing, New York published the Flushing Remonstrance, which advocated for freedom of conscience not only to Quakers, but also to "Jews, Turks and Egyptians."

Controlling beliefs and limiting ideas was nothing new for religion, but once institutional religion was de-coupled from government, limiting dissension became applied more frequently in the realm of politics. Often when a new political regime became ascendant in countries without a history of personal freedoms, dissent was stifled, disagreements became illegal and hagiographic

propaganda replaced information. One area which politicians around the world agree is how much they despise opposing viewpoints.

Even in seemingly democratic countries with a history of freedoms supported by the rule of law, politicians simply hate criticism and will attempt to restrain if not eliminate it. Usually this takes the form of mild disgust, but at times it can prove to be both personally and financially costly to oppose the ruling elite. We expect this from authoritarian governments, but when we find democratically elected governments engaging in censorship and limiting dissent, we should be troubled.

Consider the Reuther Memorandum of the 1960s. Seemingly established to advocate for fairness and equality of the public airwaves, Bobby Kennedy used the Reuther brothers' report to curtail political opposition with breathtaking success. But this is not a liberal vs. conservative issue as regulation and limitations of speech are subtly advocated by all sides.

Even founding father John Adams had Congress pass the Sedition Act making it a federal crime to speak, write, or print criticisms of the government that were arguably false, scandalous, or malicious. Numerous newspaper editors were arrested and some even imprisoned under this act.

In recent memory both conservative and liberal groups have advocated using government regulations to limit their respective definition of offensive speech. A journalist of the Jacksonian era, William Leggett, warned "if the government once begins to discriminate as to what is orthodox and what heterodox in opinion, what is safe and unsafe in tendency, farewell, a long farewell to our freedom."

Ideas, whether in opposition or support of a politician or political ideology, should never be restricted. It is much better to have ideas aired and let people decide. Bad ideas typically die a quiet death, but good ideas live on and become part of the progress of democratic government.

Rather than restrict poorly thought ideas, it is better to let them be proclaimed loudly and see them disintegrate on impact. Many years ago, Jerry Rubin encouraged student protestors to burn down a historic academic building. The more he shouted, the more the crowd responded, but no one was willing to act because no one was willing to torch a building to support academic freedom.

Bad ideas are like that. Giving someone a megaphone and unlimited time can be their undoing. Public debate, like sunlight, is a great disinfectant. Debate and open discussion forces ideas to compete against practical reality, thus winnowing out the ill-conceived and fostering workable solutions.

So, 500 years ago western civilization moved toward allowing people to think and believe as they followed their convictions, but even Luther and his followers failed to see the broad implication of their success. Various events would slowly chip away at autocrats forcing their subjects to subscribe to approved beliefs.

Instead, in a triumph of experience and personal liberty, states moved toward greater freedom. While elites might try to restrict the thoughts of others and limit criticism, free societies realize that allowing open discussion and a variety of viewpoints lays the foundation for a community in which all rights are respected, and belief systems are not censored but allowed to sink or swim based on the truth of their results.

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ROBSERVATIONS...

by Robert Tate

BLUE SKIES AND BLACK MASKS

Before I get started, this has been an interesting time for yours truly. In September 2018, I had rotator cuff surgery here in Montgomery. It didn't go so well. Then I had another. Same thing only worse. Then I went to Andrews Sports Medicine in Birmingham and met a brilliant surgeon, Dr. Benton Emblom. Let's just say he fixed the previous problems and did what was told to me could not be done. Long story short, by the time this hits the press, I will be back flying. It has been a long 2½ year odyssey but I will be pushing jets around the sky after some requalification training. COVID has made the aviation world a much different animal than when I last saw it. But I am looking forward to getting back into the jet. Yay! Now on to the Robservation.

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It is there for anyone to see. All you have to do is be intellectually honest with yourself. I am talking about so much insanity in our country right now. It seems as though everybody is immediately "triggered" to be offended by the most minute of infractions. Infractions that often do not even exist or back "in my days" would not have even registered as anything more than mild annoyance. Not today. People want to be angry; pissed off; offended and dare I say, "Butt hurt." I do not have time for these people nor their PC agendas. The Bible said it right that in these days, what is righteous will be called evil and what is evil will be called righteous. As for the news, I intentionally avoid most of it these days. I generally read headlines from News Max or Breitbart and make up my own mind about events. Imagine that! I even watch my favorite WSFA with suspicion because I hate being led to what I should believe. I still like the professionalism of all the members of their team and their weather group is one of the best I have seen but too often I catch a definite slant in their reporting that makes me shake my head.

In today's America, if someone disagrees with someone else, that person is a racist, bigot, homophobe, Islamophobe, misogynist, or any other name you want to dream up. If I do not agree with transgender men (men becoming women specifically) competing with biological woman in sports, and I don't, then people like me are considered by some to be closeminded Neanderthals. It has nothing to do with the logical argument that biological men should not be allowed to compete against biological women but rather choosing not to toe the PC line laid out before us. A disagreement with someone of another race does not instantly make you a racist. To some, however, apparently it does. If I explain something to a woman, I am not "mansplaining." If I do not believe a transgendered male should get into the ring and beat the living snot out of a woman (as has happened), I am not transphobic but logical.

But anybody with an honest interest in our country can see some really troubling signs. Here we go with some blatant examples.

1. Tom Brady is Racist: This goes into the category of "You have got to be kidding me." I wish I was making this up but unfortunately, you cannot. If someone told me Tom Brady was racist because people repeatedly reported hearing him say "The Word," or watched him burn a cross on the 50-yard line, steeped in Klan regalia while holding a noose, I would say, "Yeah. Son of a gun, he's a racist." But no. You want to know why Tom Brady is racist? Do you really want to know? Brady is a racist because he beat Patrick Mahomes in the Super Bowl and during Black History Month to boot. Personally, I think his conservative views may have something to do with this.

No. I am not making this up. It is real. It is sad. It is stupid.

www.pjmedia.com/news-and-politics/matt-margolis/2021/02/08/tom-brady-called-racist-on-social-media-for-winning-super-bowl-during-black-history-month-n1423916. It is no wonder the aliens probably fly past the Earth as if we were the dirtiest truck stop in the Galaxy. This story is so sad on absolutely every level. Here are just some comments from the link above. "If Tom Brady beats Patrick Mahomes during Black History Month then we have to double whatever we're demanding from reparations." "I feel like it's racist that Tom Brady beat Patrick Mahomes during Black History Month." Another article, www.total-prosports.com/2021/02/09/tom-brady-being-accused-of-racism-for-winning-

[super-bowl-during-black-history-month-tweets/](https://twitter.com/RobTate1978/status/1368111111111111111), and several others produced similar comments. At first, I thought it was a joke and while reading some comments, I believe some people were joking but for many misinformed people, sadly they were serious.

I want to ask myself if people can be this stupid and the unfortunate answer is, "Yes. Yes they can." I was thinking of the possible scenario where I could have an intelligent and rational discussion with a person who thinks this way and I concluded that it would be virtually impossible. How do you discuss logic with someone who actually thinks it is racist for a white quarterback to lead his team to victory over a team whose quarterback is black? Look up the definition of "racism," people and get back to me.

2. Last December, ex-NBA player Nate Robinson (black guy) decided he was tough enough to trade in his hoop duds for some gloves and enter the ring to test his skills at MMA (Mixed Martial Arts). Then he stepped into the ring with Jake Paul (white guy). Not too long later, Robinson was face down and unconscious, kissing the canvas. The next day on the television show The Vice, host Cari Champion asked Paul if it was "racist to knock a black man out." Not surprising, Paul responded that it was a "sh—ty question." Why? Because it was. It was a horrible question. It was a stupid and inane question. Those city kids a couple of years ago playing the "knockout game" where they would find someone, usually of a different race, walk up to them on the street and punch them in the face trying to knock them out: *that my friends is racism in action.*

I am sitting here shaking my head. If you get a chance, watch the clip. It was an awesome knockout but how can somebody actually turn that situation into actual and not imagined racial intrigue and hate, I have no idea. Would they have asked Robinson if it was racist had he knocked out Jake Paul? Of course, they would not have. There are plenty of actual racist occurrences in our country that need to be handled. There is no need to create drama just to make someone feel good about themselves or to fan the flames of stupidity and ignorance. You know, when they would not let blacks play professional sports or even go to public colleges in the South, that was racism. Segregation in the military: racism. The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment: racism. Trail of Tears: racism. Jim Crow laws: racism. The list goes on. Brady and Paul defeating black opponents in the field of play; not racism. If you think it is then you . . . Never mind.

3. President Biden. Clearly this will be an ongoing discussion as I move away from the discussion above. My prediction, however, still stands. By Christmas next year, Harris will be in the top seat and Biden will be put out to pasture. Even if I am wrong, I do not think he will make four years as POTUS. I don't think it was ever part of the grand plan. But for this Robservation (space constraints), all I am going to say is look up the following link: www.cnn.com/interactive/2021/politics/biden-executive-orders/index.html. Or you can just Google something like "Biden Executive Actions." This is a look at the 50 executive actions President Biden has signed thus far as of 25 February. Pretty bold for someone who believes one cannot lead through executive fiat. Twenty-two of those are direct reversals of Trump policies paving the way for another four years of Obama policies. Honestly, I agree with several of the actions, many unfortunately, I cannot support because many are purely anti-American. This is an important article (as well as others) and a chance for you to see exactly what the President has been up to. I will certainly be addressing many of these in the future.

I highly recommend reading them and update your search often as more seem to be added weekly. Some will have little effect on our daily lives while others are going to affect every single American deeply. More than the substance of all the Executive Actions, as a whole they give us a clearer picture of where this administration is headed in the way we are going to deal with the world. It shows us how they think. These actions in addition to President Biden's reversal of the "America First" policies of the former administration being met with applause from socialist Europe, China and Iran is all you really need to know. If they are all happy, it is certainly not in our best interests. More to come.

In the closing scene of The Bridge on the River Kwai, one British officer stands looking at the recently destroyed bridge and the dead men strewn about, removes his hat and says, "Madness. Madness." Here we are.

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Montgomery County, Ala. Sheriff's Office

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Anyone entering a County building is required to wear a mask or face covering, have their temperature checked, and practice social distancing.

Sheriff's Office App

If you haven't already heard, the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office has a phone app called "Montgomery County AL Sheriff" that can be accessed through your phone's app store. Once you have added this app to your phone, you can easily set your phone up to receive important push notifications:

- Go to your phone's setting icon
- Scroll down and click "Applications"
- Scroll down to "MCSO" or "Montgomery county sheriff" "O"
- Click "Application Manager," if it doesn't take you directly to the location, Click "Notifications"
- Turn 'on' "Allow Notifications" and "Previews in pop-ups"

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

Community Relations Events

As you can imagine with the COVID-19 pandemic, our Community Relations events have been postponed or cancelled. We are monitoring the situation closely so please check back monthly for updates.

Social Media

Social Media
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Snapchat mcso.alabama
Twitter MG_Twitter



Chief Deputy Kevin J. Murphy



COURTHOUSE ANNEX I CONSTRUCTION

- As renovations progress on Montgomery County Annex I, located at 100
- S. Lawrence Street, the public entrance and security screening will
- temporarily move to the entrance on Adams Street between Lawrence
- Street and Perry Street.

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HAS THERE BEEN AN INTERESTING SUPREME COURT CASE RECENTLY?



Yes, the United States Supreme Court issued an opinion on November 25, 2020 that I found interesting involving the apparent suppression of in person worship. The Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn, New York sought injunctive relief against New York Governor, Andrew M. Cuomo (ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN, NEW YORK v. ANDREW M. CUOMO, GOVERNOR OF NEW YORK).

Though Cuomo claims to be Roman Catholic, he holds several liberal views contrary to Catholic teachings and the free exercise of worship. During this time of COVID-19, Cuomo issued an executive order limiting occupancy of churches and synagogues in certain areas. Cuomo divided certain areas into red and orange sections. Based on remarks by Cuomo and a review of maps it was felt that he had gerrymandered the boundaries of red and orange zones to include heavily orthodox Jewish communities. Red zones limited occupancy to ten persons and orange zones limited occupancy to twenty-five persons. Injunctive relief was sought by both the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn, New York and Agudath Israel of America along with other entities. Of the twenty-six churches in the Diocese most can seat at least five hundred persons, at least fourteen can seat over five hundred and two can seat over 1,000 persons. Agudath Israel of Kew Garden Hills can seat up to four hundred persons. It was very difficult to understand how restrictions of ten or twenty-five people in these buildings could pose a greater health hazard than certain activities allowed in New York. Within the red zone where only ten people can occupy a church or synagogue, there are “essential businesses” that may allow an occupancy of whatever size they desire. Essential businesses include, “acupuncture facilities, camp grounds, garages, as well as all plants manufacturing chemicals and microelectronics and all transportation facilities”. While places of worship are limited in orange zones even non essential businesses in those zones are not required to limit occupancy. Those places of worship involved operated for many months using precautionary measures and had allowed only 25-33% capacity without any Covid outbreaks.

Justice Breyer wrote, “The applicants have clearly established their entitlement to relief pending appellate review. They have shown that their First Amendment claims are likely to prevail, that denying them relief would lead to irreparable injury, and that granting relief would not harm the public interest.” It was Breyer’s opinion that the shutting out of a majority of the parishioners of the churches or synagogues would cause irreparable harm. Many Catholics for instance would be unable to take communion and Jewish congregants would be unable to participate in traditions that require personal attendance. Breyer went on to say “. . . even in a pandemic, the Constitution cannot be put away and forgotten. The restrictions at issue here, by effectively barring many from attending religious services, strike at the very heart of the First Amendment’s guarantee of religious liberty.”

The executive order became a fluid one, something that would change in shape, would change from being called an orange zone to being called a yellow zone with different restrictions. If the changes occur late in the week there is not enough time to seek judicial relief to allow congregants the ability to worship. It was the holding of the Court to enjoin the Governor’s Executive Order from the continued restriction of religious worship.

In a concurring opinion, Justice Gorsuch wrote, “And it turns out the businesses the Governor considers essential include hardware stores, acupuncturists and liquor stores. Bicycle repair shops, certain signage companies, accountants, lawyers, and insurance agents are all essential too. So, at least according to the Governor, it may be unsafe to go to church, but it is always fine to pick up another bottle of wine, shop for a new bike, or spend the afternoon exploring your distal points and meridians. Who knew public health would so perfectly align with secular convenience?”

Chief Justice Roberts dissented, saying “I would not grant injunctive relief under the present circumstances. There is simply no need to do so. After the Diocese and Agudath Israel filed their applications, the Governor revised the designations of the affected areas. None of the houses of worship identified in the applications is now subject to any fixed numerical restrictions. At these locations, the applicants can hold services with up to 50% of capacity, which is at least as favorable as the relief they currently seek.” Roberts went on to say, “The Governor might reinstate the restrictions. But he also might not. And it is a significant matter to override determinations made by public health officials concerning what is necessary for public safety in the midst of a deadly pandemic. If the Governor does reinstate the numerical restrictions the applicants can return to this Court, and we could act quickly on their renewed applications. As things now stand, however, the applicants have not demonstrated their entitlement to “the extraordinary remedy of injunction.”

From a personal opinion, a reckless elected official that unjustly treads on the Constitutional rights of citizens cannot be treated with a laissez-faire approach when he or she changes blatantly unconstitutional orders to flow with the tide of legal proceedings or public opinion. A person of such wily character is like a fox that hides in a hen house, waiting to pounce again once the excitement dies down.

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PICKING A U.S. SENATOR – PROVEN TRIED TESTED

Years ago, in my manufacturing days at Giles Enterprises, we used the term “Flash Point” to describe when a chicken frying machine system would collapse, and the shortening exploded into a raging fire. In order to obtain an Underwriters Laboratories Certification (UL), we had to make sure that each fryer had the adequate infrastructure, dual thermostats; warning signals and much more to make sure that each new frying device was proven, tried and tested before the regulators allowed the product to go public. We must protect our sacred vote, exhausting our civic due diligence, insuring that who we send to Washington is proven, tried and tested. Hopefully this article serves as a training tool of how to screen a candidate to earn your coveted vote.

John W. Giles

Next to President of the USA, a United State Senator is the most powerful position in America. In fact, the most influential position in America serving as a thermostat, not a thermometer, having a lasting effect on public policy is being Governor of a state or U.S. Senator. A U.S. Senator has the constitutional duties similar to a House Member, but different in two regards. First they approve all Foreign Treaties, which sets the tone for foreign policy. Secondly, they confirm Presidential appointments to the cabinet and the federal judiciary, including the U.S. Supreme Court. The U.S. Senate IS NOT the place you send a recruit fresh out of boot camp, but to the contrary, we need to send in our most seasoned Navy Seals. Let’s talk about three ways you can insure you get a proven, tried, and tested candidate.

Character, ethics, integrity and being courageous go hand in hand. You have to know what someone is willing to die for. You need to look deep into their history, family, and how they have handled tough situation down through the years. You have to determine, are they are for sale, can they be bought, and do they have a price? Are they overly ambitious? An overly ambitious person can fold under high level pressure, if they are climbing the political summit, and just a little compromise helps them get there. Why are they running for office, their motivations do count. If you see one hair line crack in their character wall, do not ignore it, under pressure that crack widens. In my view, this is step one for me. If one passes the character test, then we can go to step two.

My family is driven by issues. We can overlook some physical deficiencies in appearance or speaking ability if they are solid on the issues important to my family. Beware; political consultants have trained candidates to color in the

conservative square to win your vote. Take your time, carefully drill into their record to see who gives them money, influences them and how they have voted. If they have the greatest character, family, moral values, and have NO PUBLIC RECORD, running for U.S. Senate is too lofty and is not an option. On the senate floor, there is no time for a learning curve; they will be debating the most seasoned liberals in the country. An economic, moral, social and constitutional conservative senator needs to have a great depth on the issues of the day in order to effectively be on offense or defense in the senate well. Make sure the candidate of your choice is proven, tried and tested on the issues; the U.S. Senate is NO Place for a novice. If you have drilled deep into the issues with a candidate and they were not being coached by a staff member or reading off a cheat sheet, then now you are ready for step three.

There is NO SUBSTITUTE for an interview with candidates. With the internet, and the ability to do Zoom, Facetime or a conference call interview with the candidate is much easier. I would suggest hosting a live interview with the candidate. You can get your Sunday School Class, church leadership, local club, neighborhood or any group together from 12 people to 100, the more the better. Also another very important point is to have their spouse involved in the interview. If a spouse is not 100% on board with a conservative worldview, then you are looking at a moderate candidate cloaked as a conservative. They are not interviewing for a ticket to the White House dinner, but they are by their spouse’s side ready to fight the hard battles facing our country. If they will not both agree to the interview, you can make your own deductions, but that would be a big negative to me. I highly encourage posting the interview on social media to educate voters.

In conclusion, a novice new to the dance floor, one who has character flaws or overly ambitious need to be quickly eliminated, not even an option. If you have someone that is shallow on the issues with no public record, they can be eliminated as well.

We only have two U.S. Senate slots representing our state, we need to send the top two in the state, the United States Senate is not a place for just a good vote; it is the place for Seal Team Leadership.

This sacred post SHOULD ONLY be reserved for those who have a high flash point, tempered by fire, UL Listed, have the right infrastructure.

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John Sophocleus

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That Smell: more ‘gas tax’ Goat Hill methane to build prisons...

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Some may recall my 2019 column on Gov. Ivey’s new and improved ACCA, BCA, *et al* bulldozer tactics deployed where Goat Hill legislators ‘passed the gas’ tax to fuel a more over-built/unsustainable road system in Alabama. That familiar Goat flatulence odor is again in the air to build prisons. No doubt our low class, high-end political prostitutes (Armistead to Waggoner type ‘Hubbard grubbers’) will prosper as usual. Montgomery is once again emitting the familiar loud, foul smell on par with all the Republocrat rhetoric surrounding the 14% **special** election turnout result (49 days before a general election) to rob \$437 million from our **ETF**. That 2012 sham result was at least determined by an election the politburo members could spin as, “a great show of support from the people.” The politburo wouldn’t let voters decide a few weeks later on a general election ballot where greater participation forecasted an outcome, which would block these political thieves. Similarly, Goat Hill oligarchs wouldn’t put the gas tax vote on the next Statewide general election ballot and now the prison issue will not be subject to an informed, transparent voter determination.

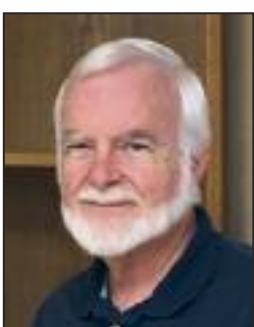
Political columnist Kyle Whitmire [*AL.com*] recently wrote how the price tag of prison construction has changed in a very short window of time, noting originally four new prisons would be built for approximately \$900 million. Whitmire wrote: *“At the time, way back in 2019, that seemed like a lot of money, especially since the state wouldn’t be buying the new prisons, but leasing them from private companies. From there, though, the plan evolved. At some point, a whole prison went missing. The women’s prison got excluded from the deal, which was weird since the barbaric conditions at the Julia Tutwiler Prison for Women were what supposedly spurred the state into action on this plan in the first place. But one thing hadn’t changed – the price. In the world’s worst BOGO, Alabama would get three prisons for the price of four. Next, the price did change – it went up. Instead of the original \$900 million estimate, last year the Department of Corrections said the new prisons should cost ‘no more than’ \$88 million/year over 30 years. If state officials had been telling the truth then, that would be a maximum of \$2.64 billion. That’s if they had been telling the truth, but they didn’t.”*

Mr. Whitmire offers some insight on how ‘indexing’ would work to estimate the first [2025] prison lease payment at \$94 million with an increasing bill to cough-up each year, offering the caveat our State can’t provide a total price tag because it wouldn’t be finalized until closing the deal. In similar Speaker Pelosi flatulence, Gov. Ivey is saying we won’t know what’s in it until it is passed. For those familiar with elementary schoolboy potty humour - these had the dubious nomenclature, ‘silent but deadly.’ Whitmire equated this as closing on a house without knowing all the expenses, but with some extrapolation using what little our politburo has offered w.r.t. indexation the 30 year deal comes to about \$3.7 billion – *i.e.*, about four fold more than initial estimates.

Mr. Whitmire spilled much ink to be clear his arithmetic may be off or missing some (possibly substantive) variables given how politburo members have refused public record requests for the ‘closed/no bid’ confidential proposals submitted for three prisons instead of four facilities **and** in the end ALDoC doesn’t keep the prisons we pay on for 30 years.

Prior to Ivey, Gov. Bentley championed the Alabama Prison Transformation Initiative Act in 2016, with proposed construction of four new prisons via \$800 million bond issuance legislation which failed; brought back up in 2017 to fail yet again, setting the stage for the current outrageous price tag Mr. Whitmire provided which will saddle Alabama taxpayers for 30 years. This warrants more representative input from legislators and voter approval in a Statewide general election.

Alabama Students Against Prisons [ASAP] demanded, *“Governor Ivey immediately cease construction plans for these prisons; decline to sign a contract with Core Civic or Alabama Transformation partners; release any and all contractual, financial, and social impact research which has been conducted related to the proposed prisons,”* and further demanded, *“Governor Ivey call a special session of the legislature dedicated to passing criminal justice reform policy which explicitly addresses the shameful and unconstitutional conditions existing in our state prisons including but not limited to repealing the Habitual Felony Offender Act and removing the overly harsh, mandatory sentencing minimums for drug offenses in the State, for example. This special session should pass policy related to decarceration, and policy which funds renovations to improve the current conditions of incarcerated people in Alabama’s prisons. We demand Governor Ivey and the Legislature address investing in our communities, rather than prison buildings, and boost*



John M. Taylor

“The Informed Southerner”

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THE FIRST AMENDMENT AND LINCOLN’S REGIME

“Freedom of speech and freedom of the press, precious relics of former history, must not be construed too largely.” – William T. Sherman

The First Amendment: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

In these times, we see blatant, unapologetic levels of censorship and propaganda. For example, some libertarian-minded individuals liken CNN, MSNBC, al.com, etc., to be American equivalents of the former U.S.S.R.’s Pravda. Despite the modern versions of censorship and information control, the phenomenon is not new in America.

Under Abe Lincoln’s Administration, the level of suppression was staggering. Since the South was attempting to establish independence and escape the grasp of Lincoln’s corporate/government alliance, this suppression was largely directed at citizens of the Northern and Border States. Examples include:

Kentucky: Newspapers that were neutral or sympathetic to the South were suppressed. This included The Louisville Courier, The Louisville Democrat, and The Kentucky Yeoman. It was also in Kentucky where U.S. General Grant issued General Order #11 on December 17, 1862, calling for Jews to be expelled from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Mississippi.

Indiana: Union Brigadier General Milo Hascall issued Order No. 9 on April 25, 1863. This led to the arrests of several newspaper editors, including Daniel E. Valkenburg of the Plymouth Weekly Democrat and Rufus Magee of the Pulaski Democrat.

Ohio: Ohioan Clement Vallandigham’s unique case will be covered in a future article. The Chicago Times was suppressed in Ohio. Attacks were leveled at the McConnellsville Enquirer, Zanesville’s Citizen’s Press, and Marietta Republican. The Second Ohio Volunteer Cavalry attacked the Columbus Crises in March 1863.

Illinois: Several newspapers were temporarily suppressed, including the Jonesborough Gazette and the Chicago Times. On June 1, 1863, Union General Ambrose Burnside issued General Order No. 84 that led to the suppression of the Times and other papers.

Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania was a strong Democratic State. Lincoln’s Administration accused some Pennsylvania newspapers of providing “aid and comfort” to the South. This led to the suppression of Philadelphia’s Christian Observer and Evening Journal as well as Eaton’s Sentinel and West Chester’s Jeffersonian.

funding for the sectors of education, mental health services, healthcare, infrastructure, and sanitation.”

ASAP is a coalition of student advocates from Auburn University, the University of Alabama, Tuskegee University, Birmingham Southern, Yale, UAB, University of North Alabama, Troy, Spring Hill, Montevallo, Harvard, and Samford Universities. One can hope our youth are beginning to pay more attention to this sort of Ivey, Pelosi, *et al* type passing of huge spending without approval by those they extract from for non-transparent expenditures. The **Department of Justice** [DoJ] declared Alabama prisons 8th Amendment civil right violations in both 2019 and 2020, compelling the **DoJ** to sue Alabama for failure to address these violations, explicitly asserting Alabama cannot build their way out of addressing issues of overcrowding, culture, corruption, mismanagement, violence, and abuse. Gov. Ivey continues ‘bulldozing’ forward to build new prisons disregarding concerns of surrounding communities of proposed construction sites who’ve been left out of the decision-making process.

Stressing lack of input from local communities, **ASAP** youth further emphasized critical criminal justice reform as necessary to effectively address the issues systematically ‘baked into’ the civil and human rights violations evident in Alabama’s prisons, often exacerbated by despicable incentives unleashed by immunities and privatization of the prison industrial complex some States are wisely abandoning after the observed result of taking the ‘for profit prison’ path Gov. Ivey is championing. So we observe yet another large ‘bond and spend’ Republocrat item unfolding, binding Alabama citizens’ future tax revenues for almost a third of a century on what many States have found a failed path, offering little promise to provide prisoner education for more to successfully return into society with reduced recidivism.

Just as I’ve observed the ‘Louisiana model’ destroy our public hospital in East Alabama, I forecast similar further decay and destruction in our prisons. It may seem foolhardy to pray for civil, transparent dialogue between a few good, rational men to assure citizens of my county and State not trod toward greater death, harm and failure. There are a few good souls who’ve revealed themselves driven more by acquired knowledge and principle over party and self-interest as shown by Rep. Chris England and former Sen. Cam Ward who recently moved to Pardons & Parole Director. “Rookie” Rep. Jeremy Gray (who was wisely chosen to respond to Gov. Ivey’s State of the State address) is also showing himself to be of sound mind and good Spirit on matters of this sort. I pray Mr. Gray continues to pursue legislation which promises to promote the general welfare and steer clear of those influenced by Felon Hubbard minions – *e.g.*, Rep. Pebblin Warren who voted **YES** to pass the gas tax and supported Hubbard’s corruption by aiding him in the Lee County Circuit Court jury selection which convicted the former Speaker.

From what little has been disclosed by our ‘hide the ball’ politburo types, the prison construction plan as currently proposed promises to be a deleterious misappropriation of resources that could be used to develop community programs toward reduced incarceration of first time offenders and in prison education programs to earn GEDs and efforts like the **Alabama Prison Arts & Education Project** to earn college degrees proven to reduce recidivism; new prison construction is worthy of consideration once the fundamental issues driving prison overcrowding are addressed and resolved.

Postscript: a House bill has been submitted to end straight ticket voting in Alabama, something long-time readers of my columns know I’ve advocated abolishing these past decades. Sadly, we are one of only six remaining States (Alabama, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Oklahoma and S. Carolina) allowing straight political party ticket voting in general elections.

House Bill 397, introduced by Rep. Jeremy Gray [D-Opelika] has 21 co-sponsors last I checked. The bill also proposed legislation prohibiting descriptions of constitutional amendments on election ballots which *“intentionally misrepresent the content of the proposed amendment,”* that may have been more effective submitted separately.

Alabama Political Reporter quoted Gray with, *“Straight-party ticket voting has always been an issue that citizens have voiced their concerns about,”* and *“Personally I feel like a true democracy embodies all citizens, and the straight-party ticket voting is not a representation of that. We leave out people who identify with other parties besides Democrat and Republican Party.”*

Keep an eye on this fine young gentleman legislator, if Rep. Gray can stay on course and navigate the Goat Hill minefield of the worst players, Jeremy can make a difference toward a brighter future.

New York: New York’s Jeffersonian Governor Horatio Seymour believed the South had a right to self-government and the anti-war New York Draft Riots were among the most violent of the era. New York was the news center of the country in the 1860s. Horace Greely, originally a supporter of the South’s independence effort eventually supported Lincoln and his war. Greeley’s newspaper, the New York Tribune, reflected that support. The papers that opposed the war were attacked or suppressed. They included the New York Herald, The New York Daily News, the Journal of Commerce, The Daybrook, Brooklyn Eagle, Freeman’s Journal, and others.

Iowa: Sympathy for Southern Independence existed in Iowa. Many Iowans were anti-war and supporters of voluntary government. Iowa Catholics were particularly leery of the Republican Party’s antipathy toward them. The wrath of Lincoln’s Administration was felt by the Dubuque Herald, the Iowa City Press and the Keokuk Constitution (Union soldiers literally destroyed their office).

Wisconsin: A strong anti-war element existed in Wisconsin. Marcus Pomeroy, editor of the La Crosse Democrat was physically attacked for his anti-war/anti-Lincoln stance. The Prairie Du Chein Courier was threatened but not actually suppressed.

Connecticut: Pro-Southern Independence elements existed in Connecticut. The Bridgeport Advertiser & Farmer was suppressed after taking an anti-Lincoln stance. Their office was destroyed and the paper put out of business; no arrests were made. Pro-Union P.T. Barnum led a mob’s interruption of a Democrat Peace Meeting in Stepney.

Other censored or suppressed newspapers included: Dayton Empire, Maryland News Sheet, Baltimore Gazette, Daily Baltimore Republican, Baltimore Bulletin, New Orleans Advocate, New Orleans Courier, Baltimore Transcript, Thibodaux (Louisiana) Sentinel, Cambridge Democrat (Maryland), Wheeling Register, Memphis News, Baltimore Loyalist, and Louisville True Presbyterian. Also, the editor of Haverhill, Massachusetts’ Essex County Democrat was tarred and feather by a Union mob and the printing equipment was destroyed.

This is just a glimpse of the attacks on the press and speech carried out during Lincoln’s regime. Anyone who seriously studies Lincoln and has not been duped by the “cartoon-version” of this very power-hungry individual knows these truths. There may have never been a greater enemy to American constitutional government than Lincoln. However, those who created the Lincoln myth after his death and those who continue to propagate it have done a masterful job in creating a fairy tale that millions have bought into.

Sources: **Union At All Costs: From Confederation to Consolidation**, John M. Taylor; **The Real Lincoln**, Thomas DiLorenzo; **The Real Lincoln**, Charles L.C. Minor

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Daniel Sutter

DEALING WITH SCAMMERS

Daniel Sutter is the Charles G. Koch Professor of Economics with the Manuel H. Johnson Center for Political Economy at Troy University and host of Econversations on TrojanVision. The opinions expressed in this column are the author's and do not necessarily reflect the views of Troy University.

Every society must protect against those who would use violence to steal from others. After controlling criminals, swindlers become a major fear and motivates many government regulations. Yet regulations against fraud allow far worse swindling than markets.

Swindling is always wrong, but most people learn to avoid pedestrian scams like the email from an exiled prince seeking to transfer millions of dollars. Many scams violate customs and laws and the courts will help victims if possible.

Smart and clever people can perpetrate more serious swindles. Consider how Tom Sawyer convinced the neighborhood boys to whitewash Aunt Polly's fence for him. The 1967 movie "The Producers" offers another example, with Zero Mostel and Gene Wilder soliciting investments in a play sure to flop.

Such "deals" often do not violate custom or law. Indeed, the other boys happily did Tom's chores. People who are smart enough to trick us and hurtful enough to not give us our money back threaten commerce.



Asking government, which protects us from criminals, to police cheaters seems quite reasonable. Except that when tailored properly by smart, mean people, laws and regulations ostensibly protecting us can allow us to be taken advantage of.

Why? In the market we are free to not deal with anyone for any reason. Refusing to do business may seem like a pea shooter response compared to government's ability to fine or jail. Yet aggregated over millions of consumers, walking away comprises the power of the market, which can humble any firm.

If you doubt the power of the market, look up 1957s Fortune 500. Readers younger than me will recognize few of the companies. Economist Mark Perry found that only 12 percent of companies from 1957 still make the list. If large businesses were more powerful than the market, Sears would still be America's leading retailer.

Honest people can do more, however, than just refuse to play after being cheated. We devise procedures for honest dealing and exclude those who break our rules.

For example, under the "Merchant Law" in medieval Europe, merchants had to submit disputes to a hearing by another merchant. Merchants not accepting a judgment were barred from future trading fairs.

Stock exchanges were formed by people recognizing the enormous potential for benefits and fraud offered by stocks. Companies wanting their stock traded had to demonstrate they were not a swindle while brokers had to trade honestly to remain members of the exchange.

By contrast, laws and regulations are coercive. The Affordable Care Act required uninsured Americans to buy qualifying policies. Laws must be spelled out in detail and remain in effect until changed. Smart, mean people can shape the details to force us into disadvantageous deals, or essentially legal extortion.

As an example, consider patents, which perform the economically valuable function of rewarding inventors for creating great new devices or medicines. Drug companies though create loopholes to extend their patents. Others take out patents not to protect a new product but rather sue others for patent infringement. "Patent trolls" epitomize the legal swindle.

In a democracy we think that we the people control the laws, including the details. Yet members of Congress boast about not reading the bills they pass. Even if we ensure the integrity of bills, they frequently call for hundreds of pages of regulations which can be gamed. And then come interpretations of the regulations. Like when playing chess with an opponent always two or three moves ahead, we will lose.

Refusing to trade is ultimately far more effective in controlling misconduct. Not only can honest people protect themselves, smart cheaters realize that cheating does not pay. Economists Ross Levine and Yona Rubinstein found that entrepreneurs incorporating new businesses were "smart and illicit:" they broke rules when young but learned that honest business was more profitable.

No one deserves to be conned out of their money. The sentiment to right such wrongs is noble. Unfortunately, laws and regulations outlawing against misbehavior enable even worse scams.

A "Babbitt" World? . . . continued from front page

The Senate, unable to secure the required 2/3 majority, failed in its attempt to convict former President Trump of inciting the riot which led to the storming of the Capitol. The House Democrats brought this second impeachment charge without calling witnesses or producing evidence of Trump's actions, but instead chopped together footage of fools and infiltrators behaving badly.

Here is a link to the Impeachment Document and the vote of not guilty:

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-resolution/24/text>

Within Article One, Incitement of Insurrection, offered by the House of Representatives is a curious juxtaposition of comments. On the one hand, it says Trump uttered "false claims" about the election when in reality no court allowed Trump's lawyers to present any facts before a judge or jury to support his claims. Conversely, this Impeachment Article clearly states that Trump supporters breached the Capitol and "killed law enforcement personnel," the most grave and heinous action within the Article.

That statement of fact as proffered by the House managers is totally FALSE.

So who really died at the Capitol that dark day or later because of it?

Here are the list of names of those seven who died that the media has repeatedly assigned blame to Trumps call to fight for the truth.

1. Ashli Babbitt, 35, Trump supporter, California, unarmed going through a Capitol window. (name of policeman who shot her has yet to be disclosed)
2. Benjamin Phillips, 50, Trump supporter, Pennsylvania, stroke, never near the Capitol
3. Kevin Greeson, 55, Trump supporter, Alabama, heart attack near but not in Capitol, media falsely repeatedly stated he tasered himself
4. Roseanne Boyland, 34, Trump supporter, Georgia, trampled in the Capitol, but no autopsy has been released to confirm cause of death
5. Jeffery Smith, 35, Capitol Police, suicide, nine days after riot
6. Howard Liebengood, 51, Capitol Police, suicide three days after riot
7. Brian Sicknick, 42, Virginia, Capitol Police, death at hospital following a stroke a day after the riots. NO AUTOPSY RELEASED. BODY CREMATED. (very unusual protocol for a murder investigation), SICKNICK DID NOT DIE IN THE CAPITOL AS A RESULT OF INJURIES FROM A THROWN FIRE EXTINGUISHER AS has been widely reported and repeated by the internet and media, i.e. NYT, CNN, USA Today. Surveillance cameras in the Capitol provide indisputable evidence Sicknick had no cuts or abrasions, and no fire extinguisher hit him during the melee. In fact, Sicknick spoke to a family member that night at his office without complaint, telling his elder brother he felt fine according to 2/27 issue of the Daily Mail. Subsequently, like Phillips and Greeson, it appears Sicknick had a medical event causing him to be rushed to the hospital and subsequently die.



Rush – A Man Way Ahead Of His Time

... continued from front page

Mind you, in 1988 there was no public internet, let alone social media. Talk radio became the gateway for the average citizen to get well acquainted, educated, and armed with facts on current affairs. This forum exponentially shaped the economic, social, moral and constitutional conservative mindset in this country.

Following Rush, the Apostle of News Talk Radio, he led the way for other shows to begin springing up across the nation. However, Air America, a nationally syndicated radio network was set up to carry the liberal talk show hosts, failed after six struggling years. Fast forward to 1994, Rush's audience and other talk radio audiences were exponentially growing, and still there was very little internet access except through AOL, do you remember that? Newt Gingrich led the GOP with the "Contract with America." Rush and the newbies of talk radio were pounding this daily, the result, we historically swept the US House into a GOP controlled body which was the first time in 40 years. Rush Limbaugh and this emerging generation of conservative news talk show hosts were shaping minds of all ages and arming them with facts, which makes a lethal body politic from those politicians wanting to hide from their record and the facts surrounding any one given issue.

Governor James who I had a great honor and pleasure of serving in his administration always told me this, "Giles, if you give the people ALL of the facts, they make sound, rational and right decisions." The key word is ALL the facts. Rush Limbaugh led a coalition of talk radio hosts across the country that made it their daily job to educate voters and arm them with ALL the facts. Rush has a gifted way of getting to the root of an issue, and in an almost prophetic manner, accurately forecast the optics, messaging and outcomes over any one given issue. Like a bird dog pointing a covey of quail, Rush has a 100% accurate sixth sense about him and like an old yard dog, would grip it in his teeth and not let go.

Rush Limbaugh un-mistakenly is the Patriarch of Conservative News Talk Radio. He has been a consistent economic, social, moral and constitutional conservative for decades. The average person on the street today, with the internet and voices like Rush Limbaugh have become a very knowledgeable educated electorate. Tuesday night, at the State of the Union Speech, President Trump recognized Limbaugh with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian award and was presented live in the gallery by First Lady Melanie Trump.

Monday, February 3rd, Rush broke the news to the world that he was in hand to hand combat with Stage 4 Lung Cancer. Stage 4 cancer generally is conclusive news, but we are all praying for a healing to take place. Rush is irreplaceable, it will take ten men to fill these shoes. Like the woman healed of the issue of blood by touching the hem of Jesus garment, we ask the Great Physician to touch Rush in the same way.

I have often quoted George William Childs before, but he once said, "I would rather have a plain coffin without a flower, a funeral without a eulogy, than a life without the sweetness of love and sympathy. Let us learn to anoint our friends beforehand, before their burial, post-mortem kindness does not cheer the burdened spirit and flowers on a coffin cast no fragrance backward over the weary way."

Rush, we are all praying for you to defeat this battle with lung cancer, fully recover and return to your appointed post each day for the American people. In the event, God is ready for you to make that final journey and exchange the temporal for the eternal, we all want to anoint you beforehand as Childs admonishes us to do. You are on our daily prayer list and you will forever be the most anointed renowned Patriarch in your field.

History will kindly showcase you as a profound man ahead of your time.

It is true; Rush Limbaugh is on loan to us by God.

(Reprint from March 2020, Alabama Gazette by John W. Giles)

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by Gazette staff writer

The wording in the Impeachment petition alleging Trump supporters killed law enforcement personnel was not true, but, either by intention or by ignorance, nevertheless published and embraced by the Democrats and Never-Trumper Republicans. Certain law enforcement personnel appear to have been guilty of circulating false narratives of Sicknick's cause of death and the House appears as complicit in promoting them. (One wonders about the two "suicides." Are they related in some way to this false narrative? It strikes some odd that with only the best, most stable personnel selected to serve as Capitol Police, and with all the physical and psychological tests one must pass, that these two men committed suicide because of a riot situation less severe than the ones seen across the country in 2020. (See *Hillary and Vince, the story of love, death and cover up* by Dean Arnold, 2016)

For example, The Memorandum in Support of Impeachment states as a matter of fact on page 29 of Part 1, "The insurrectionists killed a Capitol Police officer by striking him in the head with a fire extinguisher." A footnote used as a fact source was Marc Santoras, a writer for the *New York Times*, article of January 8. But almost a month after the article, on February 2, the House Manager included this falsehood, as "fact" even though it had been proven false and discredited by numerous sources including the deceased's family.

The sad death of Officer Sicknick appears to be not as a result of injuries from the riot, but proved to be fodder for those wanting to destroy Trump. No suspects have been arrested. No medical examiner has even announced a determination that it was a homicide. No autopsy has been released. But, House leaders in an effort to legitimize a false attack against Trump rushed to have Sicknick lie-in-state to further inflame tensions. He is only the 5th person to do so, creating a bubble of invulnerability from examination or attack. Here is the link to the Impeachment Related Publications, specifically, Part I: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CDOC-117sdoc2/pdf/CDOC-117sdoc2-pt1.pdf>. See also, President Trump's defense teams response at this link. One lawyer on his team, David Shoen, practices here in Montgomery.

We may never discover who shot Ashli Babbitt. Had the police killing of the unarmed civilian named Babbitt been under normal circumstances, the policeman's name and background would be on the front page of the NYT and possibly vilified for shooting an unarmed veteran. But these are strange times indeed. Sinclair Lewis won the Nobel Prize in Literature for his novel, *Babbitt*, where his main character, George Babbitt, attempts to break the bonds of what we today call a "cancel culture of conformity." Ashli Babbitt may also one day be recognized for attempting to be a non-conformist unto death in this increasingly Babbitt-world.



Perry O. Hooper, Jr.

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Republican State Executive Committee
Former State Representative

Court Packing: A Death Sentence for Democracy

In 1948, Winston Churchill warned that if we do not learn from history, we are condemned to repeat it. The United States has had a nine member Supreme Court for 150 years and it has served us well. Court Packing does not mean that the President replaces current Justices who retire or die. Court Packing means that the President and a Liberal Legislature adds seats to the Supreme Court

until they are able to control the outcome of cases heard by the Court, thus imposing their political philosophy on the outcomes of cases.

The appointment of Justice Amy Coney Barrett to the United States Supreme Court has reignited the debate among liberals that the only way to counter the six conservative leaning justices on the Court is for the next President to pack the court. That is, add seats to the Supreme Court to shift the balance of power to the progressive view.

History would dictate that we review the checks and balances of our United States Constitution as well as review lessons from other countries who allowed this to happen. The Legislative and Executive branches were laid out in our Constitution to be driven by the political will of the people and are checked through elections every 2, 4 or 6 years. The third branch of government, the Judicial Branch is designed to be nonpolitical and is to be the stabilizing force to keep one political persuasion from controlling the judicial outcomes from the bench. The Judicial Branch interprets the original Constitution and other foundational documents, interprets the laws passed by Congress and the States, and resolves controversy amongst our citizens. The composition of the Supreme Court ebbs and flows as Justices are appointed for life and are only replaced following their death or resignation. The U.S. Supreme Court has had 5 to 10 Justices throughout our almost 250 years of existence, but in 1869, the number of justices was set at nine which has been followed ever since.

Even Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg whose death sparked this renewed debate over whether Democrats should pack the court if given power stated "Nine seems to be a good number. It's been that way for a long time," she said, adding, "I think it was a bad idea when President Franklin Roosevelt tried to pack the court."

For a vital history lesson, let us look at Venezuela who was once the third richest country in the Americas behind only the United States and Canada. It had a burgeoning Middle class, and the economy was supported by vast oil reserves. Venezuela's constitution follows the same basic structure as the United States. It calls for an executive branch, a legislature, and an independent Supreme Court. Venezuela was a highly functional democracy with a bright future.

In 1998, the wheels began to fall off. The Venezuelan people elected Socialist Hugo Chavez as President and at the same time voted in a radical left-wing legislature. The independent Supreme Court soon began issuing rulings that went against the Chavez Administration. Chavez's solution: Pack the court with Chavez' loyalists. In 2004, he packed the court by passing a law expanding the size of the Venezuela Supreme Court from 20 to 32 justices. Under the law, Chavez got to pick 12 new judges stacking the court in his favor. Then in 2006, he ran on a fully socialist agenda knowing the Supreme Court would not throw out any of his planned initiatives since they shared his socialist views. Just last year, Antonio Canova, a constitutional law professor at Universidad Católica Andrés Bello in Venezuela, researched 45,000 rulings issued by Venezuela's Supreme Court which showed that since Chavez packed the Venezuela Supreme Court, it has never ruled against Chavez.

So, where is Venezuela now? It went from the 3rd richest country to the poorest country in the Americas, recently replacing Haiti for this dubious honor. Just eight years ago, this beautiful country had a functioning middle class. Today, 96% of Venezuelans are experiencing poverty and food insecurity while inflation soars to 10 million percent. The 20% of the population that could flee the country to start over, has. Many of the 5 million Venezuelans who chose to leave,

left their wealth in the country they once loved and became refugees in the United States and other nations willing to take them.

Venezuela is not the only South American country that resorted to court packing so that the elected party could rule unchallenged. During the 1990s, Argentina's left-wing president, Carlos Menem, packed the country's Supreme Court with his allies. Menem expanded Argentina's high court from five justices to nine, in order to prevent the court from striking down his plans. Within a decade, the South American country entered a great depression from which it has never recovered.

Attempts to pack the court are not new. Democrat President Franklin Roosevelt proposed it after the Supreme Court declared many of the plans of his "New Deal" unconstitutional. Roosevelt wanted to add six new justices. But his plan fell apart, as the Senate Judiciary Committee, even though it was Democrat-controlled, declared the plan "an invasion of judicial power such as has never before been attempted in this country." Roosevelt's plan was defeated in the Senate by a vote of 70 to 20. It remains very unpopular today according to a New York Times poll.

More recently, Harvard Law School Professor Lawrence Tribe, an outspoken liberal, described the dangers of packing the court, "Obviously partisan Court-expansion to negate the votes of justices whose views a party detests and whose legitimacy the party doubts could trigger a tit-for-tat spiral that would endanger the Supreme Court's vital role in stabilizing the national political and legal system."

Packing the Supreme Court with justices that agree with any governing philosophy, whether Democrat or Republican, would transform the court into a legislative rubber-stamp. The party in power could "rule" without the checks and balances that exist today. The Democrats have all but promised a packed court if Biden is elected and they regain control of the Senate. They would be able to implement their socialist agenda free from constitutional scrutiny from the Supreme Court. Congress would pass "workaround" laws that would effectively change the Constitution without a Constitutional Convention knowing the Supreme Court would not strike it down.

Here in America, the leading candidate for Mayor of Portland tweeted, "I am Antifa". She campaigns wearing a skirt emblazoned with images of her heroes Fidel Castro and Hugo Chavez. Her city has burned for months at the hands of Black Lives Matter activists many of whom affiliate with Antifa. Years of hard work went up in smoke while private property is destroyed without consequence. Indeed, the people are powerless as the laws are not being enforced. Rule of law matters. Having standards matters. Having a stable court that is not beholden to the government in power matters. And being a citizen of a country with checks and balances keeps the power with the people and not the government.

Chavez remains a hero to the radical left in Venezuela and where he created a two-tier system, abject poverty for everyday Venezuelans and a life of luxury for the few in power at the top, protected by the military. The Biden-Harris Democrat Party Platform inked at their Convention boasts items eerily similar to what transpired in Venezuela and led to its economic collapse. It all started with packing the court.

If Biden is certified as the next President, the only thing that can save the country from the devastation of court packing is retaining Republican control of the Senate. Republicans currently hold a 50 – 48 majority with two runoff Elections in Georgia scheduled for January 5th. If the Democrats sweep, they will control the Senate whereas Vice President Harris would cast the deciding vote if a court packing bill ends up 50 -50. We cannot let that happen. Protecting our system of government that is based on checks and balances is what keeps the United States from heading on the same path as Venezuela and other socialist nightmare countries. *God help us if that happens.*



John Martin

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

THE BIDEN REGIME

After winning the greatest scam election in history, Joe Biden and his comrades are wasting no time in their crusade to wreck the world's greatest nation. Right off the bat on his very first day, vindictive Joe signed 15 executive orders to undo Donald Trump's actions to save our republic. Of course, dozens of additional executive actions are being added to these.

With an effective majority in both the House and the Senate, the fundamental rights of all Americans are once again (after Obama) in grave danger. Once again, the sovereignty of the United States is being discarded to join a worldwide socialist movement.

Biden's actions and proposed actions include:

- Rejoining the counterproductive Paris Climate Agreement.
- Rejoining the World Health Organization.
- Rescinding Keystone Pipeline permits.
- Reversing Trump's travel and immigration bans on nations that breed dangerous terrorists.
- Stopping oil and gas leasing in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.
- More extreme racial equality mandates in federal policy making.
- A mask mandate on all federal property and for federal employees.
- A \$1.9 trillion expenditure for risky coronavirus vaccines.
- Re-imposing severe methane limits on all new and existing oil and gas operations.
- Banning new oil and gas permitting on public lands and waters.
- Legalizing many millions of illegal migrants, including criminals, that have sneaked and forced their way in.
- Pandering to the extreme left—providing benefits to people who vote for their livings and punishing people who work for theirs.
- Raising the capital gains tax to 40%. Possibly raising other taxes as well.

Biden has a long record of opposing fossil fuels in general and has vowed to end all offshore drilling and severely limit fracking. On the Keystone pipeline alone, on his very first day, Joe Biden destroyed 11,000 American jobs, \$1.6 billion in wages, and increased our future energy costs. Part of the pipeline passes through Ute Indian territory. The Utes are 100% in support of it, since it provides both current and future employment for them. The pipeline will actually reduce carbon emissions because the new pumping stations will be powered by wind and solar. Our ally and neighbor, Canada, supports the pipeline. Even "progressive darling" Justin Trudeau supports it. Biden's vow to better cooperate with our allies began with throwing Canada under the bus. Meanwhile, oil and gas prices are now exploding.

Biden wants an all out war on carbon emissions and a hefty carbon tax to wage it. Not only will this seriously cripple our economy, it is counterproductive. Studies of past CO2 levels in our atmosphere have proven that higher levels are actually beneficial. Plants and trees thrive on CO2—the greater the CO2, the better and faster they grow. This provides a greener planet and more oxygen for us to breathe. Furthermore, the increased CO2 provides more rainfall in our deserts. In the past at times with higher CO2 levels, the Sahara Desert was green with forests and grasslands. Even today, as our CO2 increases slightly, parts of the Sahara are beginning to re-green with increased rainfall.

Increased environmental penalties on our nation aren't Biden's only objectives. Biden should understand that our toxic emissions are among the world's lowest. China and India are the greatest polluters. Guess what. Biden wants to spend billions of our tax dollars to clean up their messes. He wants to tax and penalize our economy even more to help China and India out-perform

us in the world's marketplace. Why can't China and India clean up at their own expenses like we had to do with ours?

On health care, Biden wants to restore all of the nasty portions of Obama's "Affordable Care Act" that have been repealed, including the patently unconstitutional individual mandate and the utterly unsustainable coverage for pre-existing conditions.

Finally, we have what might be Biden's most devastating proposal—a 40% capital gains tax that could destroy our nation for good, especially after including the unrealized appreciation of assets passed on at death. How? A 40% tax of any kind alone is horrible, but when combined with our expected future dollar devaluations, it will be catastrophic. We already know that the US dollar as a world reserve currency is in the process of being scuttled by Russia, China, India, and other nations for other means of exchange, primarily gold. When that happens, combined with our reckless spending and borrowing, hyperinflation could devalue our dollars down to pennies, or even less, just like Zimbabwe.

Combine that with a 40% capital gains tax. Suppose you buy a home for \$500,000, and you sell it a year later for \$1,000,000. You made a \$500,000 taxable capital gain. But wait. That gain was because the value of the dollar had declined down to fifty cents. Your house is not worth one cent more, but you must pay a 40% tax on the paper profit that you made. The result is the government seizing 40% of your house when you haven't gained one cent of real value. Can you even imagine what will happen nationwide over a period of several years?

Only one time in history has our government pulled such a massive monetary theft. In 1933, the notorious Franklin Delano Roosevelt seized all of our gold, made it illegal to own gold, paid us back with Federal Reserve notes, and then revalued gold up from \$20.67 to \$35 per ounce. The values of everybody's bank accounts immediately plummeted 40%.

A large number of people seem to be concerned about Biden's senility. In a way, that might be a good thing. An evil ruler that is senile is likely to be less dangerous than an evil ruler with a sound mind. But there is one problem here. Should he become too incapacitated, he could be replaced by Kamala Harris, who many observers have noted is likely to become even more tyrannical, especially with her reputation of hating white people.

It looks like hard times are coming, folks—unless we take serious action to stop this juggernaut.

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Southern Gardening Potpourri for March



Judge Peggy Givhan

I remember the old saying that if one does not have a lot to do someone would suggest, just go fly a kite. With all the social lockdowns and quarantining, flying a kite might be a good idea. Of course, kite flying takes place in the great outdoors and the month of March should have plenty of breezes to let it soar to the heavens. And why stop at just one kite, get your children and your grandchildren take part in this fun activity. Naturally, I suggest that we do our gardening chores first. *As they say, the time for planning is over; the time for planting is now.*

I would like to report on the hardy plants in my garden that have thrived in 15 degree temperatures. The pansies were actually on their sides, but when it

warmed up to above freezing, the plants were up and sporting their blooms as if nothing happened. The dianthus withstood these low temperatures with no drooping nor frost bitten blooms. Lambs ears, and verbena also did well in the freezing weather, plus the daffodils seemed to thrive in the sub freezing temps. In my vegetable and herb beds, the collards, kale, Swiss chard, rosemary and parsley came through like champs. We will see if the tulips, which are still in the ground, do well. After all, we have to refrigerate them for 2 months before planting so they should survive just fine.

March chores in the flower garden include weeding, planting perennials, annuals and bulbs. Also this is a good time to sow seed for late spring bloom. The weeding chores should not be too onerous, as these late winter weeds spread out but have shallow root systems. I have had an invasion of pink buttercups or primroses, which every year at this time I have to pull out. This low growing flower is part of the oenothera family and not the true buttercup, which is of the genus Ranunculus. And then there is the presence of common wandering jew, commonly called the inch plant, a member of the spiderwort species. Cool weather plants include geraniums, begonias, snapdragons, calendula, dianthus, dusty miller, petunias, larkspur, alyssum, lobelia, cynoglossum, nasturtium, African daisies, daylilies, and flowering kale to name a few. Bulbs would include canna lilies, elephant ears, and ginger lilies. Unless one buys mature pansies to set out now, the heat of late April, early May might cause these plants to fade. Please do not forget to fertilize and water these plants right after planting.

RUDBECKIA – COMMON NAME BLACK-EYED SUSANS

Rudbeckia is a plant genus from the Asteraceae family and features a central raised disc, which is dark in color. Black-eyed Susans have a black or dark brown middle disc, whereby other coneflowers in the same genus may have green discs. They thrive in a sunny location with moist, but well drained soil. These are large plants and get to heights of 3 feet. All have a daisy like petal formation and commonly yellow or golden colored and these blooms last until frost. Black-eyed Susans brighten up areas outside the cultivated gardens and such a joy to see in late summer and fall along the side of the road.



Photo by Kevin Copple/FreeImages.com

GOOD GARDENING and HAPPY SPRING!

Please accept our apologies as we accidentally reprinted the January "Southern Gardening" article in the February issue of the Alabama Gazette. The revised issue can be downloaded online www.Alabamagazette.com in PDF format.



Stan Hurst
Associate Sports Writer



From Pigskins to Rawhides

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

The Alabama Gazette's Sports Writer, Stan Hurst, had to take the month off. We look forward to hearing from him next month. In the meantime, how about a blast from the past? Ed Jones wrote a column in April 2014, asking Who's Gonna Fill Their Shoes? Considering the dynasty Coach Saban has built and its outstanding 2020-21 season that concluded with its 18th National Championship, Heisman winner Devonta Smith, and too many other awards to list, the question was answered for Alabama ... but who's next? And how has recruiting been for other NCAA teams? While the players have changed since 2014, the question recycles. Here is a short excerpt:

WHO'S GONNA FILL THEIR SHOES?

With spring training winding up for most college football teams, the players will be elated, the coaches will be either happy or deeply concerned and the fans will be delirious after watching the spring games.

That event usually indicates that the grueling spring football is over. It is never over for the coaches. They must spend the next week grading the spring game and the entire spring practices. They want to come out of spring with a good idea of who the number ones are, but just as important is who the number two's are. If they don't have a handle on this they feel that much of spring was not a successful process.

Every year seniors graduate. Most fans are in a dither as to how will they possibly find a replacement for those stars that are irreplaceable. We go through this every year just as sure as spring will come and the earth turns green again. There is always someone who has been waiting in the wings to take the mantle left by a superstar. That's what recruiting is for. Nevertheless the worrisome cry of the fans of springs is...

Who's gonna fill their shoes? That is what is so great about college football. We really don't know. Be patient. You will know soon enough. August is not far away!



Ed Jones, former Sports Editor, passed away February 2019.

Renovations to Faulkner's New College Of Health Sciences are Underway



Crews with Marshall Design-Building LLC have been working since October 2020 to transform the former Burlington Coat Factory building into a space for Faulkner's new College of Health Sciences.

On June 25, Faulkner University President Mike Williams announced the 13-acre purchase of the Montgomery East Plaza Shopping Center and the empty Burlington building is currently being renovated inside and out.

"The center of health sciences project is going nicely across the way and it looks like we are on track to complete the first phase of that project by mid-March 2021 with faculty and staff moving in shortly after that," said Faulkner President Mike Williams. "We won't have classes in that facility until the fall. Once we do, it will certainly be a positive new asset to the institution to help propel our center for health sciences."

Beginning in the fall of 2020, crews began demolishing the interior floors and walls to create 85,000 square feet of empty space ... Subsequent renovations will be completed in phases to include: Classrooms, Student area, SLP, PT, and OT Research Labs, Offices, PT/OT Teaching Labs, Anatomy Lab, Activities of Daily Living Suite (an apartment simulation laboratory), Learning Resource Center, Clinical Practice/ Exams (medical simulation labs)

Artist Rendering: Renovations are currently underway to transform the former Burlington Coat Factory building into the Faulkner University College of Health Sciences.

Faulkner University is a private, Christian liberal arts university based in Montgomery, Alabama. With a mission to provide an education anchored not only by intellect but also character and service, the Faulkner experience aims to educate the whole person. Serving both traditional and non-traditional students, the university is home to six colleges: the Alabama Christian College of Arts and Sciences, the Harris College of Business and Executive Education, the V.P. Black College of Biblical Studies, the College of Education, Faulkner Law and the College of Health Sciences. In addition to its main campus in Montgomery, Faulkner operates extension campuses in Birmingham, Huntsville and Mobile along with online degree programs.

For more information, visit www.faulkner.edu or contact: **Rebecca Burylo**, Public Relations and Social Media Manager, Faulkner University, 334-386-7489 or rburylo@faulkner.edu.

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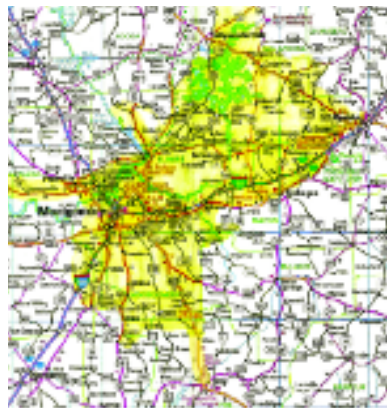
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Honoring Our Heroes

Col James Edwin Salminen: Age 79

Col Mark Dierlam: Age 81

Colonel James Edwin Salminen is a United States veteran who served 27 years in the U.S. Air Force, and his Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) was pilot and pilot-commander. He flew fighters and interceptors including the F-101 and F-102 interceptors as well as the RF-101 reconnaissance fighters, F-100 fighter and four models of the F-111, swing-wing fighter. In Vietnam, he flew 183 RF-101 combat missions including 100 of them over North Vietnam. Col Salminen served as a Squadron Commander at RAF Lakenheath, England, and as Commander of the 27th Tactical Fighter Wing at Cannon Air Force Base (AFB) NM and its one hundred F-111D aircraft. His awards and medals are: the Legion of Merit, two Distinguished Flying Crosses, four Meritorious Service Medals, 14 Air Medals, Presidential Unit Citation, Outstanding Unit Award, Combat Readiness Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Air Force Overseas Ribbon for Short Tour, Air Force Overseas Ribbon for Long Tour, Air Force Longevity Ribbon, Small Marksmanship Arms Ribbon and the Air Force Training Ribbon.

Col Salminen was born July 3, 1941, at Greenport, NY, to his parents, Edwin F. Salminen and Genevieve B. Salminen, was reared there and graduated from Greenport High School in June 1959. Having been introduced to airplanes and flying by his uncle who had been a lead navigator on B-24 Liberators in WWII, he completed AFOTC training and graduated from Hobart College with a B.S. Degree in math and psychology in 1963.

Col Salminen's entry into the Air Force began at Craig AFB, Selma, AL, where he trained as a pilot of the T-37 and T-33 for 13 months. He was then sent to Perrin AFB, TX, to fly the F-102, Delta Dagger, where he received the Outstanding Pilot Award. Next, he went to the Air Force Survival School in Nevada for three weeks and returned to Perrin AFB spending a month in training for instrument flight and training in flying the F-102F, a twin seat, side by side seating trainer. His next assignment was to Suffolk County AFB, NY, flying the F-101B having trained at Tyndall AFB, FL, for aircraft checkout and basic F-101 intercept training. In the fall 1965, he had his first assignment as an operationally ready Air Force pilot at Suffolk County AFB where he and the crews were on five minute alert, living in a facility called the "scramble shack." This occurred during the threat from Russian long-range bombers that flew up and down the coast line following the Cuban missile threat. This was followed by his training at the RF-101C reconnaissance school, Shaw AFB, SC.

Col Salminen deployed to Tan Son Nhut AB, Vietnam, where he flew the RF-101C aircraft with the 460th Reconnaissance Wing. He flew missions taking pictures over "hot" target areas like the "Iron Triangle" between Saigon and the Cambodian border as well as missions over South Vietnam and over targets in North Vietnam. He was there for the Tet Offensive, a major escalation and largest military offensive during the Vietnam War.

Following his tour to Vietnam, Col Salminen was deployed to RAF Upper Heyford, England, a former SAC base, where he was attached to the 366th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing and the 18th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron flying the RF-101C. He later flew the F-100D and the F111 as well. He then attended and graduated from the Air Command and Staff College at Maxwell AFB, AL, followed by an assignment as Staff Officer, Tactical Operations Division, Headquarters, Tactical Air Command, Langley AFB, VA, where he served as the Operations manager for TAC's F-111 fleet of aircraft. He was then assigned to the 391 Tactical Fighter Squadron at Mt. Home AFB, ID, to fly the F-111F. In 1976, he volunteered for deployment to Korea and served at Osan AB as a staff officer. He was given temporary duty (TDY) at Shaw AFB, SC, serving as the Air Force Liaison Officer for 9AF five day exercise. He was assigned to serve as the Operations Officer with the 390th Tactical Fighter Squadron at Mt. Home AFB, ID. He was then sent back to Korea to Taegu AB for a 90 day TDY as the Operations Officer. He was then deployed to RAF Lakenheath, England, where he was in charge of the Wing Air Crew Training monitoring all aircrew flying time for the crews in the 48th Tactical Fighter Wing. His next assignment was as Commander of two NATO Stand-by support bases, RAF Welford and RAF Greenham Common, England.

Col Salminen graduated from the Air War College at Maxwell, AFB, AL, followed by an assignment to Cannon AFB, NM, to serve as the Assistant Deputy Commander for Operations where he could resume flying the F-111, and then to become the Vice Commander (VC) and finally the Commander of the 27th Tactical Fighter Wing (TFW) with its 100 F-111D aircraft. His last flight in the F-111 was on August 23, 1984. Returning to Maxwell AFB, AL, for his third tour, Col Salminen became a member of the faculty of the Air War College eventually to become Department Chairman and Vice Commandant.

... continued on page 2B

Colonel Mark Dierlam served in the United States Air Force for 26 years, and during that time, he served as a pilot, instructor pilot and a leader in maintenance, operational flying and an extensive variety of senior command positions. His numerous military medals and awards are: Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with two devices, Air Medal with one device, Air Force Commendation Medal, Distinguished Presidential Unit Citation, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Valor Device with four devices, Combat Readiness Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal with four devices, Air Force Overseas Short Tour Ribbon, Air Force Overseas Long Tour Ribbon, Air Force Longevity Service Ribbon with five devices, Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon, Air Force Training Ribbon, Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Device and Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal.

Col Dierlam was born October 26, 1939, in Galveston, TX, to his parents, Mark and Gladys Dierlam. He was reared there and graduated from Ball High School followed by graduation from Texas A&M University with a BS Degree in Electrical Engineering 1962. In 1975, he received a Master of Science Degree in Operations Research from the Air Force Institute of Technology, which was Harvard University's MBA curriculum.

Following the tradition of military service by his father who had served in the U.S. Navy during WWI and WWII, Col Dierlam became an Air Force pilot accumulating over 3,300 hours in all seven models of the B-52 and in eight additional aircraft as well, KC-135, KC-10, T-37, T-38, B-377, C-47 and DC-7. He spent forty months flying combat sorties from Kadana AB, Japan, U-Tapao RTNB, Thailand and Guam over Vietnam and other areas in Southeast Asia.

His excellence in military leadership is evidenced by his positions as Commander, 42nd Air Base, Maxwell Air Force Base (AFB), AL, Vice Wing Commander, 2nd Bomb Wing at Barksdale AFB, LA flying the B-52, KC-10, and KC-135, Commander, 2nd Combat Support Group, Barksdale AFB, LA, Chairman Ad Hoc Planning Group for procurement of B-1B and Peacekeeper missile systems, HQ SAC Offutt AFB, NE, Deputy Wing Commander for Resources, 321 Strategic Missile Wing, Grand Forks AFB, ND, B-52 Instructor Pilot, Grand Forks, AFB, ND, Chief Programs, Base Civil Engineer, Keesler AFB, MS, Maintenance Control Officer for 150 B-52s, Anderson AFB, Guam, Officer in Charge of a 565 man Jet Engine Repair Shop, Anderson AFB, Guam, B-52 Instructor Pilot, Operations Staff, Maintenance Chief Quality Control, Dyess AFB, TX, Pilot Training, Reese AFB, TX, and Computer/Communications Maintenance Officer, Charleston AFS, Maine.

Col Dierlam retired in 1988, and since then, he has been a licensed investment advisor with First Command Financial Planning in Montgomery. His excellence has continued as he has received numerous company-wide awards including the Humanitarian Elsie Talley Family Life Award, New Agent of the Year, Salesman of the Year and Top Gun. Within this company, he is a member of the prestigious Platinum and Pinnacle Clubs for client service. He coaches families on how to identify and achieve their goal of being financially independent in the future.

Col Dierlam has continued to serve others in the Montgomery, AL, community on the Board of Directors of the Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce, Leadership Montgomery Original Steering Committee, Business Council for the Arts, YMCA Board, Montgomery Rotary Club President, South Alabama Rotary District Governor, Air University Foundation, the Wright Flyers and two appointed boards of the Montgomery City Council. He is an active member of the Frazer United Methodist Church where he set up a trust for charitable giving and was a Trustee for the AL-West FL Methodist Conference. In addition, he has served the Air Force Association as the AL State AFA President, the AFA National Finance Committee member for eight years and as the Montgomery Chapter President, Vice President and Secretary.

Col Dierlam and his wife, Kay, have been married over 60 years, and they have three children, nine grandchildren and three great-grand-children. Their three children graduated from the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, and each reached the rank of Colonel before retirement. Kay has worked more than 30 years as an executive assistant in the Alabama State Senate.

His conclusions about his military service are, "During the Cold War of the 1960s, I was simply defending my country against the Soviet Union's communism and socialism that do not work. My most unique assignment was when President Reagan felt that if we fielded the B-1 Bomber and Peacekeeper Missile system that the Soviet Union could not economically counter and would result in bringing down the Berlin Wall and dissolving the Soviet Union. It happened and ended the Cold War!"

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Cpl Ronald Webster Balkcom: Age 74

Corporal (Cpl) Ronald Webster Balkcom served two years of active duty and four years in the Reserve in the United States Marine Corps with two tours in Vietnam. He received two Purple Hearts, the National Defense Service Medal, Vietnamese Service Medal, Vietnamese Campaign Medal, Presidential Unit Citation and Rifle Marksmanship Badge. Cpl Balkcom volunteered to deploy to Vietnam, and although he received extensive wounds during his first tour, he volunteered to return for a second time because he wanted to finish his tour.

Cpl Balkcom was born May 20, 1946, in Columbus, GA, to his parents, Daniel Webster Balkcom and Minnie Clyde Balkcom, was reared there and graduated from Jordan High School in 1965. From age 16, he worked in a textile mill, after graduation and until he was drafted into military service January 13, 1966.

Cpl Balkcom survived and completed the U. S. Marine's Basic Training at Parris Island, SC, followed by advanced infantry training at Camp Geiger, part of the Marine Corps Base at Camp Lejeune, NC. He was assigned to Delta Company 1st Battalion, 4th Marines, 3rd Marine Division, a Rifle Company. He was deployed to Phu Bai, a combat base south of Hue in central Vietnam followed by duty at Dong Ha, Camp Carroll, an artillery base, the Rockpile known in Vietnamese as Thon Khe Thi, a solitary karst rock, characterized by underground drainage systems and underground caves, an outcropping south of the Vietnamese Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). He was there with Delta 1/4 from July 17 to Sept. 16, 1966, when he was wounded badly on September 16th in front of the Rockpile and air-vacked out that night because it was thought that he had internal injuries. He was treated in three hospitals, namely, the U.S. Navy Hospital Da Nang, Vietnam, for three weeks, Clark Air Force Hospital, Philippines, for one week and the U.S. Navy Hospital, Guam, for six weeks.

Although he was sent to Okinawa for physical therapy, this valiant Marine soon volunteered for a second deployment to Vietnam returning there March 1st through August 9, 1967, serving with India Company 3rd Battalion, 9th Marines, 3rd Marine Division at five bases south of the DMZ. There he was serving at Dong Ha, Camp Carroll, Con Thien, Gio Lin, Cam Lo, Ba Long Valley and the Rock Pile. The India 3/9 Marines were in three really rough spots, namely, Prairie II Getlin's Corner in March 30-31. Cpl Balkcom shot the M72 Law portable rocket launcher 66 inches long which presented a desirable target for the North Vietnamese enemy. On June 30th, the Marines were sent on an Operation south of Da Nang. They were there until the late morning of July 2nd when they were pulled out to go to Operation Buffalo to help 1/9, their sister Battalion. On the afternoon of July 2nd, they moved to Operation Buffalo July 2-11. On August 1st, India 3/9 pulled out of Cam Lo and returned out front of Con Thien. Cpl. Balkcom suffered another injury while on his second deployment.

G.D. Navadel and Troops compiled personal remembrances of the Marines in the publication, *A Rifle Company's Tale: India Company 3rd Battalion 9th Marines Republic of Vietnam*. The dedication of this publication reads, "This combat account is respectfully dedicated to the men of India Company who gave their lives for their brother Marines and Corpsmen and to acknowledge the acts of valor for those who lived as well as those who died."

During Cpl Balkcom's second deployment to Vietnam, a ferocious battle occurred on March 30, 1967, at Hill 70 west of Con Thien and the DMZ between the North Vietnamese and the U.S. Marines. Cpl Balkcom's platoon suffered tremendous casualties and wounded. Cpl Balkcom's statements within Navadel's publication are: "After all of the Killed in Action (KIA) had been recovered, we received orders to depart Hill 70 and return to Camp Carroll. As we were crossing down the hill and the dried rice paddy that we had come to on the afternoon of March 30th, I saw some dogtags on the ground that were partially covered up. I reached down to pick up the dogtags thinking that they may have belonged to one of the wounded or the KIA's. They were my dogtags! How I lost them or how they got there, I do not know to this day. For me, it was like a sign that March 30th or Hill 70 was not my day or place to die. The odds of my finding my own dogtags when I wasn't even aware were missing were phenomenal to me. It was as if the dogtags were saying to me 'Never forget this day. Never forget March 30th.' I was given the opportunity to walk away when the rest of my Rocket Team was not."

Cpl Balkcom was wounded, and he recalls his helicopter rescue saying, "One of the prettiest sights that I have ever seen was that chopper because I knew that I wasn't going to last much longer. When that first medivac chopper came in that night, it suddenly lurched to the left of the landing site. The wheel came down within what I think was a foot from my head. I lay on the ground. I was thinking that I could have lived through that day and then nearly get killed by the chopper. I was first triaged at Delta Med at Dong Ha and from there evacuated to the USS Repose. I got back to the States in mid April." He was discharged January 12, 1968 at Camp Lejeune, NC.

After Cpl Balkcom's military service, he returned to work at the textile mill, Bibb Manufacturing Company in Columbus, GA, as chief technician for quality control for 1.5 years. He then worked for Thorne Dental Lab for six years followed by working as part-owner of R. B. Burnham Van Service for 32 years. Cpl Balkcom and his wife, Evaughn, have been married 52 years, and they have two children and three grandchildren. For many years, they have devoted their time to assisting elderly members of their family. He has been an active membership of community organizations. At Columbus, GA, he served as an elder at the Edgewood Presbyterian Church. At Montgomery, AL, he has served as a fund raiser for the American Heart Association and the Marine Corps League especially with the Devil Dogs, a Marine organization that helps people. He was a member of the Lions Club and the Sotoma Club for a number of years. He has served as a deacon at Memorial Presbyterian Church and as a member of the Administrative Board of Frazer United Methodist Church.

Cpl Balkcom personifies everything for which the U. S. Marine Corps stands. Reflecting on his service as a U. S. Marine, he says, "One of the proudest things in my life is being a United States Marine. It was an honor to be among the few and the proud. I would do it again. I had rather go back to Vietnam for three months than to Parris Island! Serving in the Marine Corps was the highlight of my life." Cpl Balkcom exemplifies the truth in the U.S. Marine Corps motto, "Semper Fi," always faithful and always loyal.

end



Col James Edwin Salminen ... continued from page 1B

During his last tour at Maxwell, he graduated from Troy University with a Master's Degree in Adult Education. After six years at Maxwell AFB, Col Salminen retired from military service in January 1990.

Col Salminen and his wife, Ann, were married over 50 years before she passed away, and he served as her caretaker during her last 10 years. They had two children and six grandchildren. He and his second wife, Erika, married in September 2020, and both are active members of Frazer United Methodist Church in Montgomery. He has served in Christian ministry since his military retirement. He graduated from the Emory University, Candler School of Theology Course of Study and served 20 years as associate minister for evangelism and as Coordinating Pastor for Ministries on Frazer's staff. He also served as a Sunday school teacher of the Sowers Class for 20 years. He taught courses across the nation in evangelism. He enjoys singing and playing the guitar.

Col Salminen's conclusions about his military service are, "It was an honor to give most of my working years in service to my country both in peace, in war and in service to my Lord."

end



Roy McGinnis Passes Away, Age 98

1/18/1923 – 2/20/2021

Roy McGinnis, a WWII WWII gunner on a B-17 who survived 19 months as a prisoner of war in Stalag 17 passed away February 20, 2021, at the age of 98. He served 27 years in the U.S. Air Force and served as the first director of the AL Department of Veterans Affairs where under his leadership veterans homes in Alex City and Bay Minette, AL, were established in Alabama. A special exhibit honoring McGinnis is on display at the Air Force Enlisted Heritage Hall at Maxwell Air Force Base Gunter Annex.



Erskine R. Grimes Passes Away, Age 94

11/19/1926 – 2/21/2021

The WWII veteran, **Erskine R. Grimes**, passed away February 21, 2021. Born in Pratt City i 1926, he served in the United States Army. His article was published in the August 2019 issue of the *Alabama Gazette*.



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enjoyed seeing their articles in
February issue of the Alabama
Gazette in the Honoring Our
Heroes section written by Dr.
Martha Poole Simmons.

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Land That I Love: Restoring Our Christian Heritage

With the gracious forcefulness of a true Southern lady, **Bobbie Ames** confronts us with our current societal dilemma, traces its development, reminds us of our compelling history at God's Hand, and leads us toward the solution to the recovery of America's great heritage. This overview of four hundred years of American spiritual struggle and victory should grace every home and educational institution, to read and re-read for decades to come.

Mrs. Bobbie Ames was a close friend of *The Alabama Gazette* for many years until her passing in February. Her monthly rumination in our publication on the spiritual history and spiritual course of our nation, that forms the contents of this book, serves as a beacon of wisdom, hope, and love in an era when many have been uninformed or misinformed as to the greatness of this country, its Founding Fathers, and the ongoing spiritual struggles that confront our Christian society today. Bobbie's erudite collection of prose will serve humanity, and more specifically, the Christian community, for generations to come. We at the *Gazette* are humbled and honored that Bobbie chose our publication to share some of her greatest treatises. Bobbie undoubtedly stands as one of the foremost Christian writers of this or any generation.



God Bless Bobbie and all who read *Land That I Love*. You will not be the same person when you finish it. May this book make a lasting change in our world, in our community, and in your heart. — Loretta Grant, Samuel Adams, Owners & Publishers, along with the staff of **The Alabama Gazette**

<https://www.nordskogpublishing.com/product/land-that-i-love/>

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Back in 'Time - History Happenings in the 50s

- There are 1.5 million television sets in the U.S. this year. By 1951, there are 15 million – ten times as many in one year.
- In 1950, CBS broadcasts the first TV program in color.
- The Diner's Club card is first “credit card” accepted at multiple retail stores.
- The 22nd Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is passed, limiting the president to a maximum of two terms in office.
- UNIVAC introduced as the first commercial computer, sold by Remington Rand, a typewriter maker. It gains fame by crunching the numbers that allow pollsters to predict the winner of the 1952 presidential election.
- Cleveland disc jockey Alan Freed coins the term “rock-and-roll.”
- King George VI of England dies, and he is succeeded by his young daughter, Queen Elizabeth II.
- Mother Teresa opens the Home for Dying Destitutes in Calcutta, India.
- Cigarette smoking is reported to cause lung cancer for the first time.
- RCA introduces the first color TVs; NBC begins regular broadcasts in color.
- The U.S. launches the first nuclear powered submarine, the Nautilus.
- Winston Churchill resigns as Prime Minister in England; defeated for re-election.
- Rosa Parks is arrested after refusing to give up her bus seat to a white person. Her arrest sparks a bus boycott led by local minister Martin Luther King, Jr., and sets the American civil rights movement in motion.
- Sony – then known as Tokyo Telecommunications Engineering – produces the first pocket-size transistor radio. Before that, all radios had to have tubes and were large, heavy machines.
- Dwight Eisenhower reelected as President of the United States. That same year, he signs the Interstate highway into law.
- Elvis Presley releases the first of more than 170 hit songs, “Heartbreak Hotel.”
- American movie star Grace Kelly marries Prince Rainier of Monaco.
- The Soviet Union launches the Sputnik satellite, the first man-made object to orbit the earth.
- Arkansas governor Orval Faubus calls the National Guard to prevent nine black students from integrating Little Rock's Central High School. He defies the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in Brown v. Board of Education.
- Martin Luther King, Jr., forms the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) to promote nonviolent solutions to segregation.
- In the U.S. the baby boom peaks as 4.3 million Americans are born, the highest number in 30 years. During the 50s, 29 million babies are born.
- NASA, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, is founded and starts the Mercury project to take the first Americans into space.
- Fidel Castro installs the first communist regime in the Western Hemisphere. The U.S. breaks off diplomatic relations in 1961.
- In Vietnam, the first U.S. noncombatant military advisers die in a Viet Cong attack. In 1961, the U.S. agrees to supply South Vietnamese troops.
- Alaska and Hawaii become the 49th and 50th states in the United States.
- American Airlines launches the jet age in the U.S. transportation industry with the first transcontinental flights with a Boeing 707 aircraft.
- Albert Sabin develops a live-virus polio vaccine that can be taken orally and offers longer immunity than the Salk vaccine.

Written by Bill Ganzel, the Ganzel Group. First published in 2007.

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What are Social Security Representative Payees?

Millions of people get monthly Social Security benefits or Supplemental Security Income payments. Some need help managing their money. When we receive information that indicates you need help, we'll assign a representative payee to manage your benefits for you. We try to select someone who knows you and wants to help you. A representative payee receives your monthly benefit payment on your behalf and must use the money to pay for your current needs, including:



- Housing and utilities.
- Food.
- Medical and dental expenses.
- Personal care items.
- Clothing.
- Rehabilitation expenses (if disabled).

If you need help managing your benefits, tell a Social Security representative that there is someone you want to be your representative payee. They should be someone you trust and see often, and who clearly understands your needs. Social service agencies, nursing homes, or other organizations are also qualified to be your representative payee. Ask them to contact us.

You can write to us within 60 days of being assigned a representative payee if you don't agree that you need one or if you want a different representative payee.

We also offer an option called Advance Designation, which allows you to choose a representative payee in advance. In the event you can no longer make your own financial decisions, you and your family will have peace of mind knowing you already chose someone you trust to manage your benefits.

You can submit your advance designation request when you apply for benefits or after you are already receiving benefits. You may do so through your personal my Social Security account at www.ssa.gov/myaccount, by telephone, or in person.

You can find more information at <http://www.ssa.gov/payee>.

The Many Things You can do Online with Social Security

Are you looking for new ways to save time? Check out our online services available through your secure my Social Security account. We have lots to offer you online whether you receive benefits from Social Security or not.

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We designed these online features to save you time. Create your personal my Social Security account today at www.ssa.gov/myaccount.

We offer many other online resources at www.ssa.gov/onlineservices. Please let friends and family know they can access them from the comfort of their home or office, and on the go from their mobile phones.



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Some Medicare beneficiaries may qualify for Extra Help to pay for the monthly premiums, annual deductibles, and co-payments related to the Medicare Prescription Drug program. You must be receiving Medicare, have limited resources and income, and reside in one of the 50 states or the District of Columbia to qualify for the Extra Help. More information on Extra Help is available at www.ssa.gov/benefits/medicare/prescriptionhelp.

You may also be interested in reading these publications:

• **Apply Online for Medicare — Even if You Are Not Ready to Retire** www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10530.pdf.

• **When to Start Receiving Retirement Benefits:** www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10147.pdf.

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Social Security & Women's History Month



In March, we celebrate Women's History Month. Social Security has served a vital role in the lives of women for more than 80 years.

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If you would like to learn more about how we can help women plan for retirement, check out our online booklet, *Social Security: What Every Woman Should Know*. You can find it at www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10127.pdf. Please consider sharing it with family and friends. It could change their lives for the better.

Apply for Retirement Benefits Online with Social Security

It's never too early to start planning for retirement, and our online tools can make your planning easier. Visit www.ssa.gov/myaccount to access your my Social Security account, get a personalized estimate of your retirement benefits based on your earnings record, and find out how your benefit amount increases depending on the age you start them. Don't have a my Social Security account? You can create one at www.ssa.gov/myaccount.

You can also review your entire earnings history in your my Social Security account. It is important that your earnings history is correct because we base your benefit amount on the earnings reported to us. If you find an error, the publication, *How to Correct Your Social Security Earnings Record*, at www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10081.pdf, tells you how to get your information corrected.

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Southern Cuisine



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



I was reading about Southern cooking traditions, the standards that define a Southern kitchen and a Southern cook and realized that the knowledge on how to fix these staples, these meals, these time tested dishes, is slowly passing away. It is becoming a lost art in homes everywhere in America, not just the South, where the children are not learning the basics of cooking, let alone, the traditional meals that bind generations.

You have seen lists before; those that tell that you, you have lost your “Southern-ness” if you can’t make deviled eggs, don’t use bacon “drippin’s” as a seasoning, have never made a Hummingbird cake, and don’t have a cast iron pan. Why have we lost these traditions? Is it the lifestyle that we follow? Are we spending time with our children and teaching them the things that our parents taught us or are we letting the schools, television and the internet do our parenting. An excuse is “There isn’t enough time?”

Well guess what, there is enough time!

If what you just read sounds familiar, it was my opening paragraphs from my March 2016 article. Even with today’s slight loosening of travel restrictions to restaurants and to relative’s homes for family meals, and with some schools in a virtual mode, there still is time to teach our children the things our parents taught us. If we do not then the schools, television and the internet will be back at parenting our children.

I have heard comments from some of the older sons and daughters of friends, that the way their parents cook is old fashion. The cooking techniques of some foods can be updated and have the same outcome. An example is what I alluded to in my last article. I can use two different methods to cook a pork-tenderloin or an eye-of-round and sometimes have close to the same outcome. The difference is that one method will produce a piece of meat at the same desired internal temperature every time. It takes longer but produces a better outcome consistently while the second method will depend of the size of the piece of meat and how much fat in the meat. Also, if you put the meat in a too hot of oven, you could end up with jerky. The method that I’m talking about is *sous vide* cooking.

At its most fundamental level, **sous vide** cooking is the process of sealing food in an airtight container—usually a vacuum sealed bag—and then cooking that food in temperature-controlled water. In French, the term translates to “under vacuum.” According to Wikipedia: *Sous vide, also known as low temperature long time cooking, is a method of cooking in which food is placed in a plastic pouch or a glass jar and cooked in a water bath for longer than usual cooking times at a precisely regulated temperature.*

It will not replace sautéing, roasting or braising. Nor will it replace the microwave’s speed or convenience. Sous vide has been around for years. If you have eaten a boil-in-bag meal you have eaten sous vide. Many foods are packed sous vide. Such as bacon, mozzarella, and smoked salmon. Sous vide cooking can be used for many traditional Southern dishes; pork butt and brisket are two good examples.

I was introduced to sous vide cooking while I was a chef at a banquet hotel. The item we used sous vide the most was for Short Ribs. They could be ordered anytime during serving hours and they were always perfecting cooked and flavorful. Steak houses use sous vide because they can hold the bagged steaks at a certain temperature, like 125 degrees, which is rare. When an order comes to the kitchen for a medium steak, the chef pulls the steak out of the water bath and places it on the grill to brown the outside and give the steak a nice crispy grilled look and leave just long enough to raise the internal temperature to 130 to 135 degrees.

Sous vide cooking does not replace other types of cooking but to be used in addition to other techniques. For the home chef, there are many web sites and cookbooks to guide you through the different aspects of sous vide. Also, a piece of equipment not found in the ordinary kitchen, the circulating pump must be purchased. When the hotel started sous vide, the pump was over a thousand dollars. Now, you can find a home circulating pump for less than fifty.

This is part of a recipe from the pump maker ANOVA. I included this recipe to give you a glance as to the steps and equipment needed to cook an eye of round. Before you start, I would do more reading for information on sous vide than I have given here. For example I use a double zipper freezer bag to cook instead of using a vacuum-sealed bag. The picture I have is my water tank and pump with an eye of round and a pork-tenderloin submerged in the water. The water temperature was 132.5 F. I also use different rubs for different meats and different recipes. ANOVA gave instructions to sear the meat after the 24 hours over a charcoal fire. I use a cast iron pan.

Eye of Round

INGREDIENTS:

3-4 pound boneless eye of round roast Fat cap on
Garlic pepper butcher rub

METHOD:

1. Set the Sous Vide Cooker to 134.5°F
2. Liberally rub roast with butcher rub
3. Vacuum seal roast or place in double-sealed food bag.
4. Place roast into water bathand set timer for 24 hours
5. Recipe continues with searing over a charcoal fire.



Photo: David & Anne Spooner

This recipe turns the humble and typically cheap and tough eye of round roast into a tender and juicy roast similar in texture to a prime rib roast. The long cook time tenderizes the meat. The cook temperature of 134.5 yields medium doneness: a tender yet chewy and springy texture. Description is from ANOVA.

Sous vide is a common means for storing foods. I have corn on the cob vacuum packed, four cobs to a bag in my freezer. Even after a year in the freezer there is no freezer burn and when I want to eat the corn I can just drop the bags in hot water and heat up the corn. No loss in flavor compared to dropping the ears individually in the hot water.

Another way I store food is in mason jars. Soups, sauces and fruit are cooked for a meal and sometimes when there are leftovers; they go into a mason jar and into the freezer. When there are four or five jars of odds and ends of veg gies, it’s time to make soup. Only rule we follow for storing in jars is they have to be wide mouth jars. When a liquid freezes, it expands. A wide mouth jar lets the liquid expand up the jar. A narrow mouth jar will restrict the expansion and can cause the jar to break.

This next recipe is one of our favorite soups to freeze. This is not necessarily leftovers from a meal. Sometimes when we have running low on soups in the freezer, we just make a batch of soup with the sole purpose to freeze it. Sometimes we make enough of a soup or stew, for a meal and make be sure there is enough to freeze for a later time.

As the picture shows, our freezer has a mixture of frozen foods. There is lentil and zucchini soup and even Apple butter and a sauce left over from a meat dish. There is fresh squeezed orange juice and a loaded potato soup. Taking a picture of potato soup in a bowl is not what I am stressing.

The potato soup recipe can be found in the **Lowndesboro Legacies** cookbook published by the Lowndesboro Landmarks Foundation, Inc. The recipe is from Jane Dickson.

Loaded Potato Soup

INGREDIENTS:

1 pkg. Ore-Ida hash-brown potatoes, cubed**
2 quarts chicken broth
1 stick of butter
8 ounces whipping cream
1 medium onion, chopped fine
16 ounces sour cream
1 block of Mexican Velveeta cheese (1 lb) cut into ¾ inch cubes to speed up melting.
Salt and Pepper to taste



Photo by David & Anne Spooner

METHOD:

1. Heat the chicken broth to a simmer in a large pot (6 quart or larger).
2. Add potatoes and onion; bring to a boil and then simmer for 20 minutes.
3. Add butter, cheese, whipping cream, sour cream.
4. Cook on low, stirring occasionally until cheese has melted.
5. You can leave the soup chunky or use a hand held immersion blender and blend until smooth.
6. Spoon into bowels and top with bacon bits and shredded cheddar cheese.

**** Every time we have made this soup we use two twenty-six ounce packages of shredded hash brown potatoes.**

Freezes well in wide-mouth Mason jars. Makes a good cold soup for summertime service.

This next recipe has nothing to do with sous vide or mason jars. There was never enough left over to put in a jar. This is a simple Mediterranean inspired stew. Have a baguette handy to sop up the broth of this dish. This recipe is modified from a recipe in **MyRecipes**.

Greek Shrimp with White Beans

INGREDIENTS:

Serves two or more.

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 teaspoon finely chopped garlic
1 cup finely chopped green leaf vegetable (baby bok choy, kale, or spinach)
½ cup finely chopped onion
1 teaspoon oregano
1 cup chopped fresh plum tomato
¾ cup chicken stock, more or less depending on amount of broth you want in the stew.
1 (14.5-ounce) can cannellini beans, rinsed and drained
1 bay leaf
16 ounces medium shrimp, peeled and deveined
2 tablespoons parsley
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 ounce crumbled feta cheese (about 1/4 cup)



Photo: David & Anne Spooner

METHOD:

1. Heat a large saucepan over medium heat. Add oil and then garlic and sauté for 30 seconds.
2. Add the greens you are using with the onion and oregano and further sauté until onion is translucent, maybe 3-4 minutes.
3. Add tomato, stir for 2 minutes and then add stock, beans and bay leaf.
4. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 5-6 minutes.
5. Add shrimp and cook until shrimp is just cooked.
6. Turn off heat, remove bay leaf and stir in parsley and pepper.
7. Sprinkle feta cheese over top.
8. Serve with additional feta and a baguette.

People Who Love to Eat are Always the Best People. ~
Julia Child

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Home Town Community News

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Patricia Killough
Community Editor



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| Donna Ross | Betty Lossman |
| 2 Amie Dean | David Hancock |
| Bill Oates | 16 Lisa Gordan Hester |
| Norma Renfro | 18 William Watters Box |
| 3 Dorothy Fuller (83rd) | George McKinley (74th) |
| Frank Reynolds | Robert Singleton |
| 4 Todd Cole | Jacque Takacs |
| Russ Russell | Olivia Thomas (86th) |
| 5 Glen Yost | Kayla Woodall |
| 6 Gayle Bosworth | 19 Charlotte Crane |
| Emmett Poundstone | Keisha Glasscock |
| Marjorie Wright | 20 Connie Crowe |
| 7 Everett Cole | 21 Hannah Yost |
| Laura Lane | Murlyne Clements |
| Tony Law | Dorothy Lasaine |
| Michael Carroll | Phillip Reeves (70th) |
| Brad Wallace | 22 Kentston Whigham (8th) |
| 8 Frances Ard | 23 Ben Garrett |
| Linda Clayton | Laura Hudson |
| David Ehrlich | Morgan James |
| 9 Grace Neighbors (94th) | Brandy Landreau |
| Courtney Whigham | Dawn Lane |
| 10 Jane Grubbs | Lallage Neil |
| Paula Lansdon | 24 Robert Adams |
| Cory Smith | Zenia Mims |
| Jeanne Villar | 25 Deborah Cox |
| Michael Weldon | Hunter Hannon |
| 11 Dr. John Bitter | Wanda Madison |
| Glenn Harper | 26 Ruby Macon |
| Herb Meadows | 27 Renee Grant |
| 12 Angie Ferreira | Cynthia Harper |
| 13 Linda Richardson | Wendy Powell |
| Samantha Jane Rice (10th) | 29 Delicia Fuller |
| 14 Brian Takacs | 31 Carlie Corbin |

Veterans Celebrating Birthdays

Jack Adrian Lively: March 2, 1940, age 81

Wyndol A. Murrah: March 14, 1922, age 99

Robert Douglas Pike: March 24, 1925, age 96

Margaret Leah Compton: March 29, 1960, age 61



Veterans are entitled to a patriotic ceremony at their funerals. Raymond Keel will provide this service for free!

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Safety Checks for Spring!

Here are a few things on the list:

- Carbon monoxide & smoke detectors
- Flashlight batteries
- Fire extinguishers
- Household chemicals
- Medicine cabinets
- First aid kits
- Air Conditioner
- Windows and Doors
- Decks and Patios
- Roof and Gutters

Take some extra time during the upcoming nice spring days to inspect these items to be sure key components are up-to-date or are in good working order or in good repair.

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

Hickson, Mildred Inge Hill (87)	Jan. 12
Champion, Blance Pope (89)	Jan. 31
Goodin, Ina R. (93)	Feb. 2
Prescott, Rolena Kageler (83)	Feb. 3
Bartlett, Virginia A. (85)	Feb. 5
Cope, Reuben Lee (78)	Feb. 9
Chandler, Sr., Royce Wilton (92)	Feb. 10
Sigler, Martin Wayne (65)	Feb. 11
Evans, James Harold (81)	Feb. 15
Wilson, Col. William Eugene (86)	Feb. 17
Dearman, Mr. Jo T. (81)	Feb. 18
West, Jessica Crumpton (37)	Feb. 18
Tidwell, Laura Jackson (75)	Feb. 19
McGinnis, CMSGT USA (Ret.) Roy C. (98)	Feb. 20
Head, Jr., Carl Edmond (67)	Feb. 21
Stough, Myreene H. (93)	Feb. 21
Pugh, Tori Bogan, (58)	Feb. 22
Bledsoe, Bobby (82)	Feb. 23
McKeny, Peggy Marie (99)	Feb. 23
Bollie, David J.	Feb. 24
Moulton, Pam (Mrs. James R. Bozeman)	Feb. 26

Happy Belated Birthday!

Cindy Sellars: Feb. 27th

Gail Royal: Feb. 27th

Don't Forget
March 14
Spring Forward



Happy Anniversary

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 Ed & Dot Truitt (68th) | 15 Jim & Linda Richardson |
| 5 Frank & Helen Ralph | 18 George & Lynn McKinley |
| 7 Bobby & Myra Mills | 21 Craig & Mindy Trotter (11th) |
| Jim & Barbara Garrett | 23 Paul & Cynthia Harper |
| John & Melanie Higgins | 25 Tim & Nicole Sansom |
| 9 Fred & Connie Crowe | 26 Elvin & Cam Stanton |
| Sonja & Steve Campbell (47th) | 27 Al & Conni Barnett |
| 10 Willard & Joyce Haines (69th) | Mike & Cindy Smith |
| 14 Nicholas & Sally Corley | 29 Bill & Vickie Gulsby |

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In Memory Of

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Louise Browning Miracle ... February 28, 2021
Elizabeth "Betty" Wesson ... February 27, 2021
Danny Joe Albright ... February 27, 2021
L.B Woodruff, Sr. ... February 26, 2021
Wendell Edwin Kirkley ... February 26, 2021
Paul Dade Conley ... February 25, 2021
David Owen Noles ... Feb. 22, 2021
Van William Beasley ... Feb. 22, 2021
Deborah Ann Caldwell Conley ... Feb. 21, 2021
Marvin William "Bill" Rinehart ... Feb. 20, 2021
Dewey Lee Hanks Jr. ... Feb. 18, 2021
Floyd Norman Hall Jr. ... Feb. 15, 2021
Jeffery N. "Jeff" Lanier ... Feb. 12, 2021
Joe Wallace Kidd ... Feb. 11, 2021
William Eugene Harden ... Feb. 9, 2021
James William Kendrick ... Feb. 9, 2021
Bonnie Mae Israel ... Feb. 8, 2021
Larry Wayne Farmer ... Feb. 7, 2021
Johnny Bruce Lanier ... Feb. 6, 2021
Debria Owens ... Feb. 6, 2021
Myra Sunday ... Feb. 5, 2021
Edward Lee Nelson ... Feb. 3, 2021
Ricky Joe Brown ... Feb. 3, 2021

TODAY'S WOMAN

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



By Amanda Walker

Tears & Laughter: The Beauty of Alabama Dirt

Alabama has delivered into the world many an eccentric personalities, one of those being the late Eugene Walter – an entertainer, writer, and chef who engaged in so many varied activities he was known as “Mobile’s Renaissance Man.”

He grew up in old Mobile, back when women would dress-up in their finest attire – wear heels and put on lipstick – just to go shopping downtown on Saturday mornings.

He could describe it in such a charming, and almost intimate way, that if you read his work even today you will find yourself feeling homesick for a place you’ve never known, wishing there was a way somehow to still drop in for evening coffee at the Bluebird all night lunch room down on St. Julian Street.

He adored Mobile, often claiming it to be closer to the Caribbean than Montgomery, but that in no way took away from his love for Alabama. Most of his career he lived in Paris, and it was in Europe that he attained much of his success and the majority of his fame. During all of his time overseas he always kept with him a shoebox of Alabama red clay. He kept it under his bed, and it helped him feel connected to home.

I wonder where he got the clay? If it was from somewhere specific, or from a bare spot in his backyard, or was it an afterthought and he stopped along side the road on the way to the airport? Regardless, there seems to be a connection between people and the ground they know by heart.

When I was growing up in Sandflat, I would go through creative spurts, and one of my crafty adventures was to replicate some type of layered sand doorstep I had seen at my great grandmothers house. It was in a glass jug with a cork, and the sand was from the Holy Land or the beach or some spectacular place somebody had traveled, I can’t remember. But during that time in the late 1970s, doorstops were more widely used than they are today and I had the bright idea that I was going to make one using Alabama sand in a Mason jar and give to my other grandmother.

I was going to fancy it up, I had a quilt square of cloth I was going to put over the lid and tighten it with the ring. I knew where there were several different colors of dirt in my yard alone. There was the black soil from the garden, and there was of course red clay because everybody in Alabama has a little red clay, and in the driveway there were white sandy places, and other spots where sand has washed in with soil.

I went around with a plastic shovel from a sand pail scooping enough dirt from each place to make a layer in the jar. I repeated the process with as many different colors I could find until the jar was full.

I was young. But when I held it up and looked at it after it was finished, I thought it was pretty. One layer blended into the next almost seamlessly, divided by only a slight line of variation that highlighted and complimented the start of the next.

Alone, it would have just been a simple jar of dirt. But together, without any effort – without any one outweighing or overtaking the other – it was pretty.

Maybe we feel a connection to land, to the very dirt, because it represents its people. Together, living side-by-side in harmony, without any one trying to overshadow the other...what a beautiful state we have become.

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

Remembering the Light & Life of Jessica Crumpton West



her positive outlook and brave spirit. Sadly, Jessica passed away this February, almost ten years after this tragic event. She left behind a devoted husband and three loving sons. There is a [GoFundMe](#) page set up that is being shared along with the special words from one of her closest friends:

I'm Lindsey Owens, one of Jessie's best friends. Jessie passed away very unexpectedly on Thursday, February 18, 2021. Her family has no way to pay for funeral expenses. We're trying to help out in any way we can make life a little easier on them right now. This was a devastating event for all of us & wanting to do the best to help out with someone who gave all of herself to others. Jessie did everything for everyone else in any way she knew how. She touched so many lives & will be missed by all of us. She was the world to her boys & them her world. I want to help these boys in every way we can! Baseball was such an important part of their lives & keeping the boys in baseball & around our baseball family will help so much! If you need to reach someone personally please don't hesitate to [contact] me, Lindsey Minor Owens at (334) [phone redacted] or Summer Covin Freeman at (334) [phone redacted].

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/jessica-crumpton-west>

Jessica Crumpton West was the victim of a moment of rage in 2011 when her uncle threw a pot of boiling collards on her. Jessica suffered such sever burns that she had to have a triple amputation. Despite the trauma, both physical and mental, friends and family were inspired by



Ms.Wheelchair America/
Alabama 2005

Trisston's Tidbits ...

By Trisston Wright Burrows
www.trisstonwrightburrows.com

"Crawl by Faith"

Hebrews 11:1 tells us, ***“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.”***

Have you read the Hall of Faith in Hebrews 11? It honors a diverse list of ordinary people who pleased God. By what amazing feat did they please the Creator of heaven and earth? The answer is simple...by faith.

While reading through this list, I was reminded His word is alive. Because somehow, if you’re drawn to it, God will speak truth in your soul. He knows better than we do, the reason we find ourselves in front of specific passages...whether it’s in your Bible, on a podcast, or even on YouTube.

Searching His word isn’t always because we’re Christians doing our daily task or eager to bask in its blessing. Often, opening the Bible or queuing up that study, can be a slow and painful admittance that you’ve nowhere else to turn. You’ve forgotten that God sees...or that He cares.

Maybe you’ve lost something, or someone, or a sense of belonging. This past year, at times, we’ve all probably found ourselves feeling lost...in fear, sadness, and loneliness. In a world teetering through high-tech, low-touch distancing, we want to run and hide from a master plan that’s outside of our control. Because as we fill agendas and do right (or so we think), we’re often ambushed by the reality that nothing is certain...other than God.

And thank God for that! Because when betrayal, deception, or rejection whips through your best-laid plans, there is always something worth holding on to by faith: the abiding, everlasting presence of God. It doesn’t matter if you can’t run toward God or even walk by faith. You can crawl by faith. Breathe your next breath by faith. Hope by faith. Even in the darkest of times.

“For we walk by faith, not by sight.” 2 Corinthians 5:7

When reading through the biblical heroes who walked by faith, it became apparent to me that today, I can only crawl. Or lay. My faith has days when my feet are knocked out from under me. In these times, friend, when you’re maybe only able to breathe your way to the truth, rest in the knowledge that even when you don’t know what your longing is...the Spirit intercedes.

You can’t see the Spirit, but you can have confidence, by faith in God’s word, that even your wordless cries are understood. Romans 8:27 reminds you that ***“the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God.”***

If you want to have faith that is pleasing to God, remind yourself that it all belongs to Him. He is the owner of all of it. You gave it all to Him when you chose Jesus. You can’t make people stay, keep them in their faith, or heal them. That’s His work.

So, release all the days, good and bad. He’s given us the will to choose faith over fear, peace over anxiety, and eternal life over the temptations of the world. His ways are why we marvel at the tiniest treasure or seemingly insignificant moments thrill us. Let me encourage you now, that whether you can run by faith, walk by faith, or only crawl to the source of eternal life...give it all to Him again by praying ... ***“Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.”*** Psalm 51:10. Then, ask Him to give you the confidence in what you hope for and the assurance about what you cannot see.

Many Blessings & Much Love!



Women of Hope is a group of caring and compassionate individuals who desire to help educate, promote awareness, and provide hope for individuals and families coping with and dealing with the affects of breast cancer.

Our mission is to educate, promote awareness, and provide hope and encouragement for individuals and families coping with breast cancer.

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Soul Searching

Do You have Questions about Lent, Easter & Other Churchy Words?

Ash Wednesday. Lent. Palm Sunday. Maundy Thursday. Good Friday. Easter.

The Season of Lent and Easter are full of strange names and words that many people do not understand. I have found that a great many people do not know the meaning and significance of these “Churchy” words and Holidays in the Season of Lent and Easter. In fact, most people probably don’t know that the word “holiday” comes from the old English word “Haligdaeg” which literally means “Holy Day.”

So, let’s see if we can help out with some of these “Churchy” words of Lent and Easter...

Two billion Christians around the world are challenged to participate in what the Christian Church calls the Season of Lent! **What is Lent?** Lent is a season of preparation and reflection that begins on Ash Wednesday and continues till Easter Sunday. It is the 40 days from Ash Wednesday to Easter not counting Sundays, and it is traditionally a time for prayer, fasting and scripture reading. For 2021, Ash Wednesday was on February 17 and Easter Sunday is on April 4th. **Therefore, Lent in 2021, involves the entire month of March.**

In this six-week long celebration of Lent on the Christian calendar, Christ followers are “encouraged to find their own method of confronting their sinfulness, remembering their mortality, and giving thanks for the gift of salvation they receive through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.” (United Methodist Book of Worship) The word “Lent” comes from the Anglo-Saxon (Old English) term “Lencten” which refers to the lengthening of days. It also literally translates to Spring or Springtime.

On Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, Pastors and Priests gather the ashes from the burnt palm branches from the previous years Palm Sunday worship service. They mix those ashes with anointing oil, and then, on Ash Wednesday, they mark the foreheads of Christ followers with the sign of the cross as they bless them in their journey of preparation in the Season of Lent. Often Pastors or Priests will quote Genesis 3:19, **“Remember, you are dust and to dust you shall return” or “Ashes to ashes and dust to dust.**

“In the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.”

Lent is also connected to the 40-day fast that Jesus undergoes in the Judean wilderness. The accounts of Jesus fasting and praying in this desert are found in Mark 1:13, Luke 4:1-13 and Matthew 4:1-11. This 40 days of fasting and prayer for Jesus was the season of preparation for his mission as the Messiah and teacher of the Gospel (Gospel means Good News) and for his death on the cross as the Savior of the world.

The official end of Lent for 2021 will be on Saturday, April 3, the day before Easter. *The final week of Jesus’ earthly life is called “Holy Week” which begins with Palm Sunday, the Sunday before Easter Sunday.* This is the day Jesus rode a donkey into Jerusalem where throngs of believers waved palm branches and laid them at his feet in celebration of the arrival of the Jewish Messiah. Many churches celebrate Palm Sunday (so named because of the Palm branches waved before Jesus and laid in Jesus’ path) with children and/or adults marching into the service waving palm branches while the congregation is singing **“Hosanna, Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord”!**

Photo by Siddharth Gomez/Freelimages.com



Holy Week also involves several other special Holy days of remembrance. Maundy Thursday is the Thursday of Holy Week and derives its name from the Latin word “Mandatum” which means mandate or commandment. Because Jesus issued a new commandment at the Last Supper, **“I give you a new commandment. Love one another as I have loved you.”** On this day Christ followers also remember and celebrate together the Last Supper. Jesus, at this Last Supper, instituted the Sacrament of Holy Communion when he informed his disciples that the bread and the wine at the meal represented his body and his blood. Jesus told them that his body, symbolized by the bread, would be

offered on the cross for all people and that the wine represented his blood that would be shed on the cross for the sins of the entire world. Many churches offer this Maundy Thursday service during Holy Week and gather to celebrate communion together in remembrance of Jesus’ sacrifice for our sins and the mandate that he gave to love one another.

The other Holy Week service that many churches offer is the “Good Friday” service. **Good Friday is the Friday of Holy Week when Jesus was crucified on a cross for the sins of the world.** In this service, Christ followers often recount the seven last words or quotes of Jesus from the cross. It is a somber

service usually associated with candles and darkness as we remember the suffering of the Lord on the cross for our sins. Many people wonder why it is called “Good Friday” since the torture and the agony was so tragic and horrific for Jesus? It is called “Good Friday” because through Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross our salvation was secured. **The price for our sins was paid on the cross by Jesus!** It was a “good” day for all of the sinners of the world, which includes you, me and everyone else.

Holy Saturday is the day before Easter and is traditionally known for big Easter Egg Hunts and Resurrection parties for the children. Saint James Church, where I serve as Lead Pastor, does a huge Easter Egg Hunt Celebration every year on this day and it is a big day of fun, games, candy and laughter.

Easter Sunday marks the end of the Season of Lent and the joyous celebration of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ! Easter is Resurrection Sunday, and it is by far the biggest, most glorious day on the Christian calendar for the Christ follower. On Easter Day, Resurrection Sunday, we acknowledge and celebrate our liberation from sin, the gift of grace and the joy of salvation. The resurrection of Jesus defeated death and sin once and for all. Our forgiveness is secured and our salvation from sin and death is guaranteed!

The name “Easter” was derived from the Old English name “Eosturmonath” which was the name of the month in which Easter was celebrated. The name stuck. Personally, I prefer “Resurrection Sunday” instead of Easter, but that is another story for another day.

I encourage you to find a church family that offers you opportunities to remember, prepare and reflect in this Season of Lent, and be sure to find a church to celebrate this Easter/Resurrection Sunday!

Happy Lent and Easter to you!



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The Cross and History . . . continued from front page

He really did suffer and die on a cross. It was God’s dramatic attempt to draw our attention to His love. How else could we have known there was forgiveness and hope in our condition? *“The cross on which He died was not mythical or theoretical.”* It was not just an example or story. It was as rough, as cruel, as painful and as torturous as anyone else who died that way. He endured unbearable agony for our sakes.

If viewed only in its historical significance and even if accepting its reality, the cross does us no good unless it becomes a present reality in our lives. Most of us are familiar with the Old Testament sacrifice system. It was intended as a precursor to the cross of Christ as well as a meaningful expression of faith in its day. But the sacrifice system had nothing to do with the future. It was about the past. The death of Christ as the sacrifice for our sins was radically different. It ended the sacrifice system because it completed its purpose. No more sacrifice was or will ever be needed. Christ’s death on the cross was about past, present and future sin. All the sins of all mankind for all eternity converged on that cross in the point in history. That’s why the cross is a present reality for all time. We celebrate the cross not only because of what happened on that hill long ago, but because of what happened in our own heart. When we recognize that His death was for our sin, it becomes present reality. He was our substitute, our sacrifice, our sin offering. Paul profoundly, yet with such beauty of words, explained it this way, **“For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.”** (II Cor. 5:21)

As powerfully as the past event speaks to our present, there is another fact we cannot ignore about the cross as we consider its eternal reality. We who are Christians are used to viewing the past event with an understanding of how it has spoken to our heart. Let us be reminded in this season how the cross still speaks to those who do not know that Lord and the love behind the cross. The theologian “Baillie reminds us that while some generations look to it as an event in time, God’s view of the cross is that it is happening right now. In every age God is reaching out like a loving father to embrace the wayward and estranged children. He stands ever ready to lift the load of sin from His people. Such suffering in the heart of God and such longing for reconciliation with mankind defies description.”

Is it possible for us to grasp in our minds that God still agonizes over mankind? As long as there is even one who is not brought into His love, God still suffers. We should see the cross as the “eternal atonement in the sense that

by Dr. Rick Marshall

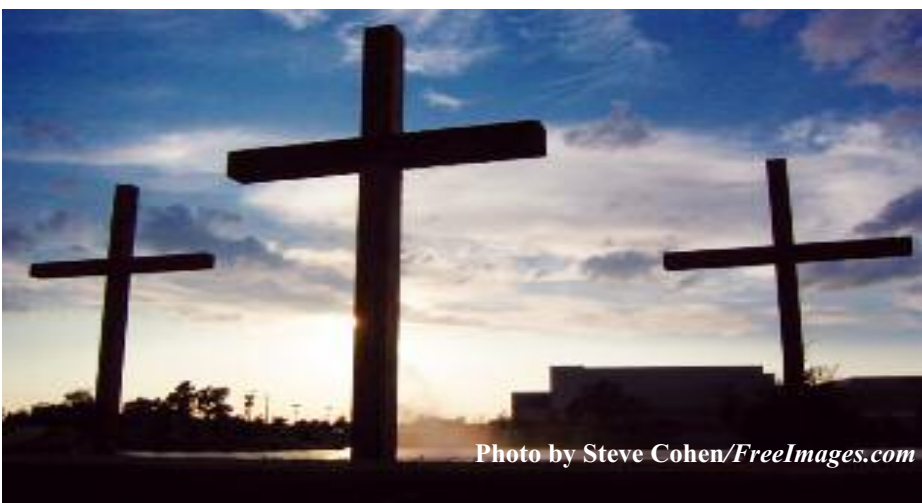


Photo by Steve Cohen/Freelimages.com

it was an expression of an eternal impulse of God’s love, an eternal desire to give Himself for the good of His creatures, and also in the sense that it is eternally efficacious.” The cross, that is the suffering of God for His people, did not begin at Calvary. It is there it had its highest expression. It was God’s crowning event at the right time in history for all of history. It was the best God had to offer. That’s why the cross speaks across all cultures, languages and peoples of all time.

William Manson wrote, “He who accepts the cross does so in the Spirit of ‘Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.’ Face to face with the event on Calvary, we have to give ourselves account finally of what is involved in real forgiveness. . . .All forgiveness is a faint derivative of the supreme act of God.”

So as you come to celebrate Easter, don’t forget the cross. Although nineteen centuries have rolled by since the physical cross with the body of Christ was erected on that hill we call Golgotha, it is not an isolated event in history. It was and is God’s plan, His only plan by which we can find forgiveness and eternal hope. It is both historical and eternal. He alone applies the forgiveness to all for whom the cross becomes a contemporary reality. One cannot come close to the cross without experiencing afresh and anew the love of God. The sacrifice of Christ for our sin will always be beyond our comprehension, but not out of our ability to accept and believe. In doing so we experience the greatest love the world has ever known.