



No. 278

APRIL 2016



Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY



A Night at the Maple Grove Nightclub

THE MAPLE GROVE NIGHTCLUB IN HUNTSVILLE WAS A SUCCESS ALMOST FROM THE DAY IT OPENED ITS DOORS IN 1937. LOCATED ABOUT A MILE OUTSIDE OF TOWN ON MERIDIAN STREET IN THE OLD CHASE HOME, THE CLUB WAS THE BRAINCHILD OF BUSHY BOLTON AND BROWN HAMBRICK WHO SAW THE NEED FOR ELEGANT ENTERTAINING IN A TOWN JUST BEGINNING TO RECOVER FROM THE DEPRESSION.

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A Night at the Maple Grove Nightclub

by Tom Carney

The Maple Grove Nightclub was a success almost from the day it opened its doors in 1937. Located about a mile outside of town on Meridian Street in the old Chase home, the club was the brainchild of Bushy Bolton and Brown Hambrick who saw the need for elegant entertaining in a town just beginning to recover from the Depression.

And elegant it was. A very tuxedo'd doorman met you at the door and led you inside to rooms decorated with heavy gilt mirrors on the walls and red velvet chairs and settees arranged for the guests' comfort. Waiters circulated through the rooms with trays of drinks while a band, usually imported from out of town, played the latest dance tunes in the main room.

Oftentimes, during periods of good weather, the crowds would be so overflowing that the band would move outside where they played on a make-

shift bandstand under trees decorated with festive lanterns.

The proprietors missed no details. There were even several one-room cottages on the premises where tipsy patrons could spend the night and sleep it off.

It was the room in back of the nightclub, however, that attracted the most people, and brought in the most money. The room had, probably at one time, been two bedrooms, but with the center wall torn out it provided ample space for the dice and card tables that provided one of the club's biggest attractions.

Although Brown Hambrick ran the club itself, Bushy Bolton was the undisputed boss of the gaming room. Almost six feet tall and heavily muscled, Bolton had once worked as a prize fighter and had earned a reputation as a tough, but fair, opponent. He was a shrewd gambler who knew the odds and, more importantly, what it took to stay in business.

He had a sentry posted at the end of the driveway and if anyone suspicious appeared, the sentry would press a buzzer that would ring inside the club. In just minutes the money would disappear and the gambling tables would be taken apart and boxed up. It was against the law to run a gaming house but there was nothing illegal about owning equipment that was not being used.

As the club's reputation

If aliens saw us walking our dogs and picking up their poop, who would they think is really in charge?



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Old Huntsville, Inc. (USPS #8510)
716 East Clinton Ave.
Huntsville, Al 35801

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Email - oldhuntsville@knology.net
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Publisher - Cathey Carney

Advertising - (256) 534-0502
Sales & Mrktg. - Cathey Carney
Editor - Cheryl Tribble
Consultant - Ron Eyestone
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Copy Boy - Tom Carney
(in memory)

"Old Huntsville" magazine is a monthly publication. Annual subscriptions are \$25 per year.

For subscription change of address, mail new information to the above address.

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grew it began to attract professional gamblers, and cheats, from across the region. Bolton would usually sit on a tall stool in the corner watching the games through half-closed eyelids. A slight move of his head might give the dealer permission to take a personal check from a customer. Another move would signal the dealer to call for a new deck.

Nothing escaped Bolton's attention. Sometimes it might be a card that was bent just a little too much or a customer who spent a lot of time with his hands in his pockets. When this happened he would move his stool a little closer, and if his suspicions were confirmed, motion for the player to follow him outside. Cheats rarely visited the Maple Grove more than once.

One day in late May of 1938 Bushy was standing on the front porch smoking a cigarette and thinking about that night's game when a strange car pulled into the drive. It was an older car with luggage and household furnishings tied to its top and clothes piled in

the back seat. Bolton had seen thousands of cars like this in the past several years - couples fleeing poverty and traveling in search of a dream and a job.

He watched as the couple got out of the car and walked over to where he stood. Their looks confirmed his first suspicions. The man's hair was just a bit too long, as if he had skipped the last couple of haircuts, and the suit he wore was maybe a size too small and shiny at the knees and elbows. The woman, attractive in a natural way, was dressed in a thin cotton dress with a man's sweater thrown about her shoulders.

They were having car trouble and wanted to know if they could use the phone to call a wrecker. Bushy pointed to the phone, and while the man was making the call, struck up a conversation with the young woman who had introduced herself as Katie Roberts.

They were on their way to Florida, the woman explained, so her husband, Bob, could get a job at the shipyards. They had lived in Gary, Indiana but there were no jobs there so they

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decided to leave. Her cousin was already in Florida and had promised to get her husband a job. In a way Bolton felt sorry for the young woman because she was so naive and trusting.

"Bad news," Roberts said as he returned from the phone call. "They're going to send a wrecker out for the car but he said it's going to be two or three days before they can fix it. They have to send off for a part. Maybe we can hitch a ride with the wrecker driver to where we can rent a room."

Katie turned to Bolton who was listening to the conversation. "Maybe you could rent us one of those cabins. We'll only be here for a few days and we have the money to pay."

Bolton thought about it for a moment. He wasn't in the room-renting business but he wasn't going to need the room until that weekend and the couple did need help. "All right," he said "but you have to be gone by Saturday morning. And pay in advance." He felt sorry for them, especially the woman, but it wasn't his problem.

About a mile away at the County Jail, on Washington Street, Sheriff Blakemore was having his own problems. Ever since the Russel Erskine Hotel had opened downtown the previous year, Mayor McAllister had been on his back about closing up the Maple Grove. Business leaders were complaining that the nightclub was drawing money away from the businesses downtown. The hotel had recently opened the Blue Room in a bid for the nightlife business but customers were ignoring it in favor of the popular Maple Grove

Nightclub.

He had already raided the place several times with no success. The club had lookouts posted and as soon as a lawman would appear the gambling paraphernalia would vanish.

A bit reluctantly, Blakemore summoned one of his deputies. "Get a couple of the men together. We're going to raid the Maple Grove on Friday night." He knew that Friday night was one of the club's biggest nights and the place would be loaded with high-rolling gamblers.

The sheriff liked Bushy Bolton, personally, although many of Huntsville's business leaders considered Bolton a bad influence in the community. The sheriff had followed the young man's career as a professional boxer and had never heard of any trouble at the nightclub. As far as he knew, the games were honest and if a man wanted to gamble it was his own business.

But the law was the law....

Back at the Maple Grove that evening, business was slow, a typical Wednesday night. There were perhaps a dozen regulars and occasionally someone else would wander in, have a couple drinks and maybe shoot dice for a few minutes before leaving. Several times Bolton thought of the young couple whom he had rented the room to. He had seen them walk to a nearby store earlier in the day and return with a bag of groceries. The woman would be pretty, he thought, if she would fix herself up a little. But her husband was a different story. Bolton had seen thousands like him. Earlier that day he had smelled alcohol on the man's breath and knew it would just be a matter of time before he showed up looking for another drink. He could tell it in the eyes.

Minutes later, almost as if fulfilling a prophesy, Roberts




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"I never said most of the things I said."

Yogi Berra

entered the club and after finding a seat in the corner of the room, ordered a drink. He appeared to be already drunk, but he was well behaved and not causing any trouble so Bolton motioned for the waiter to serve him.

After having several drinks, the man wandered into the back room where a dice game was in progress. The bets were small, a dollar or two at the most, so no one objected when he joined the game. Within minutes it was apparent to everyone in the room that the stranger knew nothing about shooting dice. He made every wrong bet possible and kept throwing dollar bills on the table trying to win back what he had lost. After about an hour he ran out of money and went back to his room to sleep it off.

Bolton was sympathetic, Roberts had lost fifty or sixty bucks that he could probably not afford, but business was business. He thought this was probably the last thing in the world this young couple needed.

The next day was a repetition of the first. The couple

walked down to the store and returned with a small bag of groceries and late that afternoon Roberts once again appeared at the club, obviously drunk. After having a couple drinks he began shooting dice with the same luck he had the day before. By nine o'clock he had lost almost two hundred dollars and was getting even drunker.

Bolton had just about decided to get someone to take Roberts back to his cabin to sleep it off when Katie, his wife, entered the club. Without saying a word she went to the table where her husband had passed out, and talking to him softly while gently stroking his cheek, got him to leave with her.

There was silence for a few moments after the couple left. Finally one of the patrons broke the spell by saying, "That's a real good woman."

Everyone agreed with the sentiment, wondering silently if their own wives would be so accommodating and thinking probably not.

The following day, Friday, Bolton saw Katie outside her cabin and stopped to talk with

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her. She told him the car would be ready that afternoon and that they planned to leave early the next morning.

Finally Bolton brought up the subject he had stopped to talk to her about. For some strange reason he felt protective of her. "Katie, your husband doesn't have any business gambling. He doesn't know what he's doing and you would be better off saving the money. If you want me to, if he comes in the club tonight I'll tell him he can't play."

"No! Don't do that!" She replied anxiously. "He's good at gambling and he's told me all about how to win and everything. And besides, since he got laid off there aren't too many things that he really enjoys. He loves to gamble."

Bolton shook his head and walked off. It was her life.

That evening the club was packed with Huntsville's finest when Roberts arrived once again. In a repeat performance, after having a few drinks, he started shooting dice, and again, he was a consistent loser. Everybody in the place had noticed how inept he was and several patrons had even tried to advise him on how to bet, but he totally ignored them. By

about ten o'clock he had lost almost four hundred dollars and could barely stand on his feet when his wife once again showed up to take him home.

When he tried to protest, she talked to him in a soothing voice, saying how much she loved him while coaxing him to the front door.

It is difficult to explain now, but the whole room was captivated by her gentleness and the obvious love she had for her husband. One patron summed it up in a nutshell when he exclaimed, "Damn, what a good woman to be married to such a louse!"

Twenty minutes later the club had returned to normal and most of the customers had forgotten all about the incident when suddenly, Katie returned. This time there was something a little different about her, her face was flushed and there was a steely look in her eyes that had not been there before.

Approaching Bolton where he was sitting on his stool, Katie loudly exclaimed that she wanted to gamble. "You have taken all of our money except for forty-seven dollars and I'm going to gamble the rest of it. You have to give me a chance to get even!"

"Yesterday I did nothing, and today I'm finishing up what I did yesterday."

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Bolton tried to coax her into leaving, telling her to save the money, but Katie was determined and refused to listen to reason. Several of the customers spoke up, telling Bolton it was only fair to give her a chance.

Irritated, Bolton finally agreed, more because of the customers than for her. "Put your money on the table," he said in a commanding voice.

"Don't know nothing about dice," she retorted.

"OK, how about a hand of poker."

"Don't know nothing about poker neither."

Bolton was about to lose his patience. "How are you going to play if you don't know how?"

Suddenly Katie seemed to brighten up. "I know how to draw high card. My husband showed me how."

By this time the customers had stopped what they were

doing and were watching the mini-drama unfold. Bolton impatiently waved to his dealer to bring a deck of cards.

"I'm not playing with your cards! My husband told me how people can cheat with them." Katie looked at the gathered crowd to see if they agreed with her.

Bolton was in a jam. He didn't want people to think he was running crooked games but if the woman didn't want to play with his cards he didn't know what else to do.

By this time the crowd was thoroughly enjoying the confrontation. A customer broke the deadlock when he threw a couple dollars down and told Bolton to send someone to the store for some new decks.

A few minutes later the employee returned with two decks of cards. Bolton tossed them on the table and told her to choose one. After she chose, he told her to go ahead and shuffle. He



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was beginning to get a little impatient.

"Don't know how to shuffle." Seeing Bolton getting angrier by the moment she told Bolton to shuffle the cards. "But do it real slow because I'm going to watch you," she said while laying her forty-seven dollars in the middle of the table.

All Bolton wanted to do at this point was to get rid of the woman. After giving the cards a few shuffles, he spread them on the table and reached down and flipped one over. A Queen of Spades.

All eyes were watching Katie as she leaned over the table, selected a card and slowly turned it over. A King of Clubs. Now she had ninety four dollars.

"All right, lady," Bolton said, "You've gambled and you've won. Now take your money and go!"

"No, I want to keep on. You didn't tell my husband to leave when he was losing. I'm going to bet it all."

Bolton, realizing the crowd's sentiment was with the woman, shrugged his shoulders and drew another card. It was a Nine of Diamonds.

Katie drew. Jack of Diamonds. Now there was one hundred and eighty-eight dollars on the table.

"Again," Katie demanded.

Bolton flipped a card. A six.

Katie drew a nine, and won again. Three hundred and seventy-six dollars was laying in front of her.

Bolton didn't wait to be asked to draw again, and picked a ten.

Once again Katie won, drawing a king and winning seven

hundred and fifty-two dollars.

By this time the room is quiet. Although many of the patrons wanted to see Katie win they realized she had to lose at some point if she kept betting it all.

"How long do you want to keep doing this?" Bolton asked.

"Until I have all of your money or you have mine." There was a hardness in her voice that had not been there before.

Bolton reshuffled, spread the cards and drew another. A three.

Katie drew a six, giving her over fifteen hundred dollars in winnings.

This was serious money. Bolton was no longer interested in placating the woman, he just wanted his money back.

Another card. Another loss



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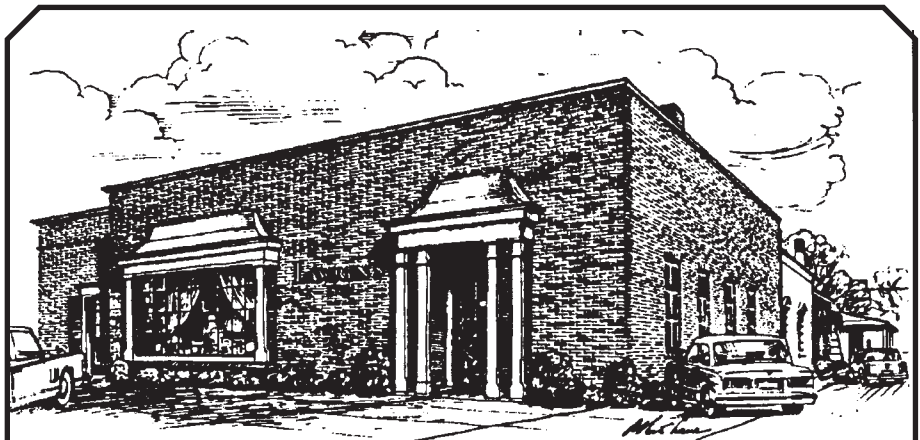
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and over three thousand dollars on the table.

Bolton drew another. A King of Clubs. A sigh went through the room as people realized it would be almost impossible for her to draw a higher card.

Katie reached over and flipped a card over. Ace of Hearts. She won over six thousand dollars.

Bolton looked at the cards as if not believing what happened. This had never happened before. Reluctantly he announced the game was over, the house was broke.

Katie left the money laying on the table and looked at the crowd. "Anyone else?"

There was a frantic scurrying about as the people began to pool their money. This was a sucker bet. They knew that it was impossible for someone to win every time cutting high card.

Once the money was on the table Katie told the designated player to shuffle and draw. The man asked for another deck. Katie shrugged her shoulders as if to say, "Whatever."

With everyone watching, he turned a four.

Katie drew a seven.

With almost thirteen thousand dollars on the table, it was the biggest pot most of these people had ever seen. "Again?" Katie asked.

There was silence until one person spoke up. "Miss, you have all the money. There ain't no way we can match that pot."

"How much do you have?"

After a period of brief whispering among the onlookers, they placed another six hundred on the table. Katie carefully picked up her winnings, leaving just enough to cover the new bet.

The man drew a ten. Katie drew a Jack. The game was over with the house and all of its customers dead broke. Asking for a paper bag to carry her winnings in, Katie announced

to the awestruck crowd, "You boys can go on home now because I'm going to Florida."


Within a few minutes the Maple Grove Nightclub was completely empty. No one had any desire, or money, to drink or gamble anymore that night. They had watched the impossible become reality.

Meanwhile, Sheriff Blakemore was preparing to raid the place. Earlier that day he had one of his deputies slip onto the grounds and cut the wire that led to the alarm. At about ten o'clock, when he knew the place would be going full blast, he barged through the front door while loudly announcing that this was a raid in progress.

Unfortunately, the place was empty except for Bushy Bolton who was sitting quietly in a chair drinking a Double Cola. After making sure the place was really empty Blake-more returned to where Bolton was sitting.

"Bushy," he said, "You have to be one of the luckiest peo-

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ple alive." "If you only knew," Bolton replied while shaking his head. "If you only knew."

Appropriately, the story would end here if it were not for certain aftermaths that make the story even more intriguing.

Several days later Bolton was having breakfast at a local restaurant with a number of his friends. Everyone had heard about the high-card game and they were commiserating with Bolton about his bad luck. At one point someone asked the mechanic, who had fixed the couple's car, what was wrong with it.

"Strangest thing," the mechanic replied. "There wasn't nothing the matter with it. He just told me to do a tune up and change the tires. I don't think he was very bright but he's probably in Florida working at a shipyard now so it doesn't matter."

"Well, I hope he's better at a shipyard than he was as a salesman," said another man. He owned the store down the road from the Maple Grove.

"What do you mean?" Asked Bolton, only half curious.

"This guy came in the store last week, said he was a salesman for a playing card company. Said if I would stock his cards he would sell them to me for half of what I was paying before. And then, just to show you how dumb he was, he took every deck of cards I had and replaced them with his own. Gave me two for one."

Bolton was almost hesitant to ask the next question. "Do you still have any of those cards left?"

The man left to go to his car and returned in a few minutes with several new, unopened decks.

It took only a few minutes for Bolton to confirm what he suspected. The cards were marked and the whole charade had been an elaborate scam.

Although the game quickly became a part of Huntsville's folklore, Bolton never acted upset about being conned. "The lesson was worth the money," he later told a friend.

The Maple Grove Nightclub closed the following year, mainly because of pressure from Huntsville's business leaders. In 1939, the property was sold to W.O. Fox who turned it into the Maple Grove Motel.

Sheriff Blakemore earned a reputation for his persistence in closing gambling rooms around Madison County. He became the first sheriff in Huntsville's history to serve two consecutive terms.

Bushy Bolton, whom Huntsville's finest claimed was a bad community influence, worked at several other nightclubs in the area before being drafted during WWII. In 1944, during a battle at the Mark River, in Holland, Bolton charged a machine gun nest that had his company pinned down. Although he was severely wounded, he then attacked a second machine gun, followed by a single-handed assault on a 88-mm artillery emplacement.

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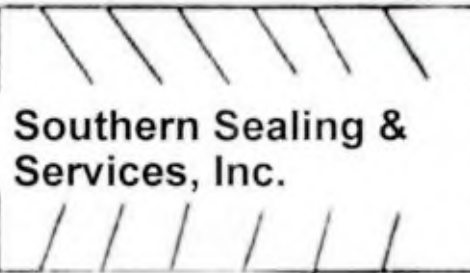
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LOVE THY NEIGHBOR

by Malcolm W. Miller

The good book says, "It is appointed unto man once to die and after that the judgment," and this will of course always hold true. However, the concern for the families of the deceased and the respect for the dead have changed drastically over the years.

I recall many years ago when someone in the community passed away, word always spread quickly through the community. Just about every neighbor dropped whatever they were doing and went to see what they could do to help the family of the deceased. The majority of the neighborhood women would pitch in and clean up the home of the deceased while others would be busy preparing food to carry to the home. In many cases when someone passed there was no insurance or money to pay for any type of burial, so some of the folks would wash, dress and lay out the body.

While this was going on at the home some of the neighborhood men would gather at the local cemetery and take turns digging the grave; then at nightfall people came from all over to "sit up with the dead" as well as to console with the family.

I have done this many times myself. As the sun began to go down the house and the yard would be filled with family, friends and neighbors showing their respect to the family.

As the sun began to come up the next day people were still there praying and paying their respects and caring for the family. People did not believe that

the deceased or the deceased family should be left alone.

On the day of the funeral everyone in the area came to the service. After the funeral the remains were lowered into the grave. The men of the community would stand in line for their turn to shovel some dirt into the grave; just another excellent way of showing concern

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and respect.

Today when someone passes away, the funeral home is called immediately and the body is taken to the funeral home. Many folks already have what I call "a layaway plan" with a certain funeral home and everything is already picked out and paid for. There is "no sitting up with the dead" as the funeral homes close by ten o'clock at night. The County Commissioner's office is called and they send machinery to the cemetery to dig the grave and line it for the oncoming casket or vault, whichever the case may be.

I, for one, am certainly not against progress. I have seen more progress in 88 years of life that anyone can imagine. I am well aware that everyone leads a busier life these days than they did in my younger years. However it is certainly a sad situation when a person dies and the neighbors down the road don't even know about it until they read it in the

newspaper or on the internet, many times a day or two after the funeral. That happened to me just recently.

Maybe it is just as well that people don't know about it in time to go to the funeral; that way they don't have to make up an excuse to themselves about not going to visitation or the funeral home to show concern and respect to the family. Some do take a minute or two to go by, run through and sign the guest book. And then there are others that actually go, talk to the family and console the deceased loved ones. Church families are good about this.

There are some, still today, that "Love thy neighbor as thyself," and I can only hope I am one of those.

The problems we face today are there because the people who work for a living are now out-numbered by those who vote for a living.

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HERE AND THERE IN YEARS PAST

1923

The Echols home was built, it is said, before the War between the States. It is of brick and two stories in height and well preserved.

John Brown, a department superintendent at the Lowe Mill, has purchased the old Echols property on West Clinton street and will remodel it for the use of himself and family.

Wanted - good cook, phone 639 or see Mrs. June Martin, Lowe Avenue.

Found - light bay mare, age 6 years, small, hair worn off hind leg, sore back, skinned place on side. Pea Ridge, southeast of Merrimack. W. W. Mitchell. Owner can have same by paying upkeep and this advertisement.

Lost - gold breast pin. Finder please return to bungalow, corner White and Randolph Streets.

For rent - furnished room in private home - apply at 302 West Holmes Street.

For sale - Oakland six touring car, newly painted, good tires, run less than 600 miles, price \$500. Baxter Brothers

1913

Snake in Decatur Comes Back Again

In the opinion of Mrs. A. Kellogg of Decatur, to have a writhing, hissing serpent climb several feet up a porch post and kill a canary within a cage was an experience sufficient to try the most equally balanced

nerves. To have the snake pay a second visit within a few moments afterward was enough to warrant drastic action.

Mrs. Kellogg, of Oak Street, had a pair of canaries hanging in a cage suspended from the porch ceiling. Chancing to step outside the door, she was horrified to find that the snake had climbed up the porch post and succeeded in reaching inside the cage and dispatching one of the birds. She frightened the reptile away and carried the cage with only one of her birds left, into the house.

A few moments later she observed the snake hissing and winding up the post in the direction of the former location of the cage, evidently after the remaining canary. Mrs. Kellogg called a neighbor's boy, Frank Denton, who killed the snake. It was one of the green striped grass

variety, and measured two feet in length.

Madison County Hit Hard by Storm, One Killed, Many Injured - 1916

A water spout fell this side of Athens and caused all streams and low places to go into flood-

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ed conditions - wind 50 miles per hour velocity. One dead, several children injured, many houses and churches demolished and property damage to the amount of thousands of dollars is the net result of a terrific wind and rain storm that passed over northeast Madison county and this city later yesterday and evening.

We were told of a great storm west of the Mississippi and that it would reach the Atlantic by Thursday, the storm burst upon Huntsville about 4 o'clock. The day had been beautiful and sunny but as in the twinkling of an eye the calm and stillness of the day was broken into a thunderous storm which was fatal in its results. The streets were soon flooded and again about 6 o'clock the heavy rain and wind repeated itself.

Huntsville only had a few roofs blown off but it was a different story in the Cameron Church neighborhood above Maysville northeast of here. The home of Thomas Riddick, an old and respected citizen was blown down and he was killed. Mr. Riddick lived several hours into the night but before Dr. Howard reached him but there was no hope of recovery from medical aid. Mr. Riddick died about 11 o'clock last night. He was the father of Fred Riddick of this county and Archie Riddick, electrical engineer of Gunterville.

In the Maysville community Walter Cawthon and John Cawthon each lost houses in the wake of the storm. John Rodgers and Gus Rodgers in that community also suffered the loss. One little child was hurt near Maysville and several others in the area it is said were slightly injured by flying timbers.

When the wind picked up two houses together with their occupants north of Maysville up in the Hurricane community and planted them several feet away - it was considered a miracle that no one was killed.

The Cameron Methodist Church was blown away and several other churches in the northern part of the county are reported as demolished. It is said that the property damage north of the Tennessee/Alabama state line will run into thousands of dollars.

Between Huntsville and Athens when the water spout fell, it came near "getting" our esteemed townsman W. L. Wall, who was returning from Athens in his car. He was caught beyond the Beas-

ley Place on Athens Pike and was engulfed in the spout. Herculean like, Mr. Wall managed to hold his car until the storm had passed over and then he ploughed his way on to town through a regular lake of water.

No other deaths are reported except that of Mr. Riddick but it is conceded that the property damaged from last night's storm was probably the heaviest that ever visited this region.

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Heard On the Street

by *Cathey Carney*



Jamie Naple is the winner of the Photo of the Month for March - she lives close to New Hope and loves hiking through old cemeteries and doing research. The picture was that of a young **Jackie Reed**, who does keep the City Council on their toes and will be running for Huntsville Mayor again. Congratulations to Jamie!

We got a call from **Phyllis Lawrence** about her 42nd wedding anniversary with her sweetie, **Billy Lawrence**. Their anniversary is April 27, and Phyllis said that "He is the most wonderful husband in the whole world!" And he didn't make her say that, either. Billy is a graduate of Butler High School. Kudos to the two lovebirds who live in Murfreesboro.

We have good birthdays in April - of course our esteemed Woodstock editor **Cheryl Tribble** has an April 27 birthday - Happy Birthday to you! **Pat Riley** had recent birthdays as did **Sherry Taylor** and **Vivian Kruse!** **Jamie Woods**, who is **Rosemary & Billy Leatherwood's** sweet daughter, has an April 14 birthday.

We were so proud to read that Huntsville Hospital has been recognized as a **Platinum-Level Fit-Friendly Work site** by the American Heart Assoc. for helping its employees eat better and

exercise more. It is the only hospital in Alabama to be so honored. Huntsville Hospital employees have access to a number of fitness and wellness-related programs. They include indoor and outdoor walking trails, discounted Wellness Center memberships, free in-house health coaching, nutrition classes, free biometric screenings and healthy food options in the cafeteria.

The hospital also was the first in the United States to partner with StepJockey, a British stair-tracking app. Signs posted around the hospital tell employees how many calories they can burn by taking the stairs instead of the elevator. The app tracks the steps of employees who scan their phone when using stairwells.

A new baby to welcome! **Barb & Ron Eyestone**, and her Mom **Ruth Hursh**, are new parents to a tiny new Imperial Shih-Tzu puppy they named **Jody**. She is nearly pure white and tiny. They found her in Fort Payne and are just in love.

For those of you (like me) who love caramel did you know it's easy to make out of Eagle Brand evaporated milk? You just put the

can of milk in a pan of boiling water and boil it for 2 hours. Cool it, open it and pour caramel!

Our friend **Miriam Riddick Dendy** celebrated a milestone birthday (we're not allowed to say which one) in February. After losing **Frank Riddick** (Uncle Bubba) last month, it was good to have a reason to celebrate. Miriam partied with more than 30 family members including the newest member, 7 month old **Peyton** - her great great-grandson. Brunch was served, tiaras were worn and a fun party was celebrated!

Heard this tip the other day - if you have to sit for a while for any reason, flex your ankles & move your legs around a bit - it could prevent a blood clot from forming.

Carson Wayne Hale was 81 when he passed away Feb. 23rd. He was the father of our Huntsville Community Watch leader, **Janice Hale Smith**. Mr. Hale is survived by Janice, his son **Jimmy Wayne Hale (Tina)**, other daughter **Vickie Hale Montiel (Ruben)**; sister **Jean White (Marvin)**; 8 grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren. He was the best, and will be missed.

Congratulations to our writer and friend of Old Huntsville -

Photo of The Month

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

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Rev. Houston Hodges. He just was selected by the Presbyterian Writers Guild to receive its Lifetime Achievement Award. We're so very proud of you, Houston!

We've had lots of calls about the availability of past issues and there aren't many left. But recently a friend donated past issues that are pretty rare and there are 3 complete years - 2007, 2008 and 2009 - 12 issues per year. The first readers who call can get these years at \$36/year - and the money all goes to the Golden K for their children's charities. Call 256.534.0502.

Congratulations to **Faith Sutherlin** and **Nolan Blackhurst** on their upcoming April wedding in Utah. **Cheryl Tribble** is the proud Grandma of Faith and she loves her SO much!

There's a new organization forming in town that is such a benefit for **Military Veterans**. It is called **Pets for Vets**, and it's just that. It matches homeless or abandoned shelter animals with returning Vets or those who have been back for a while, and in many cases throughout the U.S. it has been the best thing ever for the Vet. Many of our Vets are depressed, alone and there is a very high suicide rate among these folks. When they have a little creature that is dependent upon them to survive, it changes how they feel and takes away the loneliness and depression. You'll be hearing lots more about this group soon!

Well, somewhere within the pages of this magazine I have hidden a **VERY TINY butterfly**. It

may be in an ad, or in the text. I don't want any calls til the 15th of April, to give our out-of-town subscribers a chance too. But it'll be so small and cleverly hidden that I don't expect any calls.

There's an email based program called **NextDoor** that residents of particular neighborhoods can join up with. Many in the downtown districts have signed up and what's good about it, it lets you know what's happening in your particular area such as lost pets, found items, events & runs scheduled, crime activity, etc. It's real-time and can also be sent to your phone in the form of texts. Just Google "NextDoor" for more info.

Jan Williams is leading a walking tour of the historic neighborhood Twickenham on Apr. 9 in front of the Constitution Village on Gates Ave. and people love it! It's free of charge, start time is 10am and is sponsored by the Huntsville Historic Foundation.

One of our readers called regarding the story by **Steve Gierhart** regarding the local veterans who had recently won the French Legion of Honor award from the French Government. She called to say that another of our local vets, **Bill W. Varnedoe**, had also won in a previous award ceremony from 2015. Congratulations to Bill and all the winners of the prestigious award.

Huntsville High class of 1966 is having its 50th reunion. It will be on April 15 & 16th

and should be a great party! For more information contact **Bev** at bevboylan@aol.com.

Have a wonderful April, try to be kind to people even if you're not in a good mood, and when you're stressed just relax on your couch and listen to the Golden Oldies on TV!

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RECIPES

The Huntsville Opera Theater

*Recipes Taken from
"Hot Dishes", the Huntsville
Opera Theater" cookbook*

Olive Cheeseball

8 oz. cream cheese
1 - 8 oz. blue cheese, crumbled
1/4 c. butter, softened
1 T. onions or chives, minced
2/3 c. black olives, drained
and chopped

1/3 c. almonds, diced

Blend cheeses and butter. Stir in olives and chives. Chill slightly and form into a ball on a serving dish. Chill thoroughly. Just before serving, roll ball in almonds.

Melinda Lacy

Mustafa's Pasta Salad

16 oz. rainbow rotini
4 T. olive oil
6 T. red wine vinegar

1 t. basil
2-4 garlic cloves, chopped
Freshly ground black pepper
to taste

Parmesan cheese to taste
Cook pasta al dente in salted water and drain. Mix together rest of ingredients into a salad bowl. Add the pasta and toss. Serve warm.

Tina Gast Jones

Olive Summer Salad

2 cucumbers, diced
1 c. cherry tomatoes, halved
1 avocado, diced
1/2 c. feta cheese, crumbled
1/4 c. Greek olives (Calamati)
or Spanish olives
1/4 c. chopped chives
Sea salt & pepper to taste
4 T. olive oil
2 T. basil vinegar
1 T. lemon juice

2 T. basil, minced

In a large bowl, combine the first 7 ingredients. In cup whisk together the next 4 ingredients. Pour the dressing over the salad, toss 30 times and refrigerate for 1 hour. If desired, serve over Bibb or Sorrel lettuce.

Helen Matsos

Lemon Garlic Zucchini

4 medium zucchini, sliced diagonally

1 clove garlic, crushed
2 T. lemon juice
2 T. olive oil
1/4 t. salt
1/4 t. pepper

Combine all in a hot skillet. cook over low heat 5 to 7 minutes and zucchini is tender. Stir frequently. Good with pasta or rice.

Anonymous

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Shrimp Scampi

- 1 lb. lg. shrimp, cleaned and de-veined
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 T. butter
- 1/3 c. country Dijon mustard
- 1/4 c. lemon juice
- 1/4 c. chopped parsley
- Hot cooked rice

In a large skillet over medium-high heat, cook and stir the shrimp and garlic in butter til just pink. Blend in mustard, lemon juice and parsley; heat through. Serve over rice. Note: 1 lb. boneless chicken breast, cut into thin strips, may be substituted for the shrimp.

David Beutjer

Black Jack Pecan Pie

- 1 c. sugar
- 1/2 c. cornstarch
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 c. melted butter
- 6 oz. chocolate chips
- 1 c. chopped pecans
- 3-4 T. Jack Daniels whiskey
- Uncooked pie shell

Mix sugar and cornstarch. Beat in the eggs. Add the melted butter, stir in the Jack Daniels. Mix in the chocolate chips and nuts. Pour into an uncooked 9 inch pie shell. Bake in a 350 degree oven for 40 minutes.

Pat Lamb

French Coconut Pie

- 1/2 stick butter
- 3 eggs
- 1 t. vanilla extract
- 1-1/2 c. sugar
- 1/4 c. buttermilk
- 2 c. shredded coconut
- Unbaked pie shell

Blend together and pour into an unbaked pie shell. Bake for 45 minutes at 325 degrees.

Jean Graves

Marion Anderson Sweet Dessert Dumplings

- Sauce: 2 t. butter
1-1/2 c. boiling water
1-1/2 c. brown sugar
Pinch salt

Mix sauce ingredients and cook on top of stove. Boil 5 minutes stirring to prevent burning.

- Dumplings:
1-1/4 c. self-rising flour
1/3 c. white sugar
1/2 t. vanilla extract
1 t. butter
1/3 c. milk

Mix all well and drop dumplings by teaspoon into boiling sugar mixture. Put all into a sprayed baking dish and bake about 20 minutes at 425 degrees. Pour extra sauce over the dumplings 5 minutes before taking from the oven. Serve warm.

Ed and Joyce Bernstein



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SPRING-TIME IN THE COUNTRY



Anon.

The other day I went in search of blackberry bushes at Garvin's Feed and Seed, and as soon as I entered I heard the familiar sound of baby chicks. As I stood there watching those chicks, sweet memories flooded me and once again I recalled growing up in Hurricane Valley in the 1940s.

I loved springtime. It was a time when I emerged from an adult imposed cocoon and allowed my body and mind to run freely. It was a time to explore the wonders of nature evidenced in the perfection of a single Johnny jump-up bloom; the renewal of life through a litter of new, pink piglets; the intuitive intelligence of birds in nest building; and my favorite springtime activity, the arrival of the baby chicks.

Each year on an early spring day we would travel to Tennessee, and come home with a large box of a hundred or more chirping little chicks, usually White Leghorns or Rhode Island Reds. Grandma would hold the box on her lap and I entertained myself by sticking my fingers in the air holes and petting the babies. Sometimes I would be allowed to take one out and hold it on the way home. Each chick, destined to be either broiler or egg-layer, was tiny with just a few thin little feathers.

The chicken house with its adjoining buildings and pens was home to Grandma's prized chickens. The baby chicks went to the brooder house first. The brooder house was a small wooden enclosure that was about eight feet tall with a row of windows at the top

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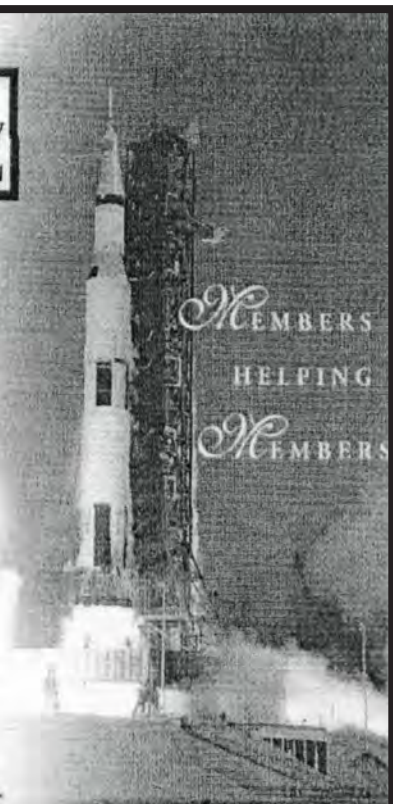
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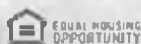
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screened by wire. Five rows of cedar logs set up about five feet above the floor stretched from side to side of the house. On one side of the house were double rows of square wooden nests.

In the middle of the brooder house was a large mud-covered mountain shape that I called the oven for lack of a better name. The mud walls of the oven were very thick at the bottom and thinned out near the top. There was an opening at one end for building a fire. The opening was covered by a metal plate secured by a pile of rocks. The oven showed evidence of frequent cracks and repairs that I likened to rivers. Newspapers saved from the whole year were spread out over the floor of the brooder house to keep it somewhat clean. The last feature of the brooder house was a large metal thermometer that hung down from a rafter in the middle of the room.

A fire was kept going in the oven at all times to keep the babies warm. When you stepped in the house it felt like summer. The temperature had to be at least 90 degrees or the chicks would die. It was so funny to see all the chicks stacked up on top of one another all around the oven trying for a spot touching the warm mud of the oven. There were always one or two super achievers who somehow managed to get on top of the oven.

Long skinny trays of food

were kept filled for the babies. Egg shells that were saved all year were toasted, crumbled and added to the mix periodically. My daily job was to change the newspaper and fill the water containers with the green water. I don't remember what made the water green or why we used it, but I suspect it had to do with controlling infection.

I loved my job. Every time I went into the brooder house the chicks greeted and surrounded me. It was hard to walk without stepping on one. It seemed chicks were

everywhere. As the chicks grew they were allowed outside in the adjoining fenced yard. And, as the weather warmed, the fire in the oven was no longer needed; however, on really cold winter nights, Granddad would run all the grown chickens into the brooder house, build a fire, and allow them to roost over the oven. I spent hours with the chicks, and despite my Grandma's dire warning to not get emotionally attached or name the chicks, I did anyway.

As the little chicks grew into hens they graduated to the big chicken house where they

Woody Anderson



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Groucho Marx

stayed during the night. In daylight hours they roamed the farm scratching for bugs and seeds. The big chicken house had row upon row of square, wooden nests. My job was to keep fresh straw in the nests, collect the eggs every day, and stay out of the way of the mean roosters.

Grandma taught me to always look into the nests before putting my hands in because snakes like hens' nests. I met quite a few snakes that way, mostly black racers. I remember one year we had problems with snakes getting the eggs before we could collect them. Granddad put smooth river rocks in the nests and the snakes swallowed them thinking they were eggs. I spent a lazy summer afternoon watching a long black racer snake with one of the river rocks in its belly climb the apple tree across from the hen house and wrap and rewrap himself around a branch trying to crack the egg. It didn't work. We found that snake hanging from the branch dead with the shape of the rock still obvious in its belly.

Part of me understood that the chickens were raised for eggs, feathers and food. I liked tending the chickens, hunting for eggs and stuffing feathers into pillows and mattresses, but when it came time to kill a chicken for Sunday dinner, that was a different story. I could never watch while my Grandma either wrung the chicken's neck or chopped its head off with an axe.

Dipping the chicken into scalding water to remove feathers was not a job that I participated in, nor was the burning off of the pin feathers over the old iron stove. That smell still resonates in my memory. I could not eat chicken though I am told my Grandma fried the best chicken around.

Grandma seemed to understand my attachment to the chickens and my revulsion for the process as she always boiled eggs for me to eat when she served fried chicken, and never once did my family question my Southern heritage because of my aversion to chicken.

Note: This is a story "Old Huntsville" has had for years but the name of the writer has been lost. If this is your story please call me and I will make sure that is put in the column next month.



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of a wildlife refuge that would encompass part of Wheeler Lake and surrounding buffer zones. President Franklin D. Roosevelt agreed and on July 7, 1938, signed an Executive Order establishing the Wheeler Migratory Waterfowl Refuge with a mission to serve "as a refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife."

The Wheeler Wildlife Refuge

by Thomas V. Ress

Many enduring images of the 1930s are of the infamous dust bowl of the Great Plains. Dismal photographs from the era depict barren, windblown plains and abandoned farms. That spectacle was not limited to the plains; a considerable bit of land in the Tennessee Valley was just as depleted. Period photographs show eroded valleys and hillsides and desolate fields. Farm fields were worn out after decades of heavy cultivation, and many of the thick pine and hardwood forests had been clearcut.

Then in 1933 the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) began construction of a series of hydroelectric power dams on the Tennessee River that would have far-reaching and beneficial effects for the Valley. Between Decatur and Huntsville, TVA purchased land to build Wheeler Dam and for the 67,100-acre reservoir behind it. Dam construction took two years and the rapidly deepening waters behind it soon formed Wheeler Lake.

Wheeler Dam dramatically altered the character of the land around Decatur and Huntsville. Formerly forlorn acreage surrounding the new lake was transformed as saplings sprouted and fields and valleys began greening up and reverting to their natural state.

The vast open waters with hidden back bays and secluded sloughs also offered an enticing habitat for migrating ducks and geese. The Federal Bureau of Biological Survey (forerunner to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service) saw the potential and proposed the establishment



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It was Alabama's first National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) and the first NWR to incorporate a manmade reservoir. Up to that point, NWRs had been established in traditional milieu such as swamps, barrier islands, high mountains and wooded forests. The concept may have been novel but it worked as the refuge quickly proved to be a magnet for waterfowl. An abundance of natural food sources and the refuge's 34,500 acres of sloughs, swamps and open water drew thousands of ducks and geese.

The waterfowl may have taken to the area quickly, but the refuge did not have an easy beginning and the first few years were a difficult time for refuge personnel who had to make do with few resources. The first refuge manager worked out of a rented office in the Old National Bank building in Decatur before moving the headquarters into a garage and storage building leased from a local farmer. Employees scrounged equipment and supplies to run the refuge — a borrowed Chevrolet from White River Refuge and a surplus Plymouth sedan from the Bureau of Internal Revenue - and even cadged metal boundary signs from Sabine NWR in Louisiana to mark the new refuge boundaries.

Despite these limitations, employees embarked on efforts to improve wildlife habitat on the refuge. Almost 500,000 seedlings were planted over the next three years, mostly by crews from a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp in Hartselle. In 1940 CCC workers constructed a headquarters building, a service building, and a manager's residence on Flint Creek Island just outside of Decatur and another staff residence house on a satellite compound near Triana.

The refuge soon became a popular recreation spot. Refuge personnel reported about 1000 visitors per day during the summer of 1940 and 100 per day through the rest of that year. Visitor numbers decreased for the next four years during World War II. The war had another impact on the refuge: in 1941, the US Army established Redstone Arsenal and 4,085 acres of the refuge were incorporated into the Arsenal's boundaries.

But the war didn't affect the birds and waterfowl populations soared. In 1943 refuge personnel recorded 33,000 migrant birds. Waterfowl populations continued to swell over the next decades and by the 1970s the refuge was home to the state's largest duck population. The increase in waterfowl resulted in an attendant increase in visitors, and in the 1980s a modern visitor center and a wildlife observation building were constructed just down the road from the existing management compound.

No history of Wheeler NWR is complete without mentioning Tom Atkeson. Atkeson was one of Wheeler's first

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Early Days

employees, starting as a junior biologist in May, 1939, only months after the refuge was established. One of his duties was to map the refuge, a task that would prove beneficial to him later. He joined the Army during World War II and was severely injured by an antitank mine explosion at Fort Hood, Texas that blinded him and severed both hands.

Using his recollection of the 1939 mapping effort as a starting point, he memorized the refuge roads and trails, learning to trace his location by listening to the surrounding noises and noting the turns his driver made along each route. He knew the refuge intimately and took over as refuge manager in 1962, a position he held until his retirement in 1987.

Atkeson was an icon within the conservation community and Charles Kuralt filmed a television tribute to him for CBS Sunday Morning.

Today Wheeler NWR is an important component in maintaining healthy waterfowl populations along the Mississippi Flyway and hosts 60,000 or so overwintering ducks and geese annually as well as 15,000 Sandhill Cranes, eagle families and a steady number of extremely rare Whooping Cranes. It is one of the major outdoor recreational destinations in Alabama, attracting 600,000 visitors each year to view waterfowl and to fish, hunt, photograph, hike and bike.

It is definitely worth the ride there to see this amazing natural habitat and walk the many trails and let all that beautiful nature just soak in!



The Energizer Bunny was arrested and charged with battery.

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March 1913

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Instead of the thousands of sickly, anemic looking men, girls with pasty or muddy complexions, instead of the multitudes of nerve wrecks, rundowns, brain fogs and pessimists we should see a viral, optimistic throng of rosy cheeked people everywhere.

An inside bath is had by drinking each morning, before breakfast, a glass of hot water with a teaspoonful of limestone phosphate mixed to wash out the stomach. It also washes the liver, kidneys and ten yards of bowels with the previous days indigestible wastes, sour fermentations and poisons thus cleansing, sweetening and refreshing the entire alimentary canal before putting more food into the stomach.

Those subject to sick headache, biliousness, nasty breath, rheumatism, colds and particularly those with a pallid, sallow complexion and who are constipated should obtain a quarter pound of limestone phosphate at the drug store which will cost but a trifle and is sufficient to demonstrate the quick and remarkable change in the health and appearance awaiting those who practice internal sanitation.

Dogs feel very strongly that they should always go with you in the car, in case the need should arise for them to bark loudly at nothing, right in your ear.

We must remember that inside cleanliness is more important than the outside, because the skin does not absorb impurities to contaminate the blood, while the pores in the thirty feet of bowels do.

Editors Note - Lemon Juice works wonders in a glass of hot water in the morning - give it a try!

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SPRING'S CHILD

by Ted Roberts

I admired her for months, but she never paid any attention to me. How could She? (Huntsville is full of majestic trees: I know them, but they don't even glance at me.) She was a wide-spreading Catalpa tree that filled up the whole front yard. Her business was with nature, not gawky spectators. I'm sure she wouldn't miss one of her baby trees that grew in her shadow. There were so many. The seeds have all fallen around the base of the tree where they fight for light and nutrients. He, the Creator, has not used his magic of the Maple seed wherein the wind blows the seeds so they could fly far away from the competitive ground beneath the mother tree.

I had been watching the mama tree for many months. And like I say, I had admired her many months.

She proudly held up her leafy arms as to provide shade for man and beast and she was a super condo to many families of squir-

rels. Weary birds by the dozens rested in her arms.

A magnificent tree. If there was tree guarding the gates of Eden, it would be like this.

One day, as I drove home down Weatherly Road I could resist temptation no longer. I stopped and parked in her yard. Strengthened by my admiration of this living, green replica of the Statue of Liberty. "Welcome," she seemed to say.

I marched up to the front door and introduced myself to the owner (as though there could be any owner beside He who made humanity and trees and He already knew me). I stressed my credentials as a solid citizen of Huntsville, a prompt payer of city tree tax, and a lover and caregiver to trees. I pointed out that I had a spacious, sunny yard made from the kind of soil that Catalpa trees craved. I bragged that not a single tree had ever filed a complaint against me. And not one tree had ever died in my sunshiny yard. And most telling, not one tree ever punished me by falling on the house. Then I struck home. "M'am, would you mind if I dug up one of the baby trees that are sprinkled around the yard -just one, m'am - one of the smaller ones will do nicely."

She must have been impressed

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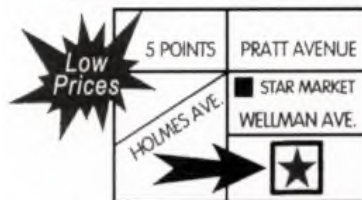
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by my panting desire and the fact that I was a tree lover. "Certainly," she said. "Just get yourself a spade and a bucket and help yourself."

I was back in 20 minutes with a spade in one hand and a bucket in the other. I dug up a huge clump of earth around the seedling I'd selected after exploring a couple dozen trees. She was a beauty - just like her mama. As I dug I looked nervously over my shoulder to make sure mama didn't care, even though the other trees, a pale Maple and a middle-aged Oak, looked on jealously. She seemed at peace except for one time when the wind ruffled her leaves, she made a long, whimpering moan. I put down the shovel and she stopped. But soon I was back at work and before mama Catalpa, the tree's temporary owner, or the Creator of trees and birds and squirrels and us could change their minds, me and the bucketed baby Catalpa were in the car.

Once home, I repeated the process - only backward.

Now the test began. How would the new creature in my backyard prevail against the suns of summer and the icy winds of winter without the shelter of mama Catalpa? Would she be homesick all alone in her new home? Only time will tell. My yard was only a mile away so, of course, they could still talk via the wind. Catalpa trees know how to do that, but they'd never see each other again. I still pass mama every morning on the way to work. I know she'd be proud of her young one who is now 30 feet tall and provides housing to three squirrels and resting places for weary birds.

Before you cut down that tree by your house remember what the poet Joyce Kilmer, said. "Poems are made by fools like me, but only God can make a tree."

»

The humor of Ted, the Scribbler on the roof, appears in newspapers around the U.S., on National Public Radio, and numerous web sites.

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If Only He Had Waited Until Five O'Clock

by Hartwell Lutz

During my time as a District Court Judge for Madison County, some of my most interesting experiences were in the trial of small claims cases. Most of the time both parties came to court without attorneys, but that was always fine with me because lawyers tended to make the trials longer than they needed to. I always asked the parties and their witnesses to just stand in front of the bench rather than to sit at what are called "counsel tables." The idea was that if they sat down they might get comfortable and stay too long.

Generally, I heard small claims cases one afternoon a week. My small claims docket would usually have about a dozen cases, and I would wind up actually trying about four of them, with the rest being disposed of in some other way. You might say that the litigants were just ordinary people with ordinary problems; fender benders, debts and landlord-tenant disputes were common.

One afternoon in about 1982 I had been working on a docket and called a case for trial involving a man we'll call "Mr. Smith." (Not his real name). It was about four o'clock. As he started to tell his side of the case, he looked at me and sort of leaned on the bench, which was about chest high on him. As he was slumping to the floor he said, "Excuse me." I peered over the bench at him lying there and could see that his face was turning blue. At that point, I asked my bailiff, Ron Eady who a couple of years earlier had been an outstanding linebacker at Alabama A&M, to go and get Joe Motley who was a juvenile probation officer and was trained in CPR. Mr. Eady began a slow run, but it was several strides before he actually moved forward. I went in my office and asked my judicial assistant, Carol Wilks, to call H.E.M.S.I., a local ambulance

service, and tell them that we had a person in the courtroom who appeared to have had a heart attack.

Mr. Smith's wife was present, and she asked if she could use a phone in my office to call her daughter. She said that she and Mr. Smith were supposed to meet their daughter for dinner about five o'clock. I, of course, gave her permission to make the call and suggested that she remain in my office until H.E.M.S.I. arrived. Mrs. Wilks stayed with her until Mr. Smith was loaded in an ambulance to be taken to the Huntsville Hospital.

Mrs. Wilks and I went to the hospital and found Mrs. Smith in the coronary intensive care waiting room. We sat there with her for about an hour. Finally, a doctor came out and inquired for a Mrs. Smith. Having located her, he said, "Mrs. Smith, I regret to inform you that your husband has died as the result of an apparent heart attack." The new widow's immediate response, her exact words that I will never forget, was, "Well, it does look like he could have waited until five o'clock so we could have been on time."

We have to believe that Mr. Smith is in a better place.

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Nursing Home

by Houston Hodges

It's hard to see these fallen heroes, the passing of the generation torch from those who fought and won the Big War and sling-shot us into Space Travel: but a nursing home in Huntsville shows the way.

They sit mostly silently in the social room, waiting for the dining room doors to open. Here is the man who worked with Von Braun, still active, a story-teller. Here's someone from NASA, who's forgotten what those letters stood for. Here's a veteran

from Army Missile Command, Redstone Arsenal, leaving the defending of our envelope of atmosphere to "new kids on the block," his time of scaring the Soviet Union fulfilled.

Another woman, frail in powder-blue kerchief in her wheelchair, maintains the Long Silence, more than half-way over the dividing space 'twixt here and there.

I admire those who care for them; I, incarcerated for a much shorter time than eternity, appreciate the gentle humor that affects this coterie of compassion. Opening up those tepid meal containers from the storage wagon, moving quickly table to table to set out food, and then,

with some, patiently spoon it into a mouth that opens on command: "Here, sweetheart; here, my dear; here, honey, open up!"

Some speak of exit plans, their time of stricture ending next week, next month. That's my bunch. But here is one sweet woman, bound to her chair, jailed in her mind, who looks out at nowhere and repeats the mantra, every so often. She looks at nothing, or perhaps at everything in the past.

"It's okay," she says from time to time, when it fills her up and she cannot keep it in: "It's okay. It's okay."

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A Cause for Paws

“Pets for Vets” and the American Legion Post 237

by John E. Carson

Since its inception in 1919, The American Legion has never strayed from its goals of serving our nation's veterans and its communities. Created in the aftermath of WW1 to help our veterans, the long and storied history of the Legion has been reflected in the American Legion Post 237 of Huntsville, Alabama.

Now known as the Clayton E. Moneymaker American Legion Post 237, the largest American Legion Post in the state stretches back through time to 1920 with the activation of a temporary charter of the Peter Crump Post - the first post in Madison County.

A leader in the growth and development of both the city of Huntsville and Madison County, the post has been active in civic and charitable causes throughout the decades serving veterans and the community in the aftermath of every conflict our nation has faced and the challenges of the changing times.

Outlined on their website at www.legion237.org, still under construction, the history and contributions of Post 237 has been detailed by Kenneth A. Carpenter, Post Historian and it is indeed an impressive legacy both for the city and its veterans - past, present and still to come.

Also shown on the site are pictures of Clean Up Day. Initiated by the newly elected Executive Committee, Clean

Reporter - “What do you think of Western Civilization?”
Mahatma Gandhi - “I think it would be a good idea.”

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Up Day kicked off a campaign to remold, redecorate and rededicate the Post to serving its patrons and programs bigger and better than ever.

Its efforts have been showing from the inside out and while much has been done there are more changes in the works to improve the appearance of the outside of the building. It serves as a meeting place for several other veteran organizations like the DAV, VFW and the Order of The Purple Heart.

In addition to its many programs, the Post also hosts many forms of entertainment for its members and guests from Bingo to live music, Karaoke, food and drink service and a spacious ballroom available for special events. Of course one of the most important services rendered comes from its Honor Guard and the many funerals they attend and conduct for veterans.

But even more important than attending funerals is preventing them. Every day we

hear new reports of veterans who suffer from PTSD, Traumatic Brain Injury and the number of suicides committed by those veterans who have been affected physically, mentally or both by their wartime service. The number 22, though far from accurate, has become identified with the number of vets in this country who take their lives each day.

With the unanimous backing of the Executive Committee of Post 237, certain members have established a relationship with the national organization known as Pets for Vets, a volunteer program that has been proven to save lives and one that serves not only the veterans but the overcrowded animal shelters of the areas they serve; effectively saving two lives with every successful match.

With 35 Chapters run by volunteers and 6 of them run by shelters, the success of this program is undisputed and long overdue in the city of Huntsville. A military town in a

state that has among the highest number of veterans and active military members in the country, Huntsville also has crowded animal shelters despite the large number of animal service organizations located here.

The many benefits of the Pets for Vets program can be found on their website at www.petsforvets.com. Completely funded by voluntary and corporate donations the program costs the veterans in need of a companion animal nothing and takes no money from state or local coffers or burdens the taxpayer.

American Legion Post 237 is proud to support this great endeavor. And like it has all through its history, continues the proud tradition of serving both the veterans and their community by doing so.

What is a life worth? Think about it. Someone you love, maybe even yourself or the beloved creatures God has put on this planet could be saved; it is indeed a cause for paws.

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HEARD IN THE NEWS IN 1916

Helen Keller to speak in Florence

Jan. 3, 1916 Helen Keller will deliver a lecture in Florence during the last week in February on "Happiness!" under the auspices of the Florence Free Kindergarten Club.

Miss Keller was born in Tuscumbia and her parents lived on Wood Avenue in Florence for a number of years. Her appearance in Florence will be anticipated with greatest interest.

Business Changes in Huntsville

R.E. and W. E. Pettus, prominent wholesale merchants who have been doing business on Jefferson St. for 17 years are leaving the Cantrell-Matthews building and are moving into the McGee Hotel block on West Clinton St., occupying the two stores east of Laughlin's Undertaking Parlors.

Goldsmith-Grosser Co. will leave north side public square and move in to the new Lynksy building being erected on Washington St.

M.G. Chaney of Merrimack has purchased the Brown store at West Huntsville. The Gill-Starling Hardware Co. is a new hardware concern moving into the old Mason furniture house on Jefferson Street.

All this is in keeping with the rapid progress and growth of Huntsville.

Rumors of Increase in Price of Gasoline - Sinister rumors continue to fill the air about still greater increases in the price of gasoline after January 1st.

The price has already climbed and climbed for months past, until it has almost doubled and in some cases more than double. And now comes the rumor that it may go over thirty cents and perhaps nearly to forty if the war keeps up and other present conditions continue to prevail. To make matters worse for the economic motorist it is also said that all standard grades of automobile tires will also take a leap soon because of the scarcity of gutta percha and zinc, both of which are used in the tires composition.

Infant Death

Willie Bell, the little 17 month old son of Mr. and Mrs. Matt Bell, died this morning at their home on north Church Street after a few days illness with pneumonia. Interment

will be made in Maple Hill cemetery tomorrow after the funeral services at their home.

Court House Fence can now be torn Down

Local Legislative act permits abolition of iron picket fence All kind of persuasion and efforts have been employed to get rid of the old iron picket fence are the court square but without avail. Relief has just been discovered in the passage of a local act by the last legislature repealing an act adopted Dec. 14 1898 prohibiting interference with the court house fence by the city of Huntsville without unanimous consent of the Board of County Commissioners or majority vote of the people of the county. Representative Edward

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Johnson in the 1915 legislature had introduced and passed an act as approved by Gov. Chas. Henderson on April 5, 1915 that permit's the tearing down of the old fence any time a majority of the county commissioners say so. The Civic League and all other influences who have been working to get rid of this cruel monster to the poor dumb beast and which has served as a dangerous menace to public health will of course be delighted to learn this good news and will hope that the county commissioners at an early meeting will do their duty.

Just Received

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A Woman's Back

The advice of this Huntsville woman is of certain value. Many a woman's back has aches and pains Oftimes 'tis the kidneys fault That's why Doan's Kidney Pills are so effective.

Many Huntsville women know this. Read what one has to say about it:

Mrs. H. C. Humphrey, 239 First Ave., Huntsville, says "I had a sharp pain in the small of my back and if I stooped, I was hardly able to straighten. Mornings my back was lame and I felt languid nearly all the time. The kidney secretions were unnatural and caused annoyances. Doans Kidney pills gave me great relief.


Price 50c at all dealers. Don't simply ask for a kidney remedy - get Doans Kidney Pills - the same that Mrs. Humphrey had.

Brothers Collide in Accident


Thos. N. McAllister, manager of the Huntsville Transfer Co. and his brother Alex McAllister, manager for local plant of Armour and Co., collided with their cars at the Daily Times corner on Holmes and Greene Streets this morning but neither were injured. Both cars were badly damaged. Thos McAllister's little son, John was

slightly bruised. Alex McAllister's car was turned over and Mr. McAllister pinned under it, but he escaped uninjured. The elder McAllister was traveling east on Holmes and his brother was driving north on Greene.

The accident was quite exciting and those who saw it say it was miraculous that neither of the brothers were seriously injured or probably killed, but cool heads and quick operating averted all danger.



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Being a Good Dog

Dear God: Here is a list of just some of the things I must remember to be a good Dog: (by the dog)



1. I will not eat the cat's food before he eats it or after he throws it up.

2. I will not roll on dead squirrels, mice, snakes, etc., just because I like the way they smell.

3. The Litter Box is not a cookie jar.

4. The sofa is not a 'face towel'.

5. The UPS man and mail delivery lady are harmless and are not stealing our stuff.

6. I will not play tug-of-war with Dad's underwear when he's on the toilet.

7. Sticking my nose into someone's crotch is an unacceptable way of saying 'hello'.

8. I don't need to suddenly stand straight up when I'm under the coffee table.

9. I must shake the rainwater out of my fur before entering the house - not after.

10. I will not come in from outside and immediately drag my butt across the carpet.

11. I will not sit in the middle

of the living room, and lick my belly.

12. The cat is not a "squeaky toy", so when I play with him and he makes that noise, it's usually not a good thing.

13. I will not stop and stand my ground when coming across an interesting spot of Monkey Grass.

14. I will lick my owner's face when she bends down for a kiss, even though I don't feel like it just then.

15. I will make my family think they are really teaching me tricks even though the most important thing is the treat I get for it.

16. I will be forever grateful to my new family for rescuing me from the shelter I thought I'd spend the rest of my life at.

17. When presented with plain dog food, I'll act like I'm not hungry and always hold out for some good table scraps.



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PET TIPS FROM ANGEL

Angel says she loves butterflies and is really excited to help you create a butterfly garden!



Butterflies have long fascinated humans. The ancient Egyptians, and later the Romans, believed they were symbols of the human soul. To make a wish come true, Native Americans suggested whispering it to a butterfly.

To invite butterflies to your garden, you will first need to understand their life cycle. Butterflies have four stages of development: egg, caterpillar (or larva), chrysalis, and winged adult. Accommodate the needs of each stage for greatest success.

Host Plants

Adult butterflies lay eggs on host plants so the larvae will have the necessary food to mature. At the end of this larval stage, they need a sturdy, protected place to attach and form the chrysalis. Milkwood, Fennel, Parsley and Dill are good choices for egg laying.

Flowers

Annuals and perennial flowers provide the nectar and food for adult butterflies. Butterfly bushes are really good. Here are a few other plants you'll want to add to your host plants (above):

- * Bee Balm
- * Zinnia
- * Sunflower
- * Purple cone flower
- * Sedum
- * Lantana
- * Verbena
- * Aster
- * Dahlia
- * Petunia

There are more but these will get you started. Plant the flowers in groups of the same, and also have them planted close to your host plants. In other words, when I do it I'll plant parsley all over the yard but have it next to groups of Verbena, Sage, Coneflowers, etc. You'll have lots of color!

You can plant many of these in large pots as well, maybe putting a larger flower in the center and surrounding it with Parsley and dill.

Pesticides

To avoid harming butterflies, which are insects, I would not use pesticides. Spot treating pest insects with insecticidal soaps

or oils leaves no chemical residue to harm caterpillars. You can handpick some pests, such as beetles. A regular, hard blast of water can remove other plant pests, such as aphids. Do this carefully.

Another advantage of decreased garden chemical use is the presence of other garden helpers, which pesticides can kill. These are beneficial critters, such as spiders, lacewings, ladybugs, and ground beetles that eat the plant pests. There are also other pollinators, such as honey bees, that benefit from reduced chemical use.

Shelters

Include a few blooming shrubs in your butterfly garden or have evergreens nearby for shelter. Butterflies will hide in these areas on cloudy days or at night and find protection from the rain and wind when needed. You can find wooden butterfly houses that they can take shelter in. Your garden might even be located near the garage, gazebo, or garden shed. These permanent structures also give protection.

Puddles

Male butterfly adults need to puddle. They obtain water and minerals from the shallows of these wet places. To make a permanent puddle, bury a shallow pan of wet gravel or sand to its rim. Fill it with liquids, such as fruit drinks or plain tap water. You might even sprinkle it periodically with liquid fertilizer when boosting the garden plants. Some butterflies, such as the viceroy, like to drink from rotten fruit. Locate the compost pile nearby and allow rotting fruit to occasionally stay on top.

Location

Butterfly gardens should be in full sun. All insects are cold-blooded. Their body temperature is dependent on the environmental temperature. Enhance the sun's warming energy with stepping stones or a gravel path. Butterfly adults will bask in these areas to warm themselves from the radiant heat. Your garden will also benefit, because most of the plants used by butterflies grow best in full sun.

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From the Desk of Tom Carney

The Mill Strike

by Tom Carney



In mid-July, 1934, after months of mediation and agitation, nearly 4,000 Huntsville cotton mill workers went on strike as part of a nationwide walk-out that quickly ensnared America's entire textile industry.

The strike brought violence to the streets in the form of killings, kidnappings, assaults, shootings and bombings. A cloud of fear hung over Huntsville like poisonous vapors seeping into the hearts of the populace. No man, woman, child, home or business was safe.

Mill owners across the nation refused to negotiate, threatening to hire strike breakers to quell any riotous activity by the strikers.

Then on July 17, the Fletcher Mill opened at the regular hour of 6 a.m., but was forced to close within three hours. Noisy strikers were clamoring in the street outside the mill and it appeared that major violence would erupt at any second. Sensing the severity of the situation, the nonunion employees chose to leave their jobs rather than confront the raucous pickets.

Police and deputies armed with tear-gas rifles and machine guns were called to the scene as the strikers grew more unruly, but the crowd dispersed when the officers arrived. Merrimac was the next mill to close as strikers, under the leadership of state union organizer Albert Cox, went through the building telling workers to leave. The mill emptied in minutes.

Lincoln and Dallas mills closed that same morning when the night shifts came off duty.

John Dean, representing the United Textile Workers of America, urged strikers to maintain picket lines and prevent the mills from running.

Carloads of strikers, armed with shotguns, pistols, knives, baseball bats, and anything else that could serve as weapons, cruised the streets shouting and waving their weapons, intimidating anyone who might have had thoughts about going to work.

A meeting of the Dallas Mill workers was held at the old Methodist Church on Humes Avenue. Monroe Adcock, president of the Dallas local union, presided and urged that no

destruction of mill property take place during the strike. He also pleaded that all union members refrain from using intoxicating liquors while the strike was in progress.

The following day reports of trouble sent police racing to the Admiral Braid Company. A crowd of a few hundred men had gathered outside the plant when it was reported that an attempt was going to be made to move a load of merchandise. The report was false and the crowd dispersed without incident.

On July 30, special deputies guarded the Tennessee River bridge between Decatur and Huntsville as rumors indicated that a motorcade of more than 500 striking textile workers from Huntsville were enroute to Decatur in an effort to urge the textile workers there to join the strike.

The deputies managed to turn the strikers back but everyone knew that it was just a matter of time before violence would explode.

Earlier in the day, three union men were attacked on a street corner near the Goodyear fabric plant in Decatur. The aforementioned union local head, Monroe Adcock, was shot in the leg, and Isaac Bullard and Burnice Rigbsy were injured in an altercation with three unarmed men.

Early Sunday morning, August 6, John Dean, leader of the strike in Alabama, was kidnapped from his room on the sixth floor of the Russel Erskine Hotel by four men and taken at gunpoint to Fayetteville, Tenn. During the ride he was beaten about the head with a pistol. His abductors, in a bizarre move, then registered him at the Pope Hotel where he managed to, according to the porter, initiate a call to his friends in Huntsville. In less than an hour a dozen automobiles, filled with armed men, arrived in Fayetteville to rescue their leader.

Instead of returning to his hotel, Dean went into seclusion at the home of George Davis on F Street in Merrimac Village. Armed guards were placed around the house to prevent further kidnapping.

During the time of Dean's abduc-

tion 400 angry men, most of them carrying guns, gathered near the Russel Erskine Hotel. They had heard of the abduction and were seeking the men responsible. The mayor sent a large contingent of police to the hotel, preventing the mob from getting out of hand.

Strikers set up roadblocks at each road leading into Huntsville. Automobiles going in and out of the city were stopped by strikers brandishing weapons who said they were looking for the kidnapped man, not knowing that he had returned and was in hiding.

The situation was becoming serious. Many citizens were afraid to leave their homes. Gangs of armed men roamed the town looking for would-be strike breakers and terrifying everyone with whom they came into contact.

With strikers demanding that the city take action, solicitor (District Attorney) James Price announced that the Grand Jury would meet the following Monday and that a warrant had been issued in the kidnap case. Fearful that the crowd would take the law into its own hands, the sheriff refused to name the persons involved until the arrests had been made.

Monday morning found a large crowd assembled downtown awaiting the day's events. In an act of bravado, Dean drove in from Merrimac and casually breakfasted at the Central Cafe downtown while armed bodyguards patrolled the sidewalks out front.

Meanwhile, the Grand Jury returned an indictment against James Conner, a mill worker. When word spread that the owners of the cotton mills might have been responsible for Dean's kidnapping, the pent-up fury of the strikers exploded.

Rumors that downtown stores

were going to be dynamited caused additional deputies to be brought in, but the day passed without incident.

Threats against the indicted Mr. Conner caused guards to be placed at his home. They were called off that same afternoon when it was realized that Conner had left town for parts unknown.

Cars were not permitted on streets where union leaders lived, unless permission was first obtained from the strikers. Armed guards were maintained throughout the night and augmented the following morning by additional strikers.

The Thomas Mill, forced to shut down when the strike began, reopened despite threats from the strikers. Before the plant could begin operating at full capacity it was invaded by a gang of strikers from Merrimac Mills and Erwin Mills, despite protests by the foremen. The workers were quickly assembled and ordered by their leaders to quit work and leave the building by the spokesman of the strikers.

William Fraser, manager of the Thomas Mill, later identified the leader as Henry Parmlee, the union leader at Merrimac.

On August 13, the kidnap charge

against Conner was stricken from the docket of the Grand Jury and a lesser charge of "whitecapping" was entered. Whitecapping was defined as "an act to prevent and punish the formation or continuance of conspiracies and combinations for certain unlawful purposes." Trial was set for Nov. 28, but was continued until Feb. 19, 1935, when the matter was dropped.

Random acts of violence continued. No one was safe. On Sept. 3, three charges of dynamite damaged the grocery store of Mrs. R.W. Atkins on Pike Street in Merrimac Village.

Shortly before daybreak, strikers were brought out of their beds by bugle calls and gunshots. Armed strikers rushed into the city from Lincoln Village after being told of trouble at the Fletcher Mill. They returned home when everything was found quiet.

A group of young women decided to ignore the picket line and return to work, but they were pushed to the ground by the angry strikers. Ignoring the girls' screams of protest, the strikers produced a pair of scissors and proceeded to roughly cut their hair.

A short while later, residents of Lincoln watched the strange sight of four bald-headed girls being paraded

down Meridian Street.

The same day, gunshots were fired into the storefront windows of businesses downtown who were suspected of being sympathetic to the mill owners. City officials, frantic by this time, asked that a federal mediator be brought in. Citizens were frightened.

Judge Petree, mediator, and his staff arrived in Huntsville and immediately went into a conference with union leaders. After the meeting at the Davis house, where John Dean had established his headquarters, Petree then conferred with the officials of the Erwin Mill.

On Sept. 22, before the mediator could work out a compromise, the great textile strike ended. National Union leaders had reached a settlement.

Almost as quickly as it had began, the violence ended. Thousands of Huntsville textile workers responded to the union leaders and returned to work. Peace had returned to Huntsville.

No charges were ever filed against anyone for the hundreds of acts of lawlessness committed during the strike. "It was," as one old-timer remembers, "as if Huntsville just wanted to forget."

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Scruffy, Part 1

by John E. Carson

I don't know where he came from but he saved my life that day. Not that I cared much about living and I have to admit that the thought of suicide had seemed like a logical choice on more than one occasion but I wasn't quite ready to die yet; especially at the hands of a bunch of punks who were as hopeless as I was.

What I had done to draw their attention I did not know but as the sun began to set and I left the park bench they fell in behind me. Pretending I hadn't noticed them I darted my eyes from side to side hoping for even a small crowd I could find shelter in or even a lone person I could approach. I dared not turn my head and my neck became stiff with tension as my frantic search proved fruitless and the once busy paths lay emptied by the fall of evening and the lure of dinner.

The chill I felt through my thin ragged coat was not just the cold January air or the arctic blast that covered most of the country and had even spread to the West Coast where I had come a year ago to escape the ice and snow. At least here, I

thought, if I slept outside I wouldn't freeze to death.

"Hey you," one of them called as my foot reached the red painted curb aiming for the sanctuary of the McDonald's across the street. I hesitated only slightly, stepping quickly onto the blacktop and hurrying my steps.

"You deaf, old man?" The kid called again and I thought that was a fine suggestion. Yes, I wanted to say, I am deaf, now leave me alone! But even as I thought it I knew my posture and my haste had informed them otherwise. Halfway up the block the golden arches seemed to be growing smaller instead of larger.

The daylight was fading as fast as my hope and my heart began to pound in my chest as my knees, painful already from arthritis, began to weaken and the gang overtook me in the parking lot.

Leaving the pack, one of the thugs blocked my path to the door and I looked around to see another headed for the

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light at the edge. I chose a path between them and made for the cars along the side but the one in front had anticipated that and I was forced to veer towards the darkness at the back of the lot.

Bordered by a high cement wall, the service alley to the back of the building was now my only hope of escape. But that too, was blocked by the same dark figure that had darted ahead of me near the door.

Too high to climb, the cement wall was as far as I could go; it's only offering to cover my back as the six members of the goon squad formed a semi-circle facing me as I turned around. In the ambient glow of the parking lot lights, they looked about half my age. I was neither old nor deaf, but years of alcoholism and lack of shaving or haircuts had taken their toll and the lines on my face added years I hadn't earned yet. What was left of my pants hid broomstick legs and the Thrift Store shoes were too big on my unwashed feet.

"What do you want?" I asked. "I don't have any money..."

"We can see that," the kid in the middle said.

"You're a bum. We don't like bums; especially scruffy looking creeps like you."

"Yeah, Scruffy - that's a good name for this guy!" The kid on the leader's right said as if he had an original thought of his own.

"Scruffy! Scruffy!" The others chanted.

The one in the middle raised his hand to quiet them.

"Keep it down, guys! Let's do this guy quick and quiet," he said as he pulled the switchblade knife from his pocket and the flash of a blade sent a wave of realization through me. They weren't going to beat me to death anyway.

Once upon a time, back in Iraq, I could have taken them all on. But that was years ago; before the nightmares and sleepless nights, before the gnawing anxiety that had grown day by day until I jumped at any sudden sound. Back in the day when I knew even in the hail of bullets and the thunder of unseen grenades that someone was watching over me as I ran to the cover of a bombed out building. Someone always had my back.

But one by one our numbers grew smaller. One

by one my brothers in arms fell; some to bullets, some to grenades, some to roadside bombs until finally we were only three. And finally our tour of duty was over. We had made it out alive.

Sure, our nerves were shat-

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tered. Sure we would live with the pain of war, seeing our friends die over and over until...

One of the kids had moved in behind me, pushing me away from the wall and placing a dirty, sweaty hand over my mouth as he pulled my head back and the one with the knife moved closer.

"Do it! Do it, Tony!" another one said. Tony stopped his advance but never took his eyes off of me as I struggled to free myself from the one behind me.

"No names! I told you; never say any of our names!" Tony admonished him and started to move forward again, flipping the knife from hand to hand as if trying to impress his gang or terrify me.

My struggles had brought two more of the punks to me to hold my arms and legs and even the adrenaline I was pumping was not enough to shake them off. Thin, weak and weary I was outnumbered and I knew it. I didn't have much of a life to lose anyway. The knife moved closer to my throat and if Tony had not been busy reveling in his power he would have slit it already. "My dad was a bum," he said, delaying the deed, "A bum like you! One night with my mother then gone! Nothing left of him but the beer bottles and me. Could have been you," he said.

I tried to shake my head, straining against the hands that held me. My eyes were forced to look down at the shorter Tony as I tried to use them to say, "No, it wasn't me!"

"Doesn't matter anyway," he said. "You're all garbage; homeless bums; worthless. We're the clean-up crew."

Just as he moved in for the kill came a growl from the darkness and a dark shadow suddenly leaped between us, jaws from nowhere clamping down on Tony's arm and forcing the knife from his hand as he howled in pain.

Startled, the boy behind me lost his grip and my head rolled forward, my ears picking up the low guttural growl and the snapping jaws that found the soft flesh of the two other punks holding me.

The sounds of scuffling and the chaos of shapes and shadow brought the scenes of battle to my mind. Covering my ears, I crouched and rode out a wave of terror. When finally I stood and dropped my hands there was only one figure in front of me.

End of Part One

"Please excuse Buddy for being absent from school yesterday - he had diarrhea and his boots leak."

Actual parent's note to teacher

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Paul S. Haley

Men's Anti-Saloon League.

To the best of my knowledge, as Papa Moon approached retirement, the newspaper where he worked in Shreveport, Louisiana, went bankrupt. His pension vanished. He moved to set type for the Atlanta Journal-Constitution and paid off his new home in about five years. Or was it three? He worked another twenty years before he finally retired in his eighties.

Growing up, the light of glory shined more brightly on Grandfather Haley than Papa Moon. I was always proud to be a Haley, as if I had anything to do with my grandfather's success. However, over the years my appreciation for Papa has grown tremendously. He was just as good a man. I believe all men and women who live lives of such private valor, invisible to most of the world, deserve to be saluted just as much as those who have tall buildings named after them. Grandfather Haley would agree.

Humor was a friend to both of these men. The best comment I ever heard Grandfather make was at the ground-breaking for Haley Center. It was one of those affairs where dignitaries stand

OUR TWO GRANDFATHERS

by John Haley

Papa Moon and Grandfather Haley. In simply hearing their names, you already get a hint of lives of very different stature.

Odds are astronomically low that you ever knew James Leslie Moon. He was the maternal grandfather to my brother Paul and me. He never heard a sound after he lost his hearing at the age of five. Papa grew up to work in the very visual vocation of typesetting for city newspapers.

Odds are astronomically high that you know of Grandfather Haley, at least indirectly... if you attended Auburn University. You probably took classes in Haley Center named for Paul Shields Haley.

Papa Moon worked hard all of his life. He and his wife Roberta, who was also deaf, had three healthy children. Unfortunately, an autocratic family patriarch believed that deaf people were not fit to be parents, so he orchestrated the removal of each child from their home. After their third child was taken away, Roberta could stand it no longer. She died of a broken heart. Papa later remarried, had a fourth child and kept working.

Grandfather Haley, on the other hand, was married happily for over 50 years to Grandmother Grace. They had five children. He was a civil engineer and on the Board of Trustees at Auburn for 51 years; he only missed one Board meeting until the month he died at the age of 87. He was a stalwart of the Methodist Church and a leader in the Alabama



L-R top - Ann Moon (our mother); her brother Russell; Papa Moon (James Leslie)
Girls l-r Mom & Russell's younger sister Ruth (still living) and her friend Sadie.



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in a row, each with his foot on a shovel as if to personally get the project underway, while behind them – out of sight from the camera – is a gaping chasm for the foundation of a ten story building already well excavated. Grandfather joked that one day students would call this Haley’s Hall, but today they were calling it Haley’s Hole.

Papa Moon tickled us at dinner one time. He and his second wife Mamie were talking with each other in American Sign Language, which we did not know very well. At one point they started fussing, and we wrote out a note asking what the argument was about. He noted back that they were debating their “accents.”

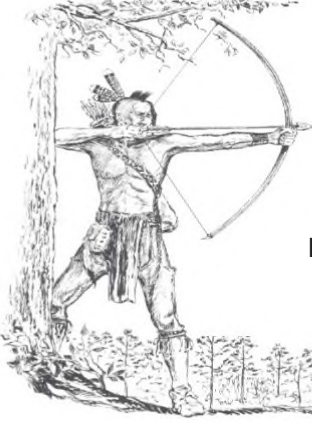
What? Sign language has accents, like Southerners and Northerners? Actually, yes. Mamie was from Louisiana. Papa was from Clay County, Alabama, near Ashland, and they had learned different gestures for the same term. This revelation painted grins across the faces of everyone else around the table.

I don’t recall if these two men ever met – maybe once – but they shared a kind of dignity. As I said, Papa always worked and he was proud of that. When he came across deaf people panhandling with little cards asking for donations because they could not hear, Papa vigorously, though silently, lectured them on how they should get real work. As for Grandfather Haley, for all his years as a Trustee I only recall one time when he passed along free football tickets to us. And then it was only two tickets. Mom and Dad enjoyed the Auburn-Alabama game from the 50 yard line at Legion Field, while Paul and I cheered from distant seats Dad had to pay for himself.

My brother Paul and I are the only grandchildren these two men had in common, but we are not the only beneficiaries of their joint legacy. I like to think our families, friends and those we meet at times benefit from their influence on us. You see, tomorrow, if I meet someone who is widely known and acclaimed, I will not presume conceit or arrogance but will be ready to spot a humble heart. And if I meet someone with a severe disability, I will be less likely to underestimate this new friend and better able to recognize intelligence and talent to be shared with us all.

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was dehydrated, starved and near the end of my short life. The Ark rushed me to the kitty doctor and they saved my life. Seems as if I had been missing for almost a year. The lady had my front claws removed and the Ark can’t imagine how I survived with no claws to find food. If I could talk I would tell them what I could find to eat.

I have a very infected front foot that I am taking medicine to try and not lose my front left leg. I am living in the lobby at the Ark until I am well. Please don’t remove our front claws. We cannot survive outside without them for very long. I know I will be well soon and that will be my 2nd lucky day. Come and visit me at the Ark and meet a real survivor. Please keep your cat inside to keep it safe as you would any other member of your family. When you come to the Ark, ask to see Lucky Day. That’s me.

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Whitesburg Drive-In

by Melinda Belew Blackman



My parents took us to the Whitesburg Drive-In Theater for the first time in my memory on a summer evening in the 1950s when I was in early elementary school. My sister and I wore our navy and white Perry Como short pajamas with stars and we were really excited. I still remember the landscaping as you approached the double lane ticket structure. I recall shapely shrubs, decorative trees and even firs.

I thought it was odd that there was actually a building, in what I now think of as the art deco style, under the giant screen with a porch, door and windows facing the street. If the movie was popular, you might have to wait in line and then drive up and down the lanes looking for the spot you wanted. The theater accommodated several hundred cars. If you were too near the snack bar, it could be a little noisier with people walking by on the gravel to get snacks, use the facility or socialize.

There were elevated slop-

ing rows fanning out from the tall movie screen. I remember the little hill we had to park on and the crunchy sound the gravel made under the wheels. You had to park just right so that those in the back could see well. My dad attached a heavy metal speaker to the partially open window of the car. It normally hung on a metal post and had a cord that connected the device to it. There were two to a post and depending on your parking spot, you either had to put it on the driver side or the passenger side. You had to test your speaker to make sure you had one that worked well. We had all the windows down to catch the night breezes and my sister and I conveniently had pillows and a cover. We ate popcorn from the snack bar and drank an iced drink from a thermos my mother brought. It was a magical evening. I don't remember the movie or when it ended as we fell asleep before it was over.

We did not go regularly, but I always enjoyed it. I loved the snack bar and the play area for kids in front of the screen. When we were little one of our parents might take us down to play before the movie started and I have distinct memories of a swing set, slide, merry-go-round and teeter totters. The snack bar sold food that you could eat for dinner as well as the usual theater snacks. It was the first time I saw hot dogs roasting on heated turning rollers and they smelled wonderful. Overall was the aroma of freshly popped corn, irresistible to most and a must-have treat for many movie goers. The sound of kernels popping rapid fire was background music to me. There were also rows of candy bars and boxed candy in the glass fronted counters, just the right height to draw children like metal to a magnet. There was neon lighting in the snack bar that gave it an other world quality, adding to the atmosphere. My favorite was a glowing blue that drew my eye each time I entered. People would greet friends inside and chat. The theater was owned by the Flemings who belonged to my church.

When the movie started, you could enter another world and become part of the story. I remember thinking how beautiful some

An advertisement for the Huntsville Community Watch Association (HCWA). It features a logo on the left consisting of a silhouette of a house with a chimney inside a circle with a diagonal slash through it, and the letters 'HCWA' below. To the right of the logo, the text reads 'FIGHT CRIME!' in large, bold, capital letters. Below this, it says 'Join Your Community Watch' followed by the phone number '256-722-7100' and the website 'www.hsvcommunitywatch.com'. At the bottom of the advertisement is a line drawing of a large, single-story house with a porch, surrounded by trees and a fence.

of the colors were in the improved technicolor films. Reds were especially rich and striking. There was always a variety of types of films to select from during the season including romance, action, drama, mystery, family, comedy and horror. Some were in black and white and others in color. Some excelled and others could be considered B or even C grade movies. Usually, you could count on getting a second chance to see a film you might have missed when it first played in town at one of the indoor theaters. I went a few times as a teenager, but I think my parents really preferred we go to an indoor theater. Considering the rumors of teen activities, I understood why. Usually the kids who wanted to act out, drink or neck parked in the very back with no one behind them. That's also where they might park and try to sneak unpaid viewers out of the trunks of their cars. That only worked part of the time as sometimes an employee would check trunks of likely cheaters before they entered. If the movie was not well attended, it was a dead give-away of why cars were so far back. If you got loud or rowdy in the regular viewing area, people would complain and the management would warn and if necessary, throw out the misbehavers.

When the movie ended, the speaker had to be replaced on the stand. You could hear the sound of car engines starting all around you and headlight beams pierced the darkness. If it was a popular movie, you had to wait your turn to get in line to leave. There were always those annoying impatient viewers who would leave early to avoid waiting and distract the rest of us. The cars all moved to the right to use the exit. You could hear the sound of many tires rolling over small grade gravel, making its unique noise. Some people would honk their horns to get the attention of a friend and call out and wave at each other. Others might honk in impatience or if someone tried to cut in line. Whitesburg Drive was only a two-lane street in those days and it could take time to empty the lot. As we pulled away from our parking spot, the magic movie spell was broken and we returned to the real world and our everyday lives.

Most young people today have never been to a drive-in theater. I think there are not very many left. My oldest son in Boynton Beach, Florida went early this year with his wife and I think they thoroughly enjoyed themselves. That area would be one location with tolerable weather that could stay open year round and have a chance of making a profit.

The black and white aerial picture that prompted my drift

into memories of Whitesburg Drive-In Theater must have been a very early one as there are none of the lovely plantings that made the entrance special. Publix on Whitesburg Drive is built on the location of the old drive-in. It was not a very populated or developed area at that time with woods on the sides and up the hill in the back; it was considered in the country. There was no Carl T. Jones Drive and the land around the theater and across the street was still part of the Fleming farm.

Later in life, I became friends with someone who actually lived at the theater as a child when her father worked there. We were fairly close in age and were probably there at the same time at some point. She saw the theater from a totally different perspective than I. The playground that was a treat for me was her everyday play area. Seeing a movie was special for me, but they played every night for her. Her adult's world was about managing, dealing with, serving and cleaning up after customers and mine was being one. It is a small world and despite sharing a certain place, we all experience the same thing in our own way.



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the legend of Aunt Jenny Brooks that are told, this much is certain. Jenny Brooks lowered her husband's body out of the tree, laid him next to their oldest son and gathered all the children around. Placing the boys' hands in the sticky blood on their father's chest - even tiny Henry's - Jenny made them swear a "blood oath" that they would never rest until all eight of those killers were dead. Later, Jenny would proudly say that she "wasted many a keg of powder teachin' my boys how to shoot!"

The feud that started with the killing of Jenny's husband and oldest son in 1863 lasted forty years. Jenny and her second son Mack first got the leader of the Home Guard, in early 1864 when they shot him from his horse shortly after he left his house. Jenny made Mack help her drag the body into the woods, where she cut off his head, put it in a burlap sack and carried it home. There, she threw it in a large boiling pot used to make lye soap and scooped and scrubbed the viscera away until she had a nice clean skull, minus the jawbone. This she used as a soap dish for the rest of her life. Her boys, brought up with the sole purpose in life of being their father and brother's avenging angels became deadly expert shooters and fairly competent killers.

The war, like all wars, eventually ended. The feud did not. While Jenny kept track by making notches on a hickory stick, her boys sought out and killed seven of the eight Confederate Home Guards and another twelve or thirteen friends or relatives of the "Secesh" who got in the way of the Brooks' bullets. The eighth literally disappeared off the face of the earth when he realized he was being stalked by the Brooks and their brother-in-law Sam Baker (who soon was well known as a stone-cold killer).

Rumor said that he too was actually killed, but in her old age (by then known by the honorific title of "Aunt") Jenny never claimed him, saying as she waved the hickory stick, "Seven ov'um have been got!" Of her sons and sons-in-law who joined the feud, only Henry survived the bloodletting and he was himself shot dead in early 1920 by a large posse from nearby Winston County while pursuing an age-old mountain tradition of making moonshine. Heavily outnumbered, he managed to get off six or seven shots before he was hit twelve times. It still took Henry Brooks fifteen minutes to die. The "revenooers" also managed to kill his horse.

Aunt Jenny was always proud of her sons, saying to whoever came visiting (and many people did come visiting in her last years because they said no one was elected on the Republican ticket in Winston County unless Aunt Jenny approved of him): "They all died like men, with their boots on!"

She outlived them all, passing away in her bed at the age of 98 on March 29, 1924. She was known as a "good Christian woman" who did many good deeds for her fellow mountain folk, often handing out much needed cash to the poor. A shopkeeper once asked her why she kept so much money on her, and she replied rather pointedly, "I pay myself \$20 a week just to tend to my own business."

As she lay dying, surrounded by her many friends and kinfolk, her pastor asked if there was anything else they could do for her before she crossed over. Aunt Jenny paused, and then said weakly, "I'd like to wash my hands." And so they brought a pan of water and Aunt Jenny's soap dish that she had made back in 1864. One last time, she washed her hands in that murderer's skull. When her hands were dry, she closed her eyes, and went to meet her Maker.

And legend has it that if you go to the cemetery next to her house at night and sit there with no lights, you can see a green glowing light coming closer to you, and if you listen real close you can hear her and her kids screaming at you to get out or you'll be next.



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