



No. 273

NOVEMBER 2015



# Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

## Trapping Days

For a ten-year-old boy in the heart of the Great Depression, trapping was freedom. Trapping was independence. Fur pelts could bring in cash at a time when there was no cash to be had anywhere. In those days, bone-tired adults worked farms and fields for just a dollar a day. So being able to catch a mink and sell the pelt for \$7 to \$10 was a big deal. That was a week's pay for a grown-up!

So young Henry Kryder Mattern, still in grade school, became a trapper.



*Also in this issue:* **Mystery on Rock Cut Road**

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*Domie Lewter*  
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# Trapping Days

by Jane Vachon, as told  
by her father,  
Col. Henry Mattern

Running a trap-line challenged a young man's knowledge of the wild - and brought in rare resources during the tough years of the Great Depression.

For a ten-year-old boy in the heart of the Great Depression, trapping was freedom. Trapping was independence. Fur pelts could bring in cash at a time when there was no cash to be had anywhere. In those days, bone-tired adults worked farms and fields for just a dollar a day. So being able to catch a mink and sell the pelt for \$7 to \$10 was a big deal. That was a week's pay for a grown-up! So young Henry Kryder Mattern, still in grade school, became a trapper.

Kryder learned the basics of the trade from his Uncle Gilbert, who handed down

his traps and stretching boards and - especially helpful - a book describing all the different animal tracks and signs. Gil taught Kryder that if you're going to succeed at trapping, you need to know each animal's habits. That's how you figure out where and when to set the traps. Kryder studied that book carefully.

Trapping was only done in the winter, of course, when fur is at its prime. Kryder would start in December and continue through February or March. He trapped up the hollow behind the house for skunks and 'possum. He'd set traps in the swamp between the railroad tracks and the creek. Lots of different animals like that kind of habitat, everything from mink and otter to muskrat, fox and weasels.

Kryder would head out and check his trap line before school most days. (It isn't humane to set a trap and not check on it every day, he's quick to tell you.) Sometimes he found an animal in his trap, but not every day. When he did catch something, there was work to do. He had to skin the animal out. The ears and tail

**Why is it we choose from just two people to run for President and fifty-three for Miss America?**



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are kept attached, but the tail bone has to be removed, which is a little tricky. You get good at it after a while, he says, but skinning an animal takes practice. The pelt is stretched, skin side out, onto a board and hung in the barn to dry for a few weeks.

Once dry, the pelts could be sold. There was a local fur buyer, but you got the best price if you mailed the cured pelts off to Sears & Roebuck. The priciest pelt was beaver, which could bring \$30-\$35. Kryder never trapped a beaver - they were scarce animals in the 1930s. Otters were worth about \$15 - they are good-sized animals with dense, thick fur. Kryder never trapped an otter, either. As you might imagine, mink were valuable, too - sought after for all those fancy hats and stoles. A nice mink pelt could bring from \$7-\$10; those with consistent dark

coloring were worth the most. Kryder caught a total of three mink in his trapping days, all over near the creek. You were more likely to catch a muskrat, also found near the water. You'd be surprised how fine and soft a muskrat pelt is! And they brought a pretty good price, too - about \$2. Rabbits were hunted, but not trapped for fur. There were no coyotes around in those days.

Kryder also trapped weasels, or ermine, as they're called in their fine white winter coats. They are small animals, with a pelt that brought in \$2-\$3, plus a \$2 bounty from the state. Catching weasels earned an added pat on the back because they have a mean streak and often wreaked havoc among the chickens over at the farm. Kryder's grandmother ran a big chicken operation called Locust Hill Poultry Farm.

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After school and during the summers, Kryder often helped out by candling eggs (holding them up to the light to see if they are fertilized and look for cracks). He has candled thousands of eggs! The farm also had several big draft Percherons used to pull the farm equipment. In the 1930s, Mudlick Farm, as it was called, was one of the biggest farms in the valley, a "four-team farm". Kryder can remember riding his horse Skippy bareback into the pasture at the end of the day to bring the cows in from way down by the creek. His grandfather Paw-Paw kept about thirty cows. But I digress.

Foxes were a good animal to catch; a red fox pelt in good condition was worth \$5. Gray foxes are bigger, but their hides brought in a little less, maybe \$4. You could also claim a \$4 bounty for fox pelts. There was an even bigger bounty for bobcats, but you never saw one. Believe it or not, raccoons were scarce in those days, too, because they were not only trapped, but hunted. If you could catch one, coon hides earned a pretty penny, about \$4 (coonskin coats were all the rage). You got quite a bit of fur from a big coon. Possums didn't bring much, perhaps 50 or 60 cents. They were easier to catch, though. Even



*By 1935 mechanized vehicles began to replace horses & mules on the farms.*

feral cats were fair game - their pelts brought in 75 cents. That sure wouldn't go over well these days! House and barn cats were never targeted; they were part of the family, and anyway, their fur was never prime because of the time they spent indoors.

Setting a trap is quite an art in itself. You have to pay attention to where the animals go and what they do. It's a little easier when there's snow and you can see the tracks. You want to camouflage the trap so the animal can't see it (the trap has



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a pan that the animal steps on to spring it; you want to hide that). But you can't have so much brush over it that it gets caught along with the animal and allows them to pull their leg free. You have to position the trap carefully. If you find an established animal trail, one that's used a lot, you can put the trap right in the trail. It needs to be level and fill the path, or the animal might get around it. Usually the trap is baited with a little meat. For muskrats, the trap is set on a path near their holes in the creek bank. A hole in a stump was a good location for a trap, too. The bait would be placed in the back of the hole and the trap in the front, catching the animal as it tried to enter to get the bait.

You might be surprised to learn that skunk pelts were quite valuable in those days, especially if they were black. A skunk pelt that was

all black, with only a small amount of white fur on it, could bring in as much as \$2. Those that were mostly white were only worth about 75 cents. Skunks were easier to trap than some critters - they sort of amble along without a care in the world. Of course, coming upon a trapped skunk on your trap line could present a bit of a challenge. It wasn't always possible to dispatch the animal without getting sprayed. And oh, how that smell hung on!

Kryder remembers arriving at his two-room schoolhouse (one room was for grades 1-4, the other for grades 5-8) after being up at the crack of dawn to check his traps. It was the early 1930s and the school had no indoor plumbing, just an outhouse. The school was heated by a wood-burning pot belly stove. If you sat close to the stove, you were soon

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*Henry Kryder Mattern (Left) and friend*

sweating, while students in the back of the room froze. You can just imagine the aroma that drifted through the classroom when the boys, including Kryder, sat next to the stove in their trapping clothes. As class commenced and the room warmed up, the strong sharp smell of skunk wafted off them. No doubt their classmates gave them a wide berth!

Trapping was a way of life in those days, a rite of passage for boys in the area. Those cold winter months

could mean real money for a boy with some trapping skills, a chance to earn some capital when earning power was mighty rare. But the rewards didn't come easy - it took a lot of time, patience and hard work.

The trap line was more than a chance to earn a few dollars. It was a world of their own, one where they were in charge, matching wits with wild creatures, learning responsibility and earning respect. Trapping was a fine thing indeed for

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*Phyllis Diller*

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*Hunting & trapping were a strong tradition in rural families. Here, Henry's father (third from right) is seen at a hunting camp with friends in 1910.*

a young boy growing up in tough times, on his way to becoming a man.

Col. Henry Kryder Mat-tern has made Huntsville his

home for the past 45 years. He grew up on the other end of the Appalachian Mountain chain, in central Pennsylvania.

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- Coon hound dogs for sale, good blood lines and sired by registered VKC, dam is Red-bone. See pups at 717 Hermitage St.

- Lost - one No. 4 food ration book in name of Jesse B. Lynch. Return to 806 Pratt Ave.

- Turtle races will be held Wednesday at the Locust Street playground, 7 pm. Turtles will be on sale prior to racing for persons wishing to buy them.

- For Sale - studio couch with springs, almost new & slip cover - 1021 Sewanee Rd.

- For Sale - ice box equipped with coils, ready for motor. Bargain for cash - see at 1204 Stevens Ave.

- The Reverend Otis King of Johnson City, Tenn. will preach at Lincoln Baptist Church Wednesday night. All are invited.

- For sale - fishing boat and motor - want to buy man's bicycle. See E. W. Dowell at 415 Stevens Ave., Dallas Village

- Following the official announcement of V-J Day, a short service will be held at the Church of Christ Scientist, Wells Ave. and White Street.

- For Sale - man's pocket watch 100 years old. Solid gold case & dial, key wind in good

running condition - make is Vacheron & Constantin - see at 529 Walker St.

- Lost on Jefferson St. - gray suitcase containing woman's clothing. Reward - notify Lester Tidwell at Halsey Grocery Co.

- For Farmers - scrap wood from Arsenal delivered anywhere in the county, \$20 per load. You may call or write W. J. Hasting, 541 Bonita Circle.

- Quick's Beauty Shop - phone 1061 - 117 Greene St.

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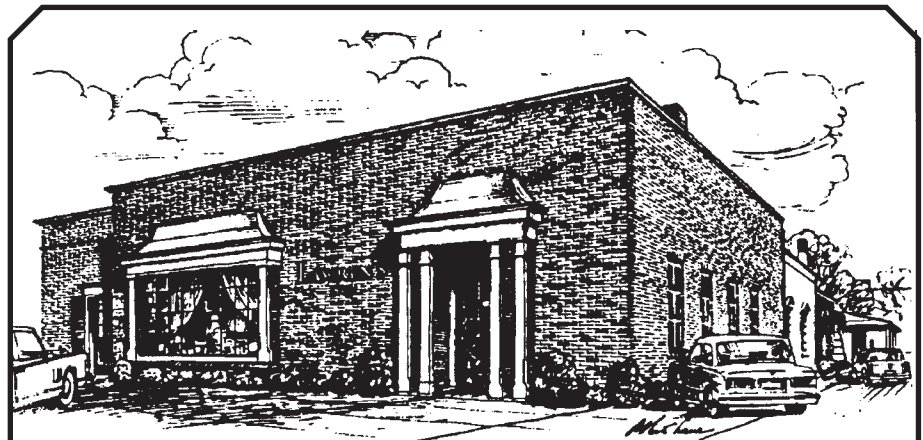
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- Special notice - F. M. Smithey is no longer associated with us nor does he represent us in any manner -Yarbrough Hardware Co.

- Woman charged with husband's death - a warrant for second-degree murder was issued yesterday in Inferior Court against Clara May Harris, charged with the fatal shooting of her husband, Walter Harris, who died Saturday a week after the shooting. The alleged slayer had been in jail since the wounding of her husband.

- Rep. John Sparkman gave his annual report to Rotary at today's session of the club, discussing the disposal of government properties and the methods that will be used in handling this vast project. He also remarked on the "bugs" in the G.I. Bill and what had been done to eradicate them from the act.

- Madam Frances - the Palmist - is finally here in Huntsville. She is the 7th daughter of a 7th daughter, born with a double veil, greatest ever in the city. The lady with the radio mind, she has no equals, 50 years experience. All are welcome. Located in house trailer at Lily Flag on Highway 36. Take Redstone Bus and look for sign.

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**From Other Papers...**

- It was reported today that a man named Stevens arrived at Ernest Hemingway's home and announced that he had heard so much about the author's fighting ability that he had determined to lick him. Stevens also confided that for this purpose he had trained rigorously for more than a year.


Stevens followed Hemingway to Sloppy Joe's and found

the ideal way to start the fight. He saw Hemingway and his sister leaving and addressed the lady in an insulting manner. The author immediately started swinging. They fought for more than an hour, a pretty equal battle for a time.

Then Stevens tore the new cashmere sweater which Hemingway had just received from Abercrombie & Fitch. "That does it!" Hemingway raged.

Five minutes later, Stevens was knocked out cold.

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## SUPERSTITIONS ABOUT YOUR CLOTHING



\* **BUTTON UP:** It has always been unlucky to hook or button up any item of clothing wrongly (start all over again if you do); just as you should never put your left arm, leg or foot into anything first.

\* If a girl's bra or pants should suddenly slip down this is a sign that someone who loves her is thinking of her; and, if two or more holes should appear in any of these items then tradition says the owner can expect a gift very shortly.

\* Any girl wearing suspenders who finds that her stocking slips from the clasp three times can take it she is in for an unlucky day, but if stockings on the washing line curl round each other it is an omen that the owner may expect great happiness before long.

\* Garters have always been regarded as lucky, and many a girl has slept with one under her pillow on Midsummer Eve in the hope of dreaming of her future husband (a suspender belt can also do the trick, apparently).

\* Any young girl anxious for a husband should get a garter worn recently by a married woman and put it on her own leg.

\* A girl who puts valerian in her underwear will prove irresistible to men.

\* Well into the nineteenth

century a new husband became liable for any debts previously incurred by his bride but, if the girl went to the altar wearing no more than her dress, any creditors would take pity on such an obviously poor young soul and not wish to compound the problems in her new life by pressing their bills. Such ceremonies were known as "smock weddings".

\* Clothes are part of the "body magic"; many fans try to touch their idols or grab a portion of their clothes and items once worn by superstars fetch a high price at auction.

\* Tying a knot in a handkerchief to remember something signifies a very ancient belief that the knot was a charm against evil. Any demon nearby will be so intrigued by the shape that all thoughts of interfering with you will go from his head.

\* **HAT:** putting your hat on back to front will result in a bad day; a woman who puts on a man's hat is giving a sign that she wants to be kissed

\* **SHOES:** lucky, hence the custom of tying an old boot to the back of the car of a couple who have just got married; shoes left crossed on the floor or put on the wrong feet brings bad luck; and walking anywhere with one shoe on could lead to the death of one of your parents.

\* A shoelace which comes undone as you set off on a venture is unlucky.

\* If you tie someone else's shoe laces you should make a wish as it is very lucky.

\* **NEW CLOTHES:** always slip a small coin into the right-hand pocket of a new suit or dress, to avoid being hard up when you wear that item of clothing.

\* It is lucky to wear a new item of clothing on Easter Day, as everything old and dirty should be renewed at the festival of Eastertide.

\* **INSIDE OUT:** it is lucky to put on an item of clothing inside out, although you must not change it until the time you would normally take it off, for the luck to hold.

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**Don't Forget The  
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# Foster Parenting for Unwanted Pets

by Lynn and Morton Eldridge

(originally published in *The Pet Gazette* 1996)



"Can you care for three two-week-old kittens?" The Humane Society Director's call played off the answering machine with reedy wails from the infant kittens in the background. Yes, of course we could. So, once again our dressing room was converted into a nursery.

Three brown and cream kittens - Marianna, Julianna, and Peabody - were gently bottle-fed and toileted every four hours; cuddled, comforted, talked to, stroked and played with for the next month. At six weeks of age our foster babies were chubby and bright-eyed, dish feeding and litter trained. Our job, once again, was finished and we returned them to the Society for adoption.

Where do these orphans come from? Some were found after their feral mother died; some were found after they washed into a storm sewer after a heavy rain; some were found at the Society with no explanation. One cold morning last fall two infants were left on the Society's steps in a box with a hot water bottle and a clean bath towel. The Society took in

four newborns that were found with their abandoned, starving mother when her owners moved away. She and her kittens were given to us to foster as she needed intensive care as well. After her matted coat was clipped and washed and she was fed a high nutrient diet, the mother, Samantha, filled out into a sleek, affectionate Persian tortoiseshell with a ready purr. Her kittens were kept with her but bottle fed since she could not nourish them herself. It was a treat to watch the family recover and grow to health. All were placed into loving homes by the Society.

Foster parenting is a labor of love and every experience is different, but each is rewarding. With good care, most of the orphans live and thrive. Gentleness, patience and caring are essential, for the routine includes mixing formula; cleaning bottles and bedding; helping the kittens toilet with a warm, wet cotton ball to simulate a mother cat's attention to infant hygiene; and daily handling and play to encourage socialization with humans and furry siblings.

Hand washing is necessary before and after handling infants to insure that their environment is kept clean, and "look but don't touch" is the rule for visitors. Sometimes friends who have followed an orphan kitten's progress will accompany me to the Society when their favorite is six weeks old and fill out adoption papers on the spot.

Yes, we cry a bit when we give them back to the Society, but it comforts us to know that our little ones will be loved by other families for many years to come.

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# Damn Yankees

by Larry M. Clark

February 14, 2015

Although I am not a native of Huntsville or even a southerner, I have become very attached to the city and the state. Jerri and I were raised in Indiana and had never traveled south of Nashville. Our introduction to this wonderful area happened 50 years ago when my company entered the competition to become a major contractor in developing of the Apollo-Saturn program. The civil rights movement was in full swing at the time so consequently getting qualified people required some persuasion. Both Jerri

and I were invited to make an interview and introductory trip. Somewhat unusual for an initial interview.

We arrived in November, 1963 dressed in our New York winter attire, with no idea what to expect. The day was beautiful! Not at all like New York. The flight approach over the Montgomery Ward roof to the old airport was a new experience for us.

My interview was conducted in a rented warehouse at the (then) Brown Engineering complex, quite a comedown from an IBM facility. I would be located in the Astrionics building, assisting in developing the guidance system for the Saturn rocket, if I accepted the offer. I was not overly excited by the idea that I would be working under the direction of NASA employees

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and not within the company hierarchy. That notion was fixed later. I soon found out civil servants are as capable as the general public in the right atmosphere and we were definitely in that place.

Interview over, back to New York to await the job offer and begin weighing the different options; stay at a very challenging position with great potential growth or leap into the unknown assignment and no sign of advancement?

This enigma was solved by Jerri when we landed back in New York. The temp in Huntsville when we boarded the plane was 75 degrees, sun shining, a beautiful November day. We landed at the home airport late at night, snow on the ground and very cold. We redonned our New York clothes and headed to the parking lot. Among the large piles of snow, we were forced to search for our car. Three cars later we found it, Problem solved with Jerri's pronouncement, "Take a cut if you must, I've seen enough snow!"

Within a few days I received a job offer that included a raise, moving expenses, etc., everything necessary to make a move into a "troubled" redneck area.

**"A wife can often surprise her husband on their wedding anniversary by merely mentioning it."**

*Jerry Barkley, Arab*

We left New York in a blinding snow storm. Arriving in Huntsville we checked into the Kings Inn in February 1964 and began the demanding task of finding a place to live. Wow! What an experience! After two days of seeing the few available options, we returned to the motel for rest and tried to determine which of the few bad options we should accept.

A trip to the ice machine started a series of events that changed our life to the very good. A big, bash stranger looked at me and said, "Are you an IBMer?" I answered in the affirmative, he asked "you found a house yet?" When I told him

no, he suggested that we check out the area that he had found. This area was a developing subdivision on Chapman Mountain with incomplete streets, few houses complete, etc. With renewed

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hope, we contacted the broker recommended by Jim and looked at the two or three available houses in this secluded area and made our choice. We moved in within a few days on a rental agreement while the paper trail caught up. Jim Rigge, his lovely wife Carole and two delightful young ladies, resided just up the hill and over the years our friendship has grown stronger and stronger. We were now officially Huntsville residents. Somehow I believe that this has always been our destiny.

When our family outgrew the house, we moved to a larger place in Huntsville. The job went away in 1979 and we had to relocate again. Three years were spent marking time before we were able to leave a very unhappy location and find our final work site in Florida. I was able to retire and our hope was to return to Huntsville; unfortunately Jerri caught the big C and our life was redirected to solve that problem. We lucked into a great group of MDs and after five years Jerri was in total remission. There is a God!

We had kept our ties with Huntsville through the years and spent several vacation days with friends here. On our last visit we had our friend Doris show us some of the available houses. Nothing really turned us on until Doris suggested a house back in the original Chapman Mountain neighborhood. The house only had a one car garage but it was available, the price was right and I always wanted to build something big, like a workshop.

We went to a local bank, got enough money for a deposit and made the offer. It was accepted and the deal closed.

**"I've learned that I can always pray for someone when I don't have the strength to help him in some other way."**

**Andy Rooney**

Thanks to our special friend Doris, we became Damn Yankees (those who come to the south, leave and come back) to stay.

My beloved Jerri left me last year after 62 plus years together with the last 20 in Huntsville. I will join her soon. We will be interred together in a vault on a Huntsville mountain. Two transplanted Damn Yankees.

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# Heard On the Street

by *Cathey Carney*

We honor our Veterans every month, but November 11 is very special. That date was chosen as the official date for **Veterans Day** in reference to the ending of World War I. Germany signed an armistice with the Allies that signaled the end of the war on 11 am on 11 November 1918. Huntsville will have its Veterans Day Parade 11/11 starting at 11 am so be sure and attend. So proud of all our Vets and the many sacrifices they've made for our country.

Congratulations to **Evelyn Holder** of Athens for being the first correct caller to guess the Photo of the Month for October. The little girl was **Margaret Poole**, co-owner of Lone Goose Saloon that is a pet friendly bar off Meridian/Cleveland Ave. Evelyn says she only met Margaret a couple of times but really enjoyed sitting outside years ago with friends and her rescue pet **Bachus** at the Lone Goose and having a beer!

According to early reports, the **Maple Hill Cemetery Stroll** was a huge success, taking in over 12,000 people. Many in the downtown area just walked there because there was no place to park! It was organized and free with lots of volunteers, sponsored by the Pilgrimage Assoc. of Huntsville.



All donations go to the upkeep of the cemetery, which is one of the most beautiful in the southeast U.S. **Ron Cooper, Jane Tippett, Blake Dorning, Jan Dorning and Topper Bierny** were some of the actors portraying those who are buried at the cemetery and they did an exceptional job! A beautiful day overall.

Happy November Birthday to my beautiful daughter **Stephanie Troup** who lives in Nashville - can't wait to see you and really celebrate!

I use my computer mouse alot while typing and lately it was getting harder to move it around on my mouse pad. I have one of those thin mouse pads with a smooth top, and I just sprinkled a tiny bit of baby powder on it and spread it around. My mouse works like new and no more sticking!

OK, in this issue somewhere is a **long tall stalk of corn**. Very tiny. I don't think you'll be able to find it at all but if by some chance you do, and call me after November 15, and are the first caller - you will win a FREE year's subscription to "Old Huntsville." So get

out your magnifying glass and be the first caller after November 15.

We heard that **Gibson's BBQ** is going to a "Meat and 3" menu, started Oct. 26th. I can't wait to try it out, and get one of their Peanut Butter pies which are SO good (only if you like peanut butter, and who doesn't). I wonder if they can figure out how to make a sweet bacon pie?

**Doug Beal** is the handsome husband of **Nina Beal**, who runs the Ark for homeless animals, and she said she couldn't do it without all the help from Doug. He has been under the weather lately - Speedy recovery Doug!

Congratulations to Old Town neighbor and publisher of Down Town Living magazine, **Dawn Renae Carson** - she just married her sweetie **Mark Carson** and they had a romantic beach wedding on the Gulf. They were surrounded by friends and family, a school of dolphins, sea gulls and sand pipers! The happy event took place on a cool morning at sunrise.

I had heard this tip years ago and it really works - if you are cutting up hot peppers, not wearing gloves and want to get the hot stuff out of your fingers, just wash

## Photo of The Month

The first person to correctly identify the youngster below wins a full one-year subscription to "Old Huntsville" magazine.

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The boy on the left was a musician and once had his name on a famous store near downtown Huntsville.



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with salt. Wet your hands and pour on just plain salt, scrub well and that should take care of it.

**Chuck Bobo** is a former newspaper man and member of Golden K Kiwanis - he has had quite a life that included working for AOL. Chuck has been not feeling well lately and we just want to say Get Better Chuck so we can see you out and about again!

**Roy Simmons** goes up nearly every day to clean up trash along Bankhead Parkway going up to Monte Sano - Thank you Roy!

**Butch Adcock** and I had dinner recently at **Brassiere Juno's** on Airport Road where the Cafe Berlin had been previously. It's still owned by the Schrader Restaurant family with the same great food. The interior has been modified somewhat and there is live music that is a really nice experience while dining. What we ordered was excellent - so tasty and some of the Cafe Berlin menu was retained. We will be back!

**Susie Bryant** is beyond thrilled at the birth of her granddaughter **Emily Grace Taylor**, born Oct 18th. I saw a picture of Emily and she should be a Gerber Baby! Parents are Susie's son **Samuel Taylor** and his wife **Jessica** of Arab. Susie and husband **Mike Bryant (Bryant Heating/AC)** have 6 grandchildren altogether and she is known as "Grannie" while Mike is "Pappa Gran." Congratulations to the family for a healthy, beautiful little girl.

**Martha Ann Reagan** pulled off

the surprise of a lifetime when she planned a birthday party for her husband **Jim**, who turned 80 on Oct. 3. It was held at the Historic Lowry House and when Jim finally pulled up to the house, the surprise and tears from him made it all worthwhile for the 70+ guests who filled the home. Martha Ann got help from daughter **Denise Reagan** and husband **TJ Merritt**; grandson **Kyle Merritt** and granddaughter **Shannon Merritt**.

Our friend **A. J. Casey** lives in Florida but has ties to Huntsville, his daughter **Liz Waggett** was a friend to many, but sadly died of pancreatic cancer 5 years ago. Love Mr. Casey!

We want to send a big Huntsville welcome to **Catherine Giles Spelce** who has moved here from Rogersville, AL to live with her daughter **Cathy Self** and son-in-law **Mike Self**. "We're so glad you're here!"

While in Walgreen's on Brandon St. (off Madison St.) lately I met a really sweet lady who works there, named **Judy**. She especially loves history and is really helpful to her customers who need help.

**The People's Law School** is a series of weekly legal classes for the lay person, dealing in different areas of the law. There is a great schedule lined up for 2016 from Jan.25 - Apr. 4, every Monday night from 6:30pm - 8:40pm - at the Public

Safety Bldg. on Wheeler Ave. If you pre-register before Jan. 15 the total fee is \$45 for all classes (not just one class). Call Gwen Joop at 256.479.3348 for more info.

Have a wonderful Thanksgiving with your loved ones and stay warm and safe!

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# Unusual but Good

## Cracker Barrel Cheese Straws

1-1/2 c. flour  
 1 t. baking powder  
 1/3 t. salt  
 1/2 t. cayenne pepper  
 1 10-oz. pkg. extra sharp Cracker Barrel cheese  
 1 stick butter softened

Stir the first 4 ingredients together and set aside. Grate the cheese, combine with butter and flour mixture, blending well. Place dough in a pastry tube to make straws. Cut into 2" lengths on an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake at 350 degrees for 10-12 minutes until edges turn light brown.

## Spicy Iced Tea

1/2 c. sugar  
 5 qts. water

6 T. instant tea  
 1 6 oz. can frozen concentrated orange juice, thawed  
 1- 12 oz. can frozen concentrated lemonade, thawed  
 2 T. lemon juice  
 1/2 t. cinnamon  
 1/4 t. ground nutmeg

Stir sugar in water til dissolved, add all the remaining ingredients and mix well.

## Christmas Bourbon

1/2 c. lemon juice  
 2 qts. orange juice  
 1 qt. pineapple juice  
 1 qt. grapefruit juice  
 1 c. Grenadine liquor  
 1 qt. good Bourbon whiskey

Stir mixture and put in refrigerator overnight or longer. Shake before serving. Add more bourbon if you like the drink stronger.

## Chicken Tarragon

1 (3 lb.) frying chicken, split in half  
 3 T. butter  
 1 t. flour  
 1 c. white wine  
 1 t. tarragon  
 Salt and Pepper to taste

In a heavy skillet brown the chicken in the butter. Remove to a casserole while adding the wine, flour and tarragon to the pan juices. Blend all together to deglaze.

Pour over the chicken, cover and bake in a 325 degree oven for 1-1/2 hours.

## Cucumber Sauce

1 c. sour cream  
 2 t. chopped chives  
 1 t. dill weed  
 1/2 c. cucumber, seeded and

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finely chopped  
Salt and pepper to taste  
Mix all ingredients together  
and serve very cold with salmon.

### Rice Ring with Cheese

2 c. uncooked rice  
1/2 lb. grated sharp Cheddar cheese

1/2 stick butter  
Salt and pepper to taste

Cook rice; put into a warm bowl and add remaining ingredients, stirring til cheese and butter are melted. Pack in a very well greased 10" ring mold, or solid mold.

One hour before serving, set mold in a pan of boiling water in oven and bake at 350 degrees for about 30 minutes. Slice.

### Chocolate Sea Salt Caramels

2 c. sugar  
1-1/2 c. light corn syrup  
1 stick butter  
3 oz. unsweetened chocolate  
1 c. half and half  
1 c. whipping cream  
1 t. vanilla extract  
1/4 t. sea salt

Combine first 5 ingredients; cook, stirring frequently, to 230 degrees on a candy thermometer.

Slowly add the whipping

cream and cook to 238 degrees on the thermometer.

Remove from heat, add vanilla and pour into a buttered pan. Sprinkle the sea salt lightly over pan.

When cool, cut into squares.

### Brown Sugar Pound Cake

3 c. flour  
1/2 t. salt  
1/2 t. baking powder  
1 cup (2 sticks) butter  
1/2 c. Crisco shortening  
1 c. dark brown sugar, packed

2 c. white sugar

5 eggs

1 c. milk

1 T. almond extract

1 T. vanilla extract

2 c. chopped pecans

Sift flour, salt and baking powder together; set aside. Cream butter and Crisco thoroughly; slowly add sugars, beating until fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.

Combine milk and flavorings; add to egg mixture, alternating with flour mixture. Fold in pecans.

Pour batter into a greased and floured tube pan; bake at 300° for 2 hours.

Note - Batter may be divided and baked in 2 loaf pans.



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# MYSTERY ON ROCK CUT ROAD

by Scott Nixon

The year was 1995 and my wife, my infant son and I lived on Childress Street in Gurley, AL. We loved it there - with Keel Mountain behind our home in clear sight, it was beautiful.

The three of us went to the Drake Avenue WalMart that night. We got the baby things he needed and made our way down Hwy. 72 East headed for home. The night was clear and so peaceful. It was around 9:00 pm when we turned right on Rock Cut Road, with my wife driving. We had a sun roof in our car. I had my seat reclined looking up at the stars - it was an awesome sight.

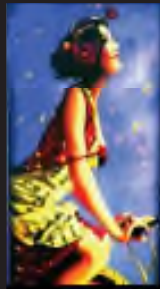
There is a line of trees that are on each side of the road, not far off the interstate at all. That's when it happened, a moment I can't and will never forget.

A creature glided across the roof of the car from right to left, right at the tree line. My heart raced and I froze. It was at least 8 feet in length. It was a human form, it had wings and it's arms were attached to them. It had veins showing all over its torso, legs, arms, wings and face. Its hands and feet had long nails.

But I can't forget those eyes. They were glowing red. I saw this much detail because we were going slow, and it was gliding slowly across the roof. Not like a bird or hawk or any animal of that type. Then it was just gone.

All I thought was, "My wife will not believe me." I still had to tell her. She was driving, as I mentioned before. I looked over at her to tell her, she was looking at me. "Did you see that?" I asked her. "Yes, I did," she said. We were not crazy! We were just scared and got home as quickly as possible. I got our son out of the back seat and told my wife to stay with him. I unloaded the car, but was constantly looking up.

We knew no one would believe us. The people we told would say, "Maybe it was this or maybe it was that." So we just stopped talking about it. We knew what we had seen and we still do. That's all that matters to us, but it is still a mystery.



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## Local Interest in 1923

### Mrs. Greaves only victim remaining

Mrs. C. T. Greaves, of Dallas, TX., one of the most seriously injured in the wreck of the Southern passenger train near Scottsboro last week, is still at the Huntsville Infirmary, where she was taken immediately following the accident. Mrs. Greaves is doing well and is the only one of the several brought here who have not returned to their homes.

### They Saw the World

Two boys, Lonnie Jones, 16 and Warren Sanders, 14 will be held in Huntsville for the arrival of their parents this week. They said they lived near Scottsboro and were taken in charge by Chief Hackworth. Their parents had telephoned the chief to notify him that the boys had traveled to Huntsville, after telling them that they "wanted to see the world." They were broke and seemed quite ready to return home after seeing enough of the world and its hardness.

### Machine Boy injured

While riding his bicycle on Walker Street Sunday, Howard Larkin, a small boy, was run into and knocked from his wheel by an automobile driven by Henry Thomas. Young Larkin was jolted but not seriously injured.

### Huntsville invention

Messrs. James McGill and Lee Guy have perfected a new automobile light which they intend to apply for a patent. The light will contain a revolving fan on one end and colored lights on the other, the lights being generated from a dry battery and being operated by the car. The gentlemen have tried out their light with complete success.

### Hanging near Courtland

A man, a respected citizen we are told, residing near Courtland, AL who purchased some years ago a Huntsville plantation, last Wednesday hanged himself in his barn near his residence. It is thought that money embarrassment led the unfortunate man to commit the rash deed. He was found dead before the body had become cold. The deceased leaves a wife and children.

**"Why does it take so little time for a child who's afraid of the dark...to become a teenager who wants to stay out all night?"**

*Judy Franklin, Scottsboro*

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## My Saving Grace

Staff Sergeant Jesse Knotts rescued a stray cat whom he named Koshka while he was serving in Afghanistan, but it was really the kitty who saved him from the difficult times during his service.

"He was showing some signs that people weren't taking very good care of him," Knotts said. He brought the kitty in his tiny office and made it home for Koshka. The cat was a reminder of his life back home in Oregon City.

"You lose faith in a lot but sometimes it's the smallest things that bring you back," Knotts added. An experience he had with a suicide bomber targeted a military convoy near his base in the Maiwand District of Afghanistan and took away two of his friends. He was devastated and crying in his office, then Koshka hopped onto his lap to give him the comfort and love that he would normally get from his loved ones back home.

"I'd lost hope in myself.

I'd lost faith. Then all of a sudden this cat came over and it was like 'hey, you are you,'" he said.

He knew there is no way he could leave Koshka in Afghanistan. The little kitty is more than just a cat to him. Koshka

is like family to Knotts.

"He pulled me out of one of my darkest times so I had to pull him out of one of his darkest places."

It was impossible for Knotts to get Koshka on a military convoy. He received help from a local interpreter who risked his life to take the cat to Kabul where they were able to fly the cat from the Middle East all the way to Portland, Oregon. It cost his parents \$3,000 for the flight home, but "for them, it was an investment they didn't think twice about."

"He was my saving grace. He kept me alive during the tour," Knotts said.

*Woody Anderson*



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# An Old Cook's Secrets



## Cooking in the Fireplace

When you're tired of cooking in the kitchen try this: When the weather starts getting chilly at night and you're in the mood for a good fire in the fireplace, take a couple of large sweet potatoes and wrap them well in heavy-duty aluminum foil. Wait til you have some good red-hot coals in the fireplace, then place the potatoes in the middle of them. Ours take about 45 minutes to an hour, and we unwrap them, cut them in half and add a bit of butter, salt and fresh-ground black pepper. You wouldn't believe anything could taste this good on a cold night!

## Chicken Roasted in Pastry?

Sure, do it this way. Make a dough of flour and water. Roll out in a large circle. Sprinkle the cavity of a whole chicken with rosemary, stuff with 2 lemons that have been cut in half. Wrap the chicken in the dough and roast it, the wrapping of bread will absorb all of the fat (Just toss it out) and will make your chicken extra healthy.

## Crispy Vegetables

For extra crispy veges and lettuce for your salads, do this. Put all the ingredients, cut and ready, into a large bowl, without dressing. Cover the veges with a couple of layers of damp paper towels, put in fridge for an hour or two before you eat.

## Potatoes

New way with potatoes: Wrap each baking potato in aluminum foil with a dab of butter, a dash of garlic powder, a grind of fresh black pepper and one or more of the following: chives, dill, tarragon, rosemary, parsley. Bake at 425 degrees for 25 minutes. Great flavor and low in fat!

## Peppermint Tea

Peppermint tea is great for moodiness. Drink it warm and strong, it will relax you.

## Dressing and Dip

Italian chefs use this delicious dressing for steamed vegetables: Mix roasted sesame seeds with plain yogurt. Pour over steamed broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage or use as a dip for raw vegetables. (I would add a bit of garlic or onion powder).



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If you are interested in tracing your family tree and have family members in Maple Hill Cemetery, you've got to check out the Maple Hill link in the "Old Huntsville" website. There is also a link that will take you to grave sites U.S. wide - complete with pictures of the headstone and a map of the cemeteries.



**Old Huntsville**

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

# Old Pence

by Malcolm W. Miller

His name was Pennsylvania Jones, however everyone that knew him referred to him as " Old Pence." He was a very old black man. How old was he? I doubt if he really knew himself; but suffice it to say, he was very, very old.

Old Pence just seemed to kind of drift in and start living with an old black lady who lived just down the road a piece from us. Her preacher husband had just passed away about the time World War II started and no doubt she needed help around the house carrying in wood and doing chores.

Since Old Pence did not have a radio and did not get the paper he would stop me as I passed by the little two-room shack where he was staying. As I recall he would always ask, "Well, son, how is the war?" I would always stop and chat with him awhile.

We would talk about everything; the war, the weather, the crops, friends, etc. I would always leave Old Pence and walk on down the dirt road feeling better than I did before I had talked to him. I felt better about people, the war and life in general.

My family was poor as

were many others during these times but this old gentleman really had nothing. His shoes had long since fallen apart and were tied to his feet with wire and twine. His baggy clothes had been patched so many times that they looked like a quilt.

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Dolly Parton

During this time there were no Government welfare checks for the poor and other people looked after the poor as best they could.

I know from talking to him that there were times when he was hungry, however he seemed to always look on the bright side.

Almost every day when the weather permitted you would see Old Pence going down the lane past our house headed for the river, loaded down with fishing poles, a burlap bag to put his catch in, and a home-made chicken wire dip net.

If he saw me outside he would always say in his very optimistic way, "I am really going to catch a bunch today." It didn't seem as though he caught any big fish, but whatever he caught he took to his home and it was cooked for dinner, whether it was a carp or a turtle.

He was always happy regardless of the catch of the day or anything else that was going on.

Many times, even today, when I really get depressed and life seems to be really bad for me, I think of Old Pence and remember our conversations and it makes me realize that I have much to be thankful for.

Thanks to an old black man who lived many years ago I learned to look on the brighter side when things are rough.

It is amazing to me which people end up making excellent long lasting impressions on the young.



**"We think too small, like the frog at the bottom of the well. He thinks the sky is only as big as the top of the well. If he surfaced, he would have an entirely different view."**

*Moo Zedong*



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# MAMA'S BROOCH

by Glenn Grady



Viewed from the doorway as one entered the visitation parlor, the three sisters stood facing the entrance and to the left of the open casket. Two of the women were attractive only in the most liberally applied and common application of the term, yet one should remember they were in a somber funeral parlor standing next to an open casket which contained a corpse and surrounded by grave side wreaths, not the most applicable location to judge appearance. Regardless, the meager attractiveness of the first two women paled in comparison to the stunning beauty of the third. As always, Sherry garnered all the attention. It was as if the closer one stood to the casket, the greater the subliminal influence of unpleasantness transferred from the corpse. The dead woman projected her acid demeanor even from death.

Yes, Mama Velva had finally died. Damn, but she was a mean old woman. She had adamantly refused ever to discuss her age so the consensus was she must have been about sixty-five. Maybe. The age controversy was just another of many long ongoing fights between the three sisters. Mama Velva's last husband (none of the daughters' fathers) had passed on fifteen years earlier and even though left unspoken all agreed he was much better off dead than being alive and still living with Velva. She had been a three pack a day forty year smoker and was legendary

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"You better pray that stain will come  
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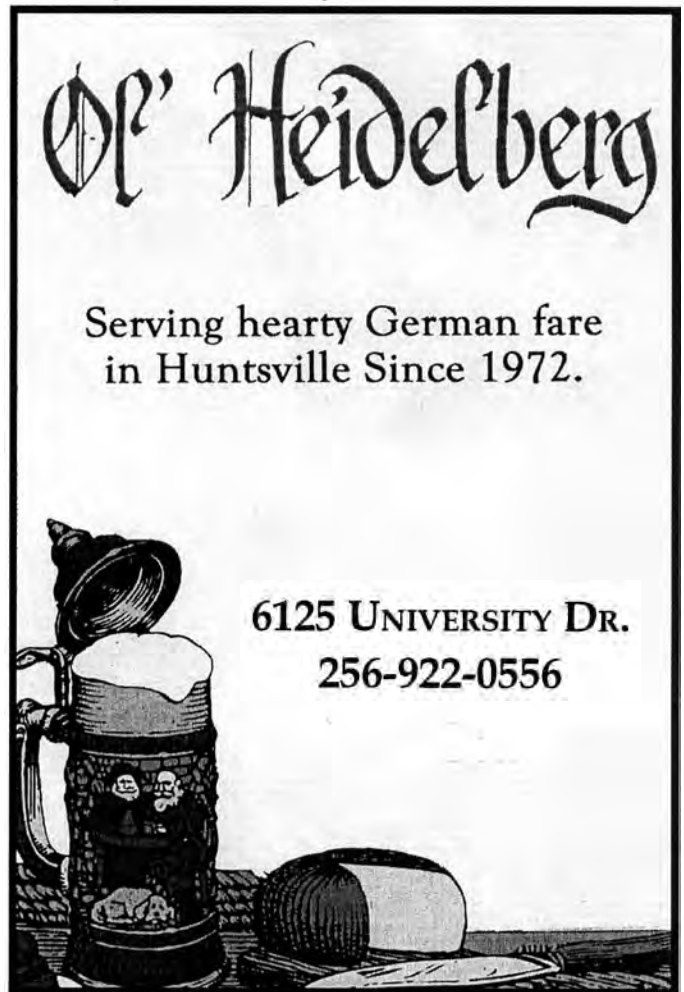
in the sheriff's department, city services, school administrators, clergy, restaurant staff, dry cleaners, beauticians, store clerks, and well, most anyone who crossed her path, as being an extremely unpleasant woman with whom to deal. She was known for her flinty sharp dark eyes constantly squinting from the smoke from the ever-present Salem cigarette hanging from her thin red lipstick colored lips, her hateful and nasty mouth, cheaply colored hair, brown nicotine stained fingers and teeth, and for generally having an overall unpleasant demeanor. Undoubtedly many of the visitors were at the visitation service only for the personal pleasure just to see her dead or to give a final farewell to the money she owed which they would never see again. Remembered she would be. Missed - absolutely not.

Standing closest to the casket, and therefore undoubtedly the plainest of the three sisters, Charlene ruled her proximity to the corpse with the haughtiness of a broody setting hen on a nest that was not of her making. She was saddened by her mother's passing, but absolutely upset that she hadn't been able to find the brooch. Of course Mama Velma would have wanted her to have it. She was the oldest. She had taken care of her two sisters all those years. There were no fond memories - just diapers, sick brats, washing clothes, scrubbing floors, cooking; no fond memories at all. The only reason she told Jimmy she was pregnant was so he would have to marry her and get her out of the house. He believed that lie just as he believed she had a miscarriage three weeks after the wedding. They eventually had two children and he believed her again when she said the doctor would allow no more. She set up a separate bed and he was not allowed near it. And where in the hell did Charlotte get that dress? For God's sake it's Mama's funeral. It looks like something a cheap mill worker would wear downtown on a Saturday night honky-tonking - but wait, isn't that her latest job? Couldn't she have worn something decent at least for Mama's funeral? Well at least she has on shoes, such as they are.

In the middle, as always, was Charlotte. She too had married young but to a good-looking man whom women of all ages found extremely attractive. Bud was a combination of a youthful Adonis with the grace and car-

riage (and also equipment, so it was whispered at the beauty parlor) of a stud horse. The horse would have been more intelligent though. Bright he was not.

To suggest that he had been unfaithful would be a gross understatement. To tell the truth, he had repeatedly violated the sanctity of his and everyone else's marriage possible. The times a woman made herself available and he didn't concede would be more noteworthy. But Charlotte always took him back. Bud had two children by



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Charlotte and undoubtedly many more by other women. Lord help the upcoming generation when they decided to start marrying.

Charlotte had to move back home with Mama Velva when her philandering husband believed a darling girl (like she really had to convince him) when she told him she was nineteen. Well, in fact she was fifteen. Statutory rape was not held in high esteem by the judge, nor did the fact that the girl was his granddaughter help matters. So Bud was in the penitentiary for ten years. Charlotte too had searched for the brooch. Mama would have wanted her to have it. She had taken such good care of her up until the end. First chance she would go and look for it again. She sniffed disgustingly to her left. Charlene's perfume would gag a buzzard. Can't she see how everyone is staring at her? And it looks like she gained twenty pounds.

Following Charlotte stood sweet Sherry. Charlene and Charlotte nick-named her "PQ" for Pedestal Queen. Nothing had ever been good enough for sweet Sherry. How one of three sisters could be so beautiful in contrast to the other two's plainness is just one of those aberrations of nature. Sherry also had married young but she was not dumb. She had an innate sense of survival and knew all she had going for her were her looks. She used her body like a weapon in a life and death struggle and won. She married an intelligent young man from a well-off family. Hank wasn't the best looking but he had a good job, family connections and they had money.

Sherry dedicated herself to being the best wife possible, attended junior college and had completely broken free from the life style that had destroyed her sisters. She drove a new car, dressed very well, was loved dearly by her husband's family, and knew how to be the daughter of Mama Velva without becoming the same. As always, she stood a little separate from her sisters. She was everything they were not. The other two knew it and hated her for it. She too had immediately registered the inappropriateness of Charlene's perfume and Charlotte's dress, but what upset her most was the way the two fawned over the visitors who she knew hated her mother. All Sherry wanted was Mama's brooch. After all, she had been putting \$50.00 a

month into Mama Velva's bank account for the last year. She deserved it. After she had the brooch she would no longer have to put up with her sisters.

So the three sisters stood and greeted the visitors. It resembled a perverted charade of "She's in Jesus' hands now" followed by a snidely whispered "What a bitch," and "The Lord called her home," and "You're not long behind her." The sisters smiled, shook their hands, received the hugs, and steadily cussed the visitors under their breath as the turned their backs. The community hated Mama Velva just about as much as she hated them. The only positive thought was that now her suffering was over. There were no "Doesn't she look good" or "Just like she's sleeping and will rise any moment" comments. Mama Velva looked pretty damn dead.

The visitors approached the coffin with the same caution used when walking up on a dead poisonous snake - have to be sure before you get too close. She had always carried a cheap shiny pearl handled .32 pistol in her purse and had killed

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a sawmill hand on her front porch late one Saturday night. He had been drinking and wanted to see Charlene. Being Mama Velva she had told him to leave in the most impolite manner possible.

He reached for the screen door to open it and she shot him five times in the chest. He fell and when Mama Velva realized she had another bullet left she opened the door, stepped closer, took careful aim and shot him between the eyes. When the sheriff arrived he was quite dead. She refused to surrender the pistol to the sheriff on the basis that he had local kin and they'd be coming for her. "Evidence hell", she said. "He's dead. I shot him. I'm keeping my pistol." The sheriff looked at the corpse on the porch, the look in Mama Velva's eyes, and the pistol in her hand. She had reloaded it. She kept her gun. No charges were brought against her.

At the pinnacle of the visitation with the most visitors present at one time for the evening, entered the preacher. He stood in the door until he was sure he'd garnered all the attention possible and the stepped up briskly with a loud "OH YOU POOR DARLINGS" and embraced Charlene and Charlotte. Sherry was able to step too far away for him to gets his fat hammy hands on her again. He hugged just a little too long and a little too tight and those hands tended to wander. Then he erupted with a booming "LET US PRAY" and stepped back into the center of the room, again waited until he was sure all were watching him and then went into one of his loud heavenly ramblings that sounded good but if listened to closely make absolutely no sense whatsoever.

The voice was strong and oratorical, the emotions and intensity was impressive, but Preacher John was basically uneducated and didn't have the acuity to realize everyone with any education whatsoever realized it. He knew some impressive words and was very good at quoting scripture, but wasn't able to relate the two and had no conception of verb tenses and dangling prepositions. But he did sound good, and he played the role perfectly. That was enough for most of the people. He had some short-

comings but keeping up with the church funds was not one of them.

Folks said Preacher John could squeeze twenty-seven cents out of every quarter in the collection plate. He had married the widow of a local feed mill owner after an accident that resulted in an unpleasant demise worthy of many still told front porch and store-front discussions and the ruining of a ton of feed. Later it was determined that if people ate cows that had eaten blood soaked feed it wasn't considered cannibalism and they shouldn't have destroyed the feed.

Preacher John preached the funeral and was a constant support to the bereaved widow. In fact he was so supportive that he married her three months later. He immediately took control of the finances, rented the feed mill, and his wife settled into the subdued role of a small town preacher's wife. During the service she was like a trained seal and knew exactly when to add "Amen", when to shout out a "Praise be to God" and when to start an impromptu sobbing to keep the emotion level from waning. Otherwise she stayed at home, stayed on a strict budget and performed her duties as directed.



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Rumors was she wasn't taking care of everything but there was always talk about such as that.

Preacher John finished his prayer, gave all one of his enlightened glances and then stepped up as close as possible to the casket. He leaned over the corpse and by the deeply grieved look on his face appeared to be recollecting his memories of the deceased. Truth was that he had always been afraid of Mama Velva because she knew him. She knew the hypocrite he was within five minutes of their first encounter. Because of this he respected her and was very careful never to be on her wrong side. Mama Velva knew why he was always so condescending and kept it to her advantage. It wasn't a relationship based on good will and trust, but it worked.

When it was apparent to all that Mama Velva only had a few weeks left to live, she summoned Preacher John. He was surprised and a little apprehensive because he knew her concern was not the fate of her already damned soul and if she were concerned about that she definitely would not have summoned him. He knew she wanted something and he would have to do it. He entered her room with a look of dread and bereavement. As he left about twenty minutes later he had a slight smile on his face. Mama Velva had given him her brooch. It was a beautiful work of exquisite art and quite valuable. It was the only item Mama Velva cared for and she had guarded it ferociously her entire adult life.

Mama Velva had given him the brooch to keep from her daughters and the vultures she owed money that she knew would swarm in after her death. He was to slip it into her casket at her funeral just prior to her casket being sealed. Then, after the burial, when she and the brooch were buried safely under six feet of dirt, he would tell the sisters where it was. It was hers, by God, and none of them would have it.

Preacher John agreed and made a solemn oath and swore on his well-worn Bible to uphold his part of the bargain. To insure compliance, she told him she knew about his indiscretion with a married woman in a nearby county. Mama Velva knew she didn't have long to live but she could still talk and people would listen. Preacher John denied nothing. He knew better than to go up against her. He took the brooch, carefully wrapped it in tissue, and placed it in his pocket and left. The next time he saw her she was in her coffin. The brooch was still in his coat pocket. He could have kept it but knew she had most likely told someone else for insurance.

The guests finally departed, the music ceased, the funeral home director closed the coffin, and the sisters all said good night. All seemed to be in a slight hurry to leave. All were very surprised to im-

mediately reunite at Mama Velma's house. Charlotte lived there, but the others were unexpected. The neighbors recalled the three sisters getting into a loud and nasty argument that lasted over an hour. Charlene and Sherry left. All three searched for the brooch. When it couldn't be found each thought the other had it and wouldn't tell.

The funeral was supposed to start the next morning at 10:00. It was late because Charlene and Charlotte got into a screaming fight again about the brooch and Mama Velva's hair. Prior to leaving the funeral parlor Charlene had given the director an old photo of Mama Velva and demanded her hair be fixed as in the photo for the funeral.

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The director, realizing at best he'd barely meet basic expenses with the service, didn't call in a professional hairdresser but directed one of his assistants to do the task. The results were much less than satisfactory. Charlene was not pleased with the result, Charlotte was furious, Sherry was aghast at the caricature of her mother in the coffin. Sherry demanded the coffin be closed immediately, Charlene was being a nasty witch to the funeral director, and Charlotte was mad at Charlene for taking it on herself to do anything. Then Charlene ripped into the other two about the dress being the worst possible, and well, it only got worse.

Preacher John, as always being sure everyone was watching him, interrupted the fight with another "LET US PRAY" and began another superbly confused oratorical masterpiece. Upon its eventual completion, he strode over to the coffin, leaned over, and placed something in the casket. It was a furtive movement supposedly disguised that everyone noticed.

Realizing the situation would only deteriorate, the funeral director started the music, shut the coffin, and with a little more force than necessary escorted the sisters to the designated pew. He then actively motioned Preacher John to get started. Having a theatrical flair anyway he met the request gallantly. The funeral proceeded as best possible. There weren't a lot of good things to say. Being gifted in the oratorical rite of saying meaningless platitudes, Preacher John did quite well.

The service ended, the coffin rolled out into the hearse, and with the exception of the


sisters getting into another loud argument and shoving match about who would follow closest to the coffin as it left, everything went well. But the procession to the grave site was a disaster. A light drizzle began to fall. Charlene cut off Charlotte to get behind the hearse.

Charlotte was driving Mama Velva's old Buick and as she slammed on her brakes to keep from rear-ending Charlene, the old Buick stalled and she couldn't get it started. Sherry pulled around Charlotte (Charlotte screaming and using very colorful obscenities) and raced to keep up with the fast departing hearse. Two other cars passed Charlotte before she restarted the Buick and took off

in the old car and ran two other cars off the road into the ditch.

She almost caught up with hearse when the Buick blew out a cloud of oily black smoke and rolled to a stop in the middle of an intersection. Charlotte abandoned the car and two children and finally waved down a distant cousin who piled her into a flat bed truck with three children. They caught up with the hearse at the cemetery. Here another fight between the sisters took place that almost came to blows this time. Charlene and Sherry's husbands, having learned years ago not to interfere, surprisingly stepped up and separated the women.

The drizzle turned into an all out rainstorm. The grave side



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service was wet and miserable. Everyone and everything was soaked. With the exception of an argument about Mama Velva hating plastic flowers the sisters were unusually reserved.

Finally the old woman was in her grave and the family departed to the nearby shelter of some large oak trees. The rain slowed appreciably. Charlene, never being shy, demanded to know which sister had the brooch. Both vehemently denied it and accused her of having the jewelry.

The intensity of the argument was increasing when Preacher John strode up and with the fanfare of which he was renown announced that he had been given the brooch and had placed it in Mama Velva's casket prior to it being sealed.

The sisters were stunned. All remembered seeing him place something in her casket. Charlene started to move toward the grave site with the clear intention of getting the jewelry when her husband again intervened and stopped her. Charlotte had to be physically restrained to keep her from attacking the preacher. Sherry began crying. The backhoe was already in the process of filling the grave. It was too late. All three knew Mama Velva had kept her brooch. They sadly departed the cemetery.

Three weeks later Preacher John announced to the congregation he would attend a three-day sabbatical in nearby Tupelo. He left Wednesday morning, driving his Chevrolet

sedan and taking a small suitcase. He arrived in Nashville several hours later and checked into a modest hotel near Beale Street.

Later that evening he met Mrs. Jones, a Sunday school teacher from the next county, at the bus stop. She was supposedly visiting a cousin in Huntsville, AL. They went immediately to the hotel.

A couple of hours later, while dining at a modestly expensive restaurant, the waiter noticed the brooch Mrs. Jones was wearing. It was a very nice piece of jewelry. He called a friend who just happened to be waiting outside the restaurant as the couple departed. Seemingly drunk, he ambled good-naturedly down the sidewalk and walked full force into Mrs. Jones. After being cursed and shoved back by Preacher John, the drunk mumbled an apology and disappeared into the dark.

It wasn't until the couple returned to the hotel that it was noticed the brooch was missing. No police report was ever filed.



*There are no new sins - the old ones just get more publicity.*

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Scott Nixon

# SHORT & SWEET

MEMORIES FROM OUR READERS

## *A note from Old Huntsville Magazine*

There is an apology we'd like to make. In the September issue of the magazine, we ran a short story about a teenage girl who was driving and hit the back of a hearse that was parked. The family of the person in the hearse called and were very upset.

We want to say that we are very sorry that we caused any emotional hurt to the family, that was never the intent. To protect the privacy of the family, we are not printing the names. But we regret that we hurt this family and their friends.

### *From Hugh Michaels*

I am the author of the story about the crash at the funeral home, and also want to add my sincere apologies

to the family members if I in any way caused distress or hurt - it is not in my nature to upset anyone and I'm sorry if I did that.

### **Written by Tillman Williams**

In 1942 or '43 Mr. Roland Dublin was driving south on Sullivan Street in Madison, AL at approximately the spot where Madison Manor Nursing Home is now.

A taxi was on the side of the road with a blowout. Mr. Roland stopped to see if he could help. He told me one of the men opened the driver's side door to his pickup and said "Get in - I'll do the driving." (he had a pistol on Mr. Dublin).

It seems that the two men had broken out of jail in Jasper, AL, called a cab and stuck up the cab driver. They were making him take them to Chattanooga, TN.


They turned around with

the cab driver and one crook in the back and the other one driving the truck through Madison into the mountains of Jackson County, near Scottsboro.

They camped out there for 2-3 days holding Mr. Dublin and the cab driver hostage. They finally decided to make their move and left Mr. Dublin and the cabbie in the mountains to walk out and drove his truck to Dalton, GA.

They attempted to rob a bank there. One of the robbers was killed by the police and the other was captured.


One amusing thing Mr. Dublin told me was that they were nice to him and when they got ready to leave asked if he had any money. He got out his wallet to give them his money but they didn't take it. They just wanted to make sure that he had enough bus fare to get back to Madison, AL. His family was very concerned because he just disappeared for 2-3 days and that was not like him.





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# NATURAL BEAUTY TRICKS & TIPS

## Wrinkles

- Dryness, thinning of the skin, and loss of elasticity are among the reasons skin gets wrinkled. Oils and moisture have to be restored to rejuvenate the skin. The following recipes are for the purpose of restoring moisture and plumping the skin to soften wrinkle lines. For additional help, use additives in your night cream.

- Melt 1 tablespoon of lanolin in 1/2 cup almond oil. Blend well. Apply to skin. Leave on for 30 minutes, then gently blot off. Apply often.

- Spread cocoa butter on generously. Use as often as you like.

- Beat 1 egg white slightly. Add enough whipping cream so you can apply it easily. Leave on for 30 minutes, then rinse off with lukewarm water and pat dry.

## Warts

Native Americans used the sap of the milkweed to treat warts, rubbing the liquid onto affected areas until they cleared up.

Warts seem to be caused by a virus that comes and goes at will. They often disappear on their own. Often, any treatment that you seriously believe will work will do the magic for you. Therefore, rub the affected areas with milkweed sap or vitamin E oil four times a day for 12 successive days. (If this doesn't work, dip the wart in stump water after dark during a new moon, then throw a dead cat over your left shoulder!)

## Treatment for Brown Spots or Discoloration of Hands

Ingredients: lemon rind or raw potato

### Instructions:

1. Rub area of discoloration with the inside of a lemon peel or slice of raw potato. Do not

use the peel of the potato, since it may leave a dark stain.

2. Moisturize your hands following this treatment.

## Deep-Cleaning Scrub

Use this scrub once a week for deep cleaning. A total body buffing speeds up the removal of dead cells and surface debris.

Ingredients: sea salt, olive oil

### Instructions:

1. Combine 1/4 cup sea salt with 1/4 cup

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warm olive oil.

2. Apply to skin with a washcloth to gently buff skin smooth. Pay special attention to elbows, knees and heels.

3. Alternate long strokes with circular ones, and be careful around blemishes, warts, moles, and varicose veins.

4. Take a hot shower or bath to rinse the oil and salt from your skin.

**Corns**

Ingredients: roasted onion, soft soap

**Instructions:**

1. Dip one piece of roasted onion in soft soap.

2. Apply this mixture to the corn on a piece of linen, as a poultice.

**Foot Odor**

Make a foot powder of 1/4 cup arrow-root powder and 1/4 cup marigold flowers (calendula) to help prevent foot odor. Or sprinkle baking soda over your toes.

**Mouthwashes**

Natural mouthwashes are very effective. If you have bad breath, try the following:

- Chew a little fresh parsley.
- Rinse your mouth with water containing chopped watercress.
- Rinse your mouth with apple juice.
- Rinse your mouth with salt water (1/2 teaspoon salt in 1 cup water).
- A fresh leaf of spearmint helps whiten the teeth, condition the gums and also prevents bad breath.

**Herbal Mouthwash Ingredients:**

Dried balm, dried savory, dried thyme

**Instructions:**

1. Combine 1 teaspoon each of dried balm, dried savory and dried thyme.
2. Pour 1 cup boiling water over the herbs.
3. Cool and strain into a clean bottle.
4. Rinse out your mouth with a portion of the infusion.
5. Refrigerate the remainder. Discard unused portion after four days.

**Rinse to Deepen Color of Dark Hair**

Ingredients: water, tea bags, dried sage leaves, dried rosemary leaves

**Instructions:**

1. Pour 2 cups boiling water over 2 tea bags.
2. Steep, covered, in a glass pot for 15 minutes.
3. In another bowl or glass pot, mix 1/4

cup dried sage leaves and 3 tablespoons dried rosemary leaves.

4. Remove the tea bags, squeezing out all the liquid.

5. Reheat the tea; pour it over the herbs when it begins to boil.

6. Cover and steep for 1 hour.

7. Strain and cool.

8. Pour the rinse through your freshly shampooed and rinsed hair, catching the liquid in a bowl so that you may rinse several times.

**Natural Brightener for Red Hair**


Because of its acidity, this rinse tightens hair cuticles, which boosts the shine and enhances the red color to make it more vibrant.

Ingredients: cranberry juice


**Instructions:**

1. Saturate hair with cranberry juice.
2. Leave on hair for 2 minutes, then shampoo out with a gentle shampoo.
3. Use an instant conditioner following the shampoo.





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# Grits

**No one knows for sure what grits are.**

**They are just delicious and are a staple of any Southern dish. Following is how to make & eat them.**

### For one serving of Grits:

Boil 1.5 cups of water with salt and a little butter. [Use milk and they are creamier].

Add 5 Tbsp. of Grits.

Reduce to a simmer and allow the grits to soak up all the water.

When a pencil stuck into the grits stands alone, it is done. That's all there is to cooking grits.

### How to Make Red Eye Gravy

Fry salt-cured country ham in cast iron pan. Remove the ham when done and add coffee to the gravy and simmer for several minutes. Great on grits and biscuits.

### How to Eat Grits:

Immediately after removing your grits from the stove top, add a generous portion of butter or red eye gravy. (WARNING: Do NOT use low-fat butter.) The butter should cause the Grits to turn a wondrous shade of yellow.

In lieu of butter, pour a generous helping of red eye gravy on your grits. Be sure to pour enough to have some left for sopping up with your biscuits. Never, ever substitute canned or store bought biscuits for the real thing because they can cause rotten teeth and impotence.

Next, add salt. NOTICE: The correct ratio of Grit to Salt is 10:1. Therefore for every 10 grits, you should have 1 grain of salt.

Now begin eating your grits. Always use a fork, never a spoon, to eat grits. Your grits should be thick enough so they do not run through the tines of the fork.

The correct beverages to serve with Grits is black coffee and Bloody Mary's. (DO NOT use cream or, heaven forbid, Skim Milk). Your grits

should never be eaten in a bowl because Yankees will claim it's Cream of Wheat.

### Ways to Eat Leftover Grits:

(Leftover grits are extremely rare) Spread them in the bottom of a buttered casserole dish.

Cover and place them in the refrigerator overnight.

The Grits will congeal into a gelatinous mass.

Next morning, slice the Grits into squares and fry them in 1/2" of cooking oil and butter until they turn a golden brown.

### Blessing Before Eating Grits:

May the Lord bless these grits,  
May no Yankee ever get the recipe,  
May I eat grits every day while living,  
And may I die while eating grits.

AMEN



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**\*THURSDAY\*, NOVEMBER 5th @ 5:00 P.M.** = **\*SPECIAL THURSDAY SALE** to auction the remaining lots of **BOTH** Barbara Hunkapiller Estates. These lots will be those which we didn't have time to auction on October 31st. Plus, **Eddie from PA** will be hauling a 53ft. tractor-trailer to add to this date as well.

**\*THURSDAY\*, NOVEMBER 19th @ 5:00 P.M.** = **\*ANOTHER SPECIAL THURSDAY SALE** headlined by **EDDIE FROM PA** and featuring multiple loads. Our building will be **SO FULL** that we are starting this auction on Thursday and finishing on Saturday (**Just like we used to do!**). Pictures, listings, and updates will be available soon for viewing at the web address below.

**\*SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21st @ 4:00 P.M.** = **EDDIE FROM PA** will be selling the remainder of his multiple-loads. We have to sell-out **EVERYTHING** by the end of the year, so we can start over **FRESH** for 2016. This will **NOT** be a "left-over" sale--Eddie & Wilson will be equally dividing the merchandise for these two sales from over **1500 LOTS!! DO NOT MISS THESE SALE DATES!!**

**\*For pictures, listings, details, and directions, log onto [www.auctionzip.com](http://www.auctionzip.com) ~ Auctioneer I.D. #5484. Call us for questions, inquiries, and seating at 256-837-1559!!**

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# Tweetie's Pet Trivia

## Why Hire a Pet Sitter?

A pet sitter – a professional, qualified individual paid to care for your pet – offers both you and your pet many benefits. Your pet gets:

- The environment he knows best.
- His regular diet and routine.
- Relief from traveling to and staying in an unfamiliar place with other animals (such as a boarding kennel).
- Attention while you're away.

### You get:

- The peace of mind that comes from knowing that your pet is being cared for by a professional.
- Someone to bring in your newspaper and mail so potential burglars don't know you're away.
- Someone who will come to your home so you don't have to drive your pet to a boarding kennel.
- Other services provided by most pet sitters, such as plant watering and pet grooming.

### Where do I find a pet sitter?

Start with a recommendation from a friend, neighbor, veterinarian, humane society or dog trainer. Check online or in the Yellow Pages under "Pet Sitting Services." You can also contact the National Association of Professional Pet Sitters (856-439-0324) or Pet Sitters International(336-983-9222).

### What should I look for?

Before selecting a pet sitter, interview the candidates over the phone or at your home. Find out the following;

- Can the pet sitter provide written proof that she has commercial liability insurance (to cover accidents and negligence) and is bonded (to protect against theft by a pet sitter or her employees)?
- What training has the pet sitter completed?
- Will the pet sitter record notes about your pet – such as his likes, dislikes, fears, habits, medical conditions, medications, and routines?
- Is the pet sitter associated with a veterinarian who can provide emergency services?
- What will happen if the pet sitter experiences car trouble or becomes ill? Does



she have a backup?

- Will the sitter provide related services such as in-home grooming, dog walking, dog training and play time?
- Will the sitter provide a written service contract spelling out services and fees?
- If the sitter provides live-in services, what are the specific times she agrees to be with your pet? Is this detailed in the contract?
- Will the pet sitter provide you with the phone numbers of other clients who have agreed to serve as references?

Even if you like what you hear from the pet sitter and from her references, it's important to have the prospective pet sitter come to your home to meet your pet before actually hiring her for a pet-sitting job. Watch how she interacts with your pet – does your pet seem comfortable with the person? If this visit goes well, start by hiring the pet sitter to care for your pet during a short trip, such as a weekend excursion. That way, you can work out any problems in advance.

### Helping the pet sitter and your pet

Of course, even the most trustworthy, experienced pet sitter will have trouble if you haven't also kept your end of the bargain. Here are your responsibilities:

- Make reservations well in advance
- Ensure your pet is well socialized and allows strangers to handle him.
- Affix current identification tags to your pet's collar.
- Maintain current vaccinations for your pet.
- Leave clear instructions detailing specific pet-care responsibilities and emergency contact information, including how to reach you and your veterinarian.
- Leave all pet food and supplies in one place.
- Leave a key with a trustworthy neighbor as a backup, and give him and your pet sitter each other's phone numbers.
- Show the pet sitter your home's important safety features such as the circuit breaker, emergency numbers and security system.

Finally, remember to bring your sitter's phone number when you want to find out how your babies are doing.

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# From the Desk of Tom Carney

## "Account Paid"

by Tom Carney

When Bragg's Grocery on Hurricane Creek closed in 1993, it was the end of an era. The old store had at one time been the center of the community, with housewives gathering inside to trade gossip while their husbands sat outside on the bench talking endlessly about the weather and whittling on ever-present pieces of cedar.

With the store closed, the only thing that remained was a stack of old ledgers from a bygone day, when people would charge their purchases and pay when their crops came in, or maybe when times got better. These yellowed account books contained, in many cases, the life stories of many people who called Hurricane Creek home.

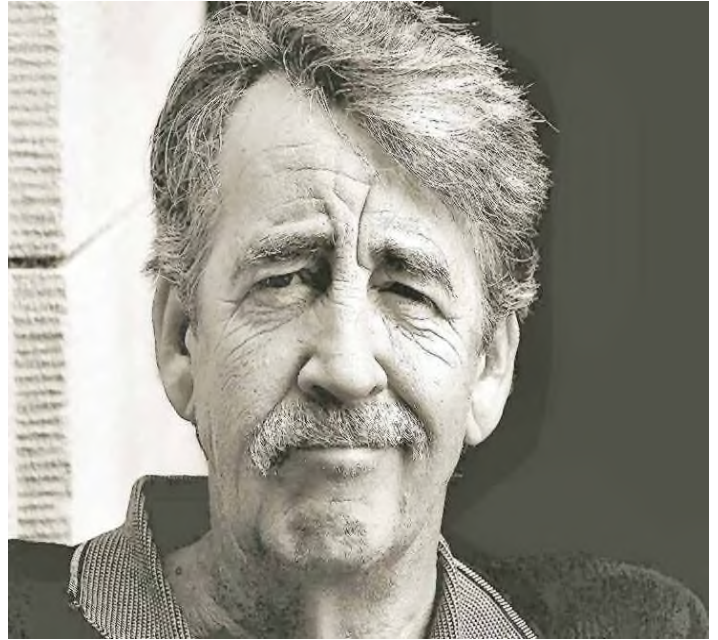
There was Bob Ashburn. He charged a pair of shoes that cost \$2.65. That same day, he purchased a shirt for 75 cents. Looking back at an old calendar, we see that the day was a Friday.

Had he just gotten paid? Or, maybe he was buying new clothes in order to court someone special.

Bill Matthews, on the following day, bought 12 yards of cloth and 10 cents worth of snuff. Wonder if the same person used both?

Charlie Fears must have been a hard-working man because most of his purchases were for farm implements and seed. Two days before Christmas, in 1937, he was back in the store buying apples, candy, and oranges, probably for Santa Claus.

Henry Tucker stopped at the store for 50 cents worth of gas on Christmas Eve. Louise Jolly was in the store the same day settling her account. Bob Langford seemed not to have been in the Christmas spirit that year as



the only purchases he made on December 24, were tobacco, snuff and coffee for a total price of 65 cents.

The first of the month must have been a

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busy time at the store. Old-timers called it "check-cashing day," as that was when they received their government checks. That must have been a popular day for the children too, as almost everyone purchased candy when cashing their checks. Among the people cashing checks was Bill Smith, who also paid his insurance premium (51 cents) at the same time.

Gus White must have been a carpenter, or maybe he was adding on to his house. In January of 1938 he purchased 500 feet of oak boxing, 50 posts and 25 feet of lumber. The lumber was 2 cents a foot.

Macaroni was obviously a popular food. Besides tobacco, coffee and candy, it was the product sold most often. The Walton family purchased macaroni four times in three weeks.

Alvin Blackwell probably didn't travel very far when he was young. His average purchase of gas was only 50 cents. That summer he also charged 19 cents worth of fishing tackle.

The community didn't need a restaurant. On almost every page were listings such as "Logan Honey, lunch — 20 cents."

You would have to guess that the Robert Harris family suffered from sickness that winter. Among their purchases were aspirins, salve, iodine, Black Drought, castor oil, alcohol and salts.

The week before Christmas, Mr. Harris added a French harp, stationery, tablets, apples and a coconut to his bill. Perhaps the most poignant entry in the ledgers is the account of an old man who purchased cotton seed in anticipation of making a crop that year. The man was poor with no way to pay until the crop came in.

Several weeks after the purchase, the old man died, leaving no family or money. The next day someone, in old-fashioned, meticulous handwriting, had carefully entered "Paid" to his account.






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# From Brooms to Vacuums

*The following is reproduced from "Precious Memories... May They Linger" by Thelma Jones with the kind permission of Dr. James Jones.*

*(Originally printed in Old Huntsville Magazine in 1993)*

As I look back over the past seventy-nine years of my life, I marvel at the progress that has been made in the Twentieth Century. I feel very fortunate to have lived in this century. We have gone from oil lamps to fluorescent lighting, phonographs to video recordings, brooms to vacuums, and horse and buggy to space travel.

Before electricity, listening to a phonograph was an active, rather than a passive, pastime. The first phonograph I remember seeing was in about 1914 when I was seven years old. One of our neighbors, Mr. Brown, had a Victor with a horn and crank. The record was quite different from the disc type of today. It was a cylinder placed on a spindle. After the crank was wound, the needle began vibrating up and down, rather than ro-

tating from side-to-side like today's disc. The sound was so different from the sound of modern stereos. Of course, that scratchy, muffled sound was literally music to our ears. We, as children and adults, were always excited to have the rare opportunity to listen to them. One of the first records I heard was "The Preacher and the Bear."

Yes, electricity is the spark that lit the world. In about 1918, electricity became available to the residents of our community. It was then we had our first electric lights, no fancy lighting fixtures in the beginning, only the wiring dropped from the ceiling, with the light being turned on at the bulb. It was a great improvement from the oil lamps - no more smoked chimneys to be cleaned each day before dark!

After electricity our

daily work, as well as leisure time activities, became more convenient. But in the old days when my mother assigned chores such as sweeping floors, vacuum cleaners were not a household item. When Irene and I were girls, we did the household work while Mama and Papa were at work. They worked ten hours a day and Irene and I cooked supper. Most of the time supper consisted of bread and milk. During the winter, we cooked hoe cakes (bread) on the coal heater. It was a Franklin, a cast iron stove with two eyes. Some-

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**Albert Einstein**



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times the bread was burned a little. Mama and Papa could smell the burned bread sometimes before they reached the house.

Mama firmly believed that cleanliness was next to godliness. Since there were no vacuums, my mother could frequently be seen sweeping during the day or at night before we retired. Papa often remarked, "If we could just get Bertha to put that broom down for a few minutes."

Another way in which work changed was with the wringer type washing machine. It eliminated a lot of manual labor that was required when we drew water from the well to fill the wash pot. We made a fire under the wash pot to heat the water. We added Octagon soap powder to the water. (We liked Octagon because its wrapper had a coupon on it. When we accumulated enough coupons, we could redeem them for gifts.)

When the water was hot, we put just enough into the first tub to keep the water warm. The dirty clothes were put into the first tub. Soap was rubbed on the soiled spots and the clothes were washed up and down on the washboard. When we had removed as much dirt as possible with the washboard the clothes were removed to the wash pot.

In the wash pot the clothes boiled for several minutes.

We occasionally punched them with a stick made from an unpainted mop or broom handle. The clothes were then removed from the wash pot with the stick. They were held high for a short interval so that much of the soapy water would drip back into the wash pot. The clothes were then put into the first of two tubs of rinse water. Into the first tub of rinse water, we poured Mrs. Stewart's bluing, a whitener. If too much was added, we would hang blue sheets, blue pillow cases and blue underwear on the line.

Back then, none of the clothes were permanent press. We either used starch, or lived with wrinkled clothing. Argo was a popular brand of starch in those days. Some people acquired skill in starching and ironing to

perfection.

I recall the excellent smoothing iron work of Nannie Clinton. We called her and her husband Aunt Nannie and Uncle Bob. She laundered the linens that were placed on the communion table at church. Those linens were as white as snow and smooth as silk. The smoothing irons had to be heated on the stove. Heating the irons on a hot stove in summer made the chore of ironing a very uncomfortable one. Yes, the introduction of electric irons was a great improvement over the old smoothing irons.

World War II brought about many of the changes which occurred in the 1940s. I began working at Redstone Arsenal in 1943. It was my first full-time job, outside the

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"I didn't attend his funeral, but I sent a nice letter saying I approved of it."

Mark Twain

home, after I was married. When I first began working, I rode the bus. Later I rode to work with a fellow employee who worked in my department.

My first job at Redstone consisted of putting together crates for shells. It was difficult driving nails into the hard wood that was used in assembling crates. I suffered a slight injury the first day on the job, a small scratch above my eye. I was required to seek first aid at the hospital. It was very embarrassing, but it was my last accident.

Next I was placed on an assembly line. There I used a paint brush to paint a strip on shell crates, as they came down the conveyor belt. Finally, I became a checker. I was required to keep a record of the powder poured into the shells. I was also responsible for keeping employees' time cards.

In 1942 and '43 several food items were rationed. Two of the items were shortening and sugar. At times we ran short of these items and listened to news sources reporting any stores having them. We would then immediately send one of the children to purchase them before they were sold out.

Word was received on a very hot summer day that a nearby grocer had shortening. Mary Jo's job was to buy a four-pound carton of lard.

She asked some of her friends to go along with her. One of her friends rode along on a scooter. The children took turns riding and while Mary Jo was riding, the carton of lard slipped out of her hands. The lard was hot and melted when it hit the sidewalk.

One of the children came running home to tell me. I took a vessel to the spot and retrieved as much of the lard as I could. Having lived through the Depression, World War II and food rationing of the 40s, it is easy to understand why many of our generation found the progress of the 1960s and 70s

unbelievable.

John Kennedy's New Frontier was unfolding right before our eyes at Huntsville's Space and Rocket Center. Wernher von Braun lived in our very midst. The space program was underway and the day the first astronaut went into space was unbelievable.

My mother for one had said it could never happen. However, she was privileged to see this event occur before her death in 1965.



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**“Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don't matter and those who matter, don't mind.”**

*Theodore Giesel*

# OLD HUNTSVILLE TRIVIA

1808 - Stephen Neal is appointed Madison County's first sheriff. He and Thomas Freeman are also named Justices of the Peace.

1843 - Madison County now has 23,070 cattle and 8,714 horses.

1885 - City Attorney's office is abolished, but is re-established a year later.

1918 - Huntsville is growing by leaps and bounds. We now have 10 firemen and 10 policemen.

1919 - Fisk community near Hazel Green is bombarded with five-inch hail.

1941 - Hopper Hardware store is established. They sold 107 kerosene lamps in their

first six months of business.

1943 - Joe Tidwell opens his grocery store and J.C. Jamar is publishing the city's newest newspaper: Huntsville Weekly Mirror.

1945 - Waterman Airlines begins regular flights to and from Huntsville.

1946 - City Council takes a chance on modernization and sells the city's last mules and wagons to C.A. Floyd for \$200.

1958 - Secretary of Defense Charles Wilson is hanged in effigy by Huntsvillians who blamed him for Russia being first to launch a spacecraft.

1965 - Ed Greene becomes Madison County's first Bailiff

for Circuit Court, although the legislature had authorized such positions in 1923.

1968 - John Tarver is appointed Assistant City Attorney (Prosecutor). He later is named manager of a citrus plantation in Felsmere, Fla.

1972 - Chattanooga psychic Doc Anderson appears on Channel 31 News and predicts the upcoming wounding of Gov. George Corley Wallace. Movie actor Denver Pyle is at the seer's side as the prediction is made. Anderson had predicted many other major events, among them the deaths of F.D.R. and Martin Luther King.

1974 - Richard Nixon comes to Huntsville and makes his last public appearance before resigning as President of the United States.



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# I Call My Doctor

by Ted Roberts



*"You know your call is important to us.*

*I promise your call is important to us.*

*Don't make a fuss, it's important to us.*

*We'll get back to you next Wednesday, don't cuss,*

*'Cause you know your call's crucial to us."*

I called my doctor the other day. No, it wasn't a social call nor was it a soliciting call for the Obama poverty poll. My question was simple, having undergone a trial of surgery.

"How much longer do I have to live?"

I was encouraged by the immediate recording response. *"A doctor will be with you immediately."*

Great, odds are I'd live to hear the verdict. The most popular message dealt with the adverb "immediately" and the fact that it implied this week. A close No. 2 was the strong implication that patience was next to Godliness and you must never give up, even though the phone slipped from your hand, you're slumped in your chair, and Saint Peter was interrogating your qualifications.

I waited. You know what happened. Three minutes crawled by and an anything but urgent voice informed me that all assistants were "helping other patients". Well, you certainly couldn't complain about that. Trouble was, I might have to receive the next message by celestial mail, which would do me no good at all.

Then hope blossomed again. An urgent voice told me that they knew my message was important to me. Don't give up - the cavalry was on its way.

I listened with baited breath. And what disappointing news I received. A repeat: All the doctor's assistants were busy helping patients. How they were helping them was not hinted; reading the apocalypse, scrambling breakfast eggs, giving

advice on how to detect syphilis, financing their bill, reading 10,000 pages of Obamacare.

No estimate whatsoever on when my turn would come along.

Sometimes I think I'd rather get a bleak message that says, "Quit wasting your time, you ain't got a prayer. Maybe better to call next Tuesday around 3:30. There'll probably only be a two hour wait."

By now I had changed the rules of this one-sided game. "I'm dying here - why doesn't the doc hire more assistants? You told me that three messages ago. If you realize my question is important to me, send me an email or put the doc on."

"Don't hang up, advice from the Mayo Clinic is en route."

"Yeah, who'll receive it, my heirs?"

Finally, after three appendectomies, a heart valve replacement and three bladder removals a human voice came on the phone. (It didn't apologize by the way.) I briskly stated my business after several minutes of discussion of the word "immediately".

No, they couldn't define it!

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# Popular Superstitions



- Keep garlic hanging in the doorway of your kitchen to keep out all people who wish you harm.

- Killing a cricket is bad luck.

- Leaving a dwelling from a door different from the one you entered is bad luck.

- Lift your feet up when driving over railroad tracks for good luck.

- Never begin a task on a Friday that you can't finish that week, or expect bad results.

- Never invite a door knocker to come in without seeing who is there first. It might be an evil spirit.

- Never say "thank you" when someone gives you a plant or it will die.

- Never shut a pocket knife someone else opened, they must shut it themselves.

- Never tickle a baby's feet because you will make it stutter.

- Place old baby shoes in the attic to prevent witches from stealing babies. The witches are confused by the odor and take the shoes instead.

- Placing a hat on a table or the bed is bad luck.

- Placing keys on a table will result in an aggravating day.

- At midnight a bird that comes in your window brings bad luck.

- A bride should be carried through the door of their new home for assured love always.

- A buckeye in your pocket is good luck

- A cricket in your house is a very good sign.

- A dog howling at night when someone in the house is sick is a bad omen.

- A lock of hair from a baby's first haircut should be kept for good luck.

- If a peculiar noise is heard three times in succession at night, someone will die.

- A person cannot drown before going under three times.

- If you have a rabbit's foot it brings good luck

- A ring around the moon means that rain will come in three days.

- A small new potato in your pocket will help with arthritis.

- A squat bottle with nails, broken glass or anything sharp should be placed in a wall or attic of a new house. This gives witches a pain in the womb should they approach.

- After receiving a container of food, the container should never be returned empty.

- Always say "so long" or "I'll see you later", and never "goodbye", when leaving family members or you might never see them again.

- Plaster or stone lions or dragons at the foot of stairs will frighten away demons.

- Play with fire and you will pee in the bed that night.

- Put a pair of open scissors under your pillow for good luck and to keep away evil spirits.

- A sailor wearing an earring in one ear cannot drown.

- If a shark is pursuing a ship it means bad luck, especially if there are sick people onboard.

- If you see 3 hawks circling in the sky you will experience a major event in your family life.

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[Kim.SteadyforLife@gmail.com](mailto:Kim.SteadyforLife@gmail.com)

# Uncle Bill, the Bootlegger

by Charles Martin

The first memories I have of my Uncle Bill was when I was about nine or ten years old back in the 1920s. I remember spending the night with my cousins and being woken up at all times of the night when people would knock on the door. After a few minutes of whispered conversation, my Uncle would give them a bottle in a brown paper bag.

At the time I just assumed my Uncle had a lot of friends. It was several years before I realized he was a bootlegger.

Uncle Bill sold moonshine. He would buy several gallons at a time and dispense it in half pint and pint fruit jars. Friday nights were always his busiest time and us kids were warned to stay out of the kitchen. Sometimes we would sneak and watch what was going on. I remember a bunch of men drinking and playing cards. I don't remember there ever being any trouble.

Uncle Bill had a small room built on the house, next to the kitchen, for a bathroom, only it wasn't a bathroom. There was a commode that fed into a wash tub under the house. When he got raided he

would pour the liquor down the commode and after the law left he would retrieve it and bottle it again.

One time he got raided and he just barely had time to pour the booze down the commode. After the deputies had searched in vain and were about to leave, one of them excused himself, saying he had to go to the bathroom.

I hope Uncle Bill didn't bottle that whiskey again.

Another time he was walking into the house carrying a glass gallon jar of moonshine when deputies sneaked up on him. Thinking fast, my Uncle threw the jar with all of his might against a large rock. Instead of breaking it simply bounced off the rock like a rubber ball and rolled to where one of the deputies was standing.

As the deputy picked up the evidence, it slipped out

of his hand and fell to the ground, shattering into a million pieces.

With no evidence, they could not arrest Uncle Bill.

We all knew what he did for a living but somehow it just didn't seem that bad back then. I don't remember him ever saying a curse word or raising his voice to anyone.

Aunt Jemma never spoke about her husband bootlegging. She always referred to it as "Bill's business." The only argument I ever recall them having was when Uncle Bill confiscated two boxes of canning jars that she had purchased.

Family legend has it that when he died, Aunt Jemma put a half pint in his coffin.



## Louie

Meow, the Ark named me "Louie" after King Louie in the Disney Jungle Book. King Louie was an orangutan but I am a beautiful kitty. I am a big guy for a 9-month-old feline. A kind gentleman found me wandering

in his yard. He tried for a long time to find my family. He finally decided to bring me to the Ark. I have a very sweet disposition.

I am looking for a companion that likes big cats. I would like to have a "cat tower" to climb on. I prefer my own bed but would like to sleep on my companions' bed too. I am neat and clean with my litter box. I like dry kitten chow and need to stay on it until I am one year old. I do not do any house cleaning. I would love to be brushed and kept free from fleas. I am an indoor cat only. Do you have room in your heart and home for me? Come to the Ark and ask to see the king, oops, I mean Louie. That's me.

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## A Boy Named Beau

by Gary Luerding

I remember the day I brought you home from the shelter. They told me you were ten months old, a Golden Retriever, Great Pyrenees mix and weighed ninety pounds. My wife and I wanted a smaller dog, but when our eyes met and you looked at me so expectantly with such a hunger to be free, I couldn't resist. You got into my heart in just those few seconds. From that moment on you were mine and I was yours and I named you Beau.

We bonded immediately and I marveled at how intelligent you were. You quickly learned the names of your toys and also what "sit," "lie down," and "stay" meant and when you wanted out, you'd touch the door knob with your nose. We'd go for our walks in the morning and you were so eager you'd gently grab my arm in those massive jaws and pull me toward the door then sit patiently as I attached your leash. One thing I could never do was teach you to heel. You had a stubborn streak in you, but that was okay as long as you didn't pull too hard.

You scared me once, you know. The first time you came up to my chair, looked straight into my eyes, bared your teeth and growled caused my heart to thud in my chest, but that was your way of saying, "lets play." And when I tried to ignore you, you'd sit back and bark in that deep voice of yours.

When I sat in my chair, you'd lay your head at my feet looking up occasionally to make sure I knew you were there. Of course I did. By that time you weighed over 100 pounds. Who could have mistaken your presence?

You rarely let me out of your sight either. Whether I was working in the yard, or sitting at the computer, you were always by my side. Digging in the garden, your nose would be inches from the shovel and I was afraid I'd hurt you, but you were always fast on your feet.

What was irritating were the times you'd growl and try to nip my ankles or grab my foot as we walked together,

but you never tried to hurt me. You just thought it was fun even though I yelled at you to stop.

Then came the dark days. Those days when you became lethargic and refused to eat. The vet said you had Lyme disease and you were given a month's worth of antibiotic. You seemed to recover after that, and your appetite returned, but you wouldn't eat regular dog food so I fed you "people food." You were spoiled, but I didn't care. It was simple to prepare an extra portion of food for you each evening.

And just when we thought you were returning to health, you refused all food and I had to coax you to drink water by putting my hand in your bowl and bringing my filled palm up to your muzzle. You'd look into my eyes, not really wanting any but doing it just to please me, after I pleaded, saying, "Please, drink, Beau" and your tongue would touch my open hand.

Even after all the tests we put you through, the vet didn't know what caused your sickness and had never seen anything like it before. You were so young, barely two years old, and full of life. Did you know? Did you know you'd be with us for only a short time? Is that why you were so desperate to leave the shelter?

I didn't want you to leave us, Beau. I couldn't bare the thought of having you put to sleep. Yet I couldn't let you go through it without being by your side. We had made a commitment to each other and I'd stay with you till the end no matter how much it bruised my heart.

Did you feel me stroke your head and listen to my whisper when, for the final time, you looked into my eyes then went peacefully to sleep?

I miss you every day, Beau.

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# I Remember

by Don Wynn

*Originally published in "Old Huntsville" magazine in 1993*

In my youth, I developed a real affection for Mullins' Drive-In. It was one of the centers of activity in the community and almost everybody went there once or twice every week.

The building that used to house Mullins is still standing at the corner of 5th Avenue (it's now called Andrew Jackson Way) and Stevens Avenue in the Five Points area. Even though that building seems small when I drive by it today, Mullins' Drive-In seemed like a big place in the 60s. It had large plate glass "picture windows" that faced both streets. It was well lit inside and there was always a lot of noise and activity.

I remember sitting at the counter when I was a boy about 12 or 13 years old. Mr. Mullins and the waitresses made me feel as though I were the King ordering my lunch from the Palace kitchen. Everybody knew ev-

erybody else and always took an interest in what you were doing.

The traffic light and the bus stop at the corner made it possible to sit in the corner booth and keep track of the goings and comings of everyone in that entire part of town. In the afternoons and on weekends, kids would fill that prize booth for hours. The jukebox on the front wall was kept busy playing the latest rock-n-roll songs.

All the kids wore a uniform of sorts. Boys wore white T-shirts, dark blue jeans with the cuffs turned up, white socks and penny loafers. The penny loafers weren't complete unless they actually had pennies in the tabs. In the winter, leather jackets were everywhere. Just about every hair cut involved long greasy hair that ended in a duck-tail in the back. When it was time for a hair cut, the boys would land in Floyd Hardin's barber chair and order a "flattop with fenders."

The girls wore turtle neck sweaters, poodle skirts, bobbie socks and saddle oxfords. When they danced to rock-n-roll music, their skirts would flare out when they did the spins.

Neighborhood boys could always pick up a little spending money by working as car-hops for Mr. Mullins. Mike Smith, Joe Ward, Joe Sharpe and my brother C.E. Wynn spent a lot of time sitting on Coke flats along the outside wall on Stevens Avenue waiting for customers to drive up. People would park on Stevens, honk their car horns and wait for one of these boys to take their orders. They could eat in their cars with serving trays hung on the door glass or they could simply pick up their orders "to go."

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The boys earned about 30 cents per hour plus tips. They weren't real formal about work hours though. Boys would usually drop by when they needed money and would ask Mr. Mullins if they could work for a while. At the end of the day, the boys would be paid in cash for their efforts.

Sometimes when business was slow and Mr. Mullins didn't really need anybody, the boys would work anyway just for the tips. They didn't have anything else to do so they just sat on Coke flats telling jokes and stories and waiting for customers.

An added incentive to working as a car-hop was that most of the waitresses were teen-age girls. They were all beautiful to us.

The restaurant has moved a few blocks down Andrew Jackson since the 60s but not much has

really changed. The dining area is bigger and there is a big parking lot. The people are always friendly and the waitresses are all pretty.

You can always find someone who wants to talk about the Dallas Mill and the Mill Village, Rison School, Optimist Park, Huntsville and days gone by. Those days seem like a world away.

You might even see a little of the history of Huntsville displayed in the photographs and mementos, if they're still on the walls.

And if you happen to look in the phone book, it's still listed there as Mullins' Drive-In Restaurant!

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# JFK Remembers a Huntsville Soldier and his Family; A Story from Bobby Hayden

by Steve Gierhart

My mom, Fannie Battle Hayden, knew when to be kind but also when to cut a head off. Momma often said "This is not a democracy; this is a dictatorship."

I guess in the long run, she knew best. I've had a remarkable life. Luck certainly entered into it, but I know she helped me get there.

Back before many of my color were given the same opportunities as others, I was an angry young man, but Fannie helped guide that constructively. I was drafted into the United States Army on January 2, 1961. I was student teaching at the time and about to graduate from Alabama A&M. My mom worked in the cafeteria there, so I had to be on my best behavior. Couldn't get away from her, even by going to college, that being a rare feat for black men of my time.

I thought my future was in the classroom, not in the White House with JFK where I ended up in June 1962. I was one of the first group of black men in the Army's Old Guard, the 3rd Regiment out of Ft. Myers, Virginia.

That's a long story, too much for this little flashback, so I want to tell about an event that involved my momma, one after my assignment to the Honor Guard for President John F. Kennedy. It shows how that fine President watched over those who watched over him.

I had been with the Old Guard for a few months and knew the routine. I had gotten here by a circuitous route and an impossible set of odds, but when my mom found out about my new assignment, she quickly told me "Do your job and keep your

mouth shut!" That was good advice for someone like me. After all, it was my firecracker emotion that could have gotten me a lot worse and sometimes did. It was also the reason I was with the Old Guard, though not before a lot of pushups handed out by my superiors at Ft. Chaffee where I was assigned before the White House.

On May 17, 1963 I was shining my ten pairs of shoes that matched my ten uniforms, something that matched my ten uniforms, something that had to be done every day if I was to pass inspection. I was actually much happier here than at Ft. Chaffee. I had taken momma's advice and worked hard to prove her right although I also admit to a desire to prove those wrong that thought I would never make it in Washington.

I was interrupted by Sgt. Eldridge Johnson, my white staff sergeant, who had a note from the President's office. I was to report the next morning to Andrews AFB for duty aboard Air Force One. Sgt. Johnson, who called me "Bama", did not know the reason, but I was excited regardless.

I discovered that none of my African-American buddies in our Magnificent Seven, the seven first black

initiates into the Presidential Honor Guard, were assigned to the trip. So I did not find out until the morning that I was to go to Huntsville where the President was giving an Armed Forces Day speech at Redstone Arsenal. I thought to myself, "Wow, if I can only call momma while I'm there!"

It was peculiar, but I did not have to report in my dress blues, my normal uniform for White House duty, but I had brought them for a quick change as necessary. The informality of the assignment was also odd. I was not a friend of the President or anything. Wasn't my job.

The flight was uneventful if not fulfilling. I arrived jittery

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with excitement. Of course, I did not disembark with the Presidential party, but after the pomp and circumstance had fled the scene, I deplaned to find a staff car and driver had been assigned to me personally. And the driver was told to take me to Alabama A&M where I was to visit with momma!

I arrived at A&M and went directly to the cafeteria. I managed to sneak in and walked up behind Fannie without her noticing me. I put my hands around her eyes and asked her to "guess who." Of course, she knew, but her expression was one I will never forget. She brightened up like the sun shining off of a field of daisies, because she and I both knew her hard work and perseverance had paid off. She turned around and we hugged for what seemed like an eternity, but in a serene way - happiness that was to be savored for more than a moment. Then the party started.

The word spread around campus. Even A&M Vice President Leander Patton heard about the commotion. He let out classes and before momma and I knew it, we were surrounded by friends and students. Mr. Patton, who headed up business and finance for the university and for whom I had worked as a student, came up to me and shook my hand, but with a huge smile asked "Why are you goofing off and are you AWOL?"

I took it all in stride, but I was very happy, especially for momma who, though well-respected in the univer-

sity community, enjoyed the extra attention brought on by her son's assignment to such a prestigious position. It also demonstrated the kindness and attention to detail that the President had for the members of his Honor Guard.

I spent about four hours at A&M while the President gave his speech, but I knew that while John Fitzgerald Kennedy had already earned my respect, he now won my heart along with my allegiance. I had been made to feel special by a special President. It was a day neither my mom or I would ever forget.

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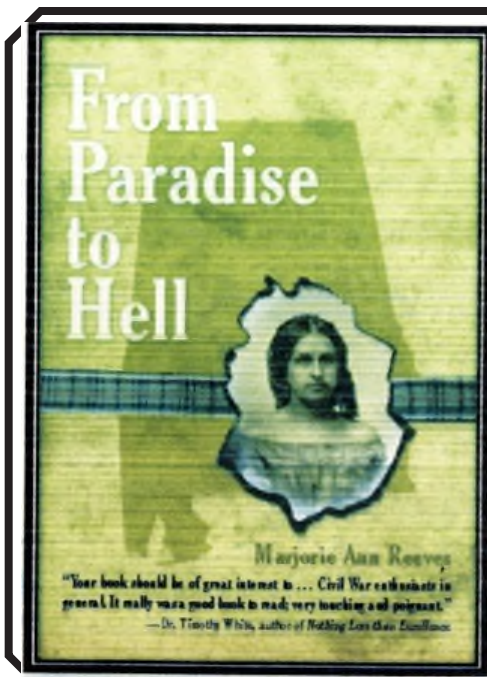
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# A Summer Night

by Johnny Johnston

The summer 1955, I had just graduated from Butler High; Dad had gotten all his brothers and sisters to come here for the first reunion in 40 years. The crowd had left late in the evening, the lights in the meeting area outside where the latest conversations had taken place. That weekend I had met Aunts and Uncles for the first time and learned things I had not heard before.

I learned that my Grandfather, who lived in Paint Rock Valley at the time, was a prideful man who paid his bills and expected to be repaid what was owed him. He and all the family worked at the Horn Blow Stave Mill Company of which they had followed from Kentucky with many stops along the way.

He was owed money by a neighbor who had successfully hidden from him for many months and was not about to pay. My Grandfather, his son-in-law Tom Markham and Dad had taken a wagon from around Princeton to the closest community with shopping which was Paint Rock, Alabama.

Paint Rock consisted of several drinking establishments, a

hardware store and a couple of grocery stores.

My Grandfather and Tom Markham wanted something cool so they entered a drinking establishment along with my Father, John, who was not turned away. He was only a teenager. Rules were not well known, let alone enforced. Grandfather spotted the neighbor who owed him money, drew the old rusty pistol and shot his neighbor when he refused payment. Grandfather cocked the hammer of the old rusty .38 and placed the pistol against his neighbor's head. He had full intentions of adding a second wound which would have ended his neighbor's life.

Sam Markham quickly grabbed the pistol and in the process his thumb lodged between the hammer and the pistol as Grandfather pulled the

trigger. Needless to say the pistol did not fire but Sam almost lost his thumb. I asked what happened to my Grandfather. Dad said laws were not exact in those days. The Jackson County Sheriff came by the Mill a couple of days later, said the neighbor was still living but said "Mr. Johnston, if he dies you know I'll have to come arrest you, don't you?"

As I sat alone in the yard thinking of this story and others I had heard that night, a very strange thing happened. A very large solid white bird with a wing span of 5 or 6 feet landed close enough that I could have grabbed him. It scared the living air from my body. He looked around the yard for a minute or so then flew off just like he came.

Never saw a bird like that before or since. Don't really want to.



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# We Never Forgot Him

by Bill Wright

It was the winter of 1952 when our Army Infantry Regiment arrived in Korea. We had just completed nine months of advanced infantry training in Japan. I was 20 years old and assigned to a machine gun platoon.

In late summer of that year the entire Regiment was sent to Koje-Do Island to help guard North Korean prisoners-of-war. There were 50,000 North Korean prisoners there and they were constantly rioting. At Koje-Do we would occasionally patrol the surrounding hills looking for any suspicious activity. One day we came upon a group of South Korean teenage boys. They were harmless refugees from Korea and like everyone else trying to survive the war. There was a young boy with them who was very thin and wearing rags for clothing. The teenage boys told us his parents had either been killed in the war or had become separated from him. The teenagers agreed with us taking him, although we were not supposed to. They said his name was "Chon" and he was 6 years old.

We took Chon to a nearby village and paid a Korean tailor to make him a Army looking uniform. He now looked like us. We kept Chon in our squad tent and gave him small jobs to keep him occupied. Each day, 3 times a day, we would bring him a meal from the Mess Hall. Chon was gaining weight and looking healthy.

After 2 months at Koje-Do Island

guarding prisoners-of-war the entire Regiment was ordered back to Korea for more front-line combat duty. This created a problem about what to do with Chon. We did not want to send a 6 year old child back to the hills to fend for himself, but we knew we could not take him on a military ship back to Korea, nor could we take him into a combat zone.

We developed a plan where we would hide Chon in a duffel bag and sneak him on the ship with us for the short trip to Pusan, Korea. We could then, hopefully, find an orphanage that would accept him. So that is exactly what we did.

Once we arrived in Pusan, Korea we had to react quickly to find an orphanage before the Regiment moved north towards the front-lines. We were successful in finding one that agreed to accept Chon. We said goodbye to him and left.

We would not see Chon again, but we never forgot him....a 6 year old child that showed us a side of the war we had never seen before.

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