



No. 279

MAY 2016



# Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY



## NEWT KNIGHT, A YANKEE AMONG REBELS

### THE HUNTSVILLE CONNECTION

Newt's journey started in July 1861 when he enlisted. However, he was allowed to furlough home in January 1862 to tend to his father, Albert.

Then in May 1862 he and other friends in the county, sensing the direction of the draft, collectively enlisted, simply so they could stay together during the war, instead of with strangers.

*Also in this issue:* **Nineteen Puppies**

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# Newt Knight, The Huntsville Connection

by Steve Gierhart

*"We Stood firm to the Union when secession swept as an avalanche over the state. For this cause alone we have been treated as savages instead of freemen by the rebel authorities."*

*Newton Knight, Petition to Governor William Sharkey, July 15, 1865*

Except for lingering myth and growing legend, history forgot Newton Knight, or at least the white supremacist governments that followed Reconstruction wanted to forget him. Nonetheless, Matthew McConaughey will bring him back to life on June 24. On that day McConaughey, STX Entertainment and IM Global will release the remarkable story of Newton Knight in the Civil War drama, "Free State of Jones". McConaughey portrays the legendary man and certainly has an eerie resemblance to Knight, down to the steely blue eyes of that rebel

against rebels.

As last month's story on "Aunt Jenny" Brooks of Moulton revealed, many Union sympathizers lived throughout the South during the Civil War. Many of those are colorful such as Aunt Jenny, but maybe none were more courageous and defiant than Newton "Newt" Knight of Jones County, Mississippi. Even his last name seems to reflect the nature of the man, as he not only fought against the Confederacy and did not die, but continued his quest for the freed slaves and the poor men of his area throughout his life until he died in 1922.

At the start of the Civil War Newton Knight and other poor farmers had an allegiance to family and home, not to slavery, not to the wealthy planters who held power in the South. As many repeated, including Aunt Jenny and Newt's friend and comrade, Private Jasper Collins, the conflict was a "rich man's war and a poor man's fight."

Collins was furious when in late 1862 the Confederate Congress passed the "Twenty Negro Law", the Second Conscription Act, which allowed any plantation owner with 20 slaves or more, or his sons, to avoid fighting for the Confederate Army.

Collins immediately deserted, leaving the Confederate Army for good, and later had a son whom he named Ulysses

**"Heat makes things expand; therefore, I'm not overweight, just hot."**

**Jenny Adcock, Madison**



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Sherman Collins after Ulysses Grant and William Tecumseh Sherman. This legislation and the tragic desolation of the poor of the South would inspire Newt to do the same and more.

When Mississippi announced its declaration of secession, it opened with this statement - - "Our position is thoroughly identified with the institution of slavery - the greatest material interest of the world." The poor, especially the women and children left behind by the men fighting for the South, were hit hard by the acts of the local Home Guard, the Confederate tax collectors, and soldiers who confiscated the poor's crops and animals for the war effort. Reports of women and children starving during the war were not uncommon among the poor.

And the Home Guard was also tasked with the capture of Confederate deserters (they were given a bounty for each man caught and returned), so Newt and other like-minded Union sympathizers had much

more to hate about these men and their charge.

Newt's journey started in July 1861 when he enlisted. However, he was allowed to furlough home in January 1862 to tend to his father, Albert. Then in May 1862 he and other friends in the county, sensing the direction of the draft, collectively enlisted, simply so they could stay together during the war, instead of with strangers.

At that time Newton was married to the former Serena Turner and was running a small farm in Jones County. Newt said he signed on to take care of the sick and wounded and did not want to fight. However, he was forced into such. Disappointed and very concerned for his family, Newt followed his friend Collins into desertion in November, 1862, after the Confederate defeat in Corinth, Mississippi, scrambling and hiding to avoid the Home Guard throughout his 200 mile journey home.

He managed to avoid the authorities for awhile but by May 1863, he was caught and

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 **At Home**

arrested, in large part because he refused to go back into service with fellow Mississippians in support of the siege of Vicksburg which was in full swing on the Mississippi River. During his imprisonment, he was tortured and his home and possessions were destroyed by the authorities. Newt was branded a traitor, but remained a known force for Union sympathies in the area.

As the siege went on and on, many Confederate soldiers deserted, a large number coming from Newt's neck of the woods after the loss of Vicksburg in July, returning home and creating "mischief" against the Southern authorities and sympathizers in Jones County. By August Confederate authorities decided something had to be done and sent Major Amos McLemore to investigate and stop the raids of Union sympathizers in Jones County. Not much is known about McLemore's efforts to stop the raids except its ending. On October 5, McLemore and many of his men met defeat and death in the home of Amos Deason in Ellisville, Mississippi, with many survivors saying Newt pulled the trigger that ended McLemore's life.

Soon thereafter, Knight organized a guerilla group of 125 men with Newt its "Captain." They lived in the swamp and harassed the Home Guard and tax collectors to the point that county authorities told the Confederate leadership they could no longer collect taxes. Before long, Newt's Union volunteers were joined by numerous ex-slaves who left the surround-

ing plantations to join Newt's cause. Included in this group was the slave woman Rachel who became Newt's lover and helped bring food and information to the insurgents.

From late 1863 to early 1865 the Knight Company allegedly fought fourteen skirmishes with Confederate forces, often conducting "Robin Hood-like raids" to secure food for his men and the poor. At one point he captured five wagon loads of corn which he passed to the starving families in Jones County and the surrounding area. By the spring of 1864, the Confederate government in the county had been effectively overthrown. Confederate Captain Wirt Thomson wrote James Seddon, Secretary of War, claiming the Knight Company had captured Ellisville and raised the U.S. flag over the courthouse in Jones County.

Such action came with a

price as the Confederate authorities finally sent in battle-hardened troops to eliminate the insurgents. In April 1864 they sent Colonel Robert Lowry, later a Mississippi governor after Reconstruction, to weed out Newt's group of rebels amongst rebels. He used bloodhounds to track Newt into the swamps and rounded up ten men who Lowry hung in the trees for the public and left them to rot, hopefully to dissuade future resistance.

They never caught Newt and he reemerged from the swamps to continue his cause. In July 1864, the Natchez Courier reported that Jones County had seceded from the Confederacy.

Newt's efforts did not stop after the War ended. He was a powerful force in the area throughout the time of Reconstruction (1867-1876). In 1872, he was appointed as a deputy




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*Frank Ivy, Driving Instructor*

U.S. Marshal for the Southern District to help maintain the fragile democracy. However, by 1875 the Ku Klux Klan and the white supremacists of the Democrat Party were keeping blacks and Republicans from voting through violence and voting fraud. Newton Knight left the political arena, but not his support of the rights of blacks and the ex-slaves.

Here is where the story takes a Huntsville twist. In 1870 Newt left his wife Serena to take up with and later marry his black lover, Rachel, with whom he had several children. One of these children was Anna Knight, who became a leader in the ranks of the Seventh Day Adventists. Anna was famous in her own right, obtaining a degree in nursing and doing Mother Teresa-like work in India for six years. In 1898, she established an Adventist-sponsored school and churches in the Knight community. Under her tutelage, many of her relatives gained educations and converted to Seventh-Day Adventism.

And Anna? She eventually

moved to Huntsville to help Oakwood College take wing. She was a fixture on the campus for almost 50 years, dying in Huntsville in 1970. Oakwood Elementary is named after Anna Knight and Jones County Junior College (Mississippi) has established the Anna Knight Memorial Scholarship.

And Newt? Well, yes, he had white and mixed race children who initiated several branches of the Knight family who live today. He has a movie now - really two if you count the 1941 film, "Tap Roots", which is very loosely based on Newt's story, not even using his name as the central figure.

But he may also be the player in a ghost story, much like Aunt Jenny. It is said that in the Deason home in Ellenville, on the anniversary of McLemore's murder, "the door to the doorway in which Newt Knight stood swings open and promptly closes, as if by an unseen hand."

Be sure and check out the movie, *Free State of Jones*, if you want to see the Hollywood version of the story.

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# THE NO-SHOW WEDDING

by Helen Miller



Of all the family gatherings we had, none was ever larger or caused as much excitement, hysteria and embarrassment as the wedding of my cousin Lucile Whaley, Aunt Mary's daughter.

I remember it well - it was a beautiful day out at the house where I was born near Grandpa and Grandma's farm. Cars were parked alongside horses and buggies under the trees in the shade. Menfolks were grouped about discussing politics, how hot it was, and wondering all about this fellow Lucile was about to marry.

We children were instructed to stay out of the house because there was too much going on inside. We chose the porch and

joggled on the joggling board that Mama and Daddy had left out there when they moved into town. After what seemed like a half day, curiosity finally got the best of me and I slipped into the house to get firsthand info on what was going on. Clara Mae and Sudie wouldn't dare disobey Mama's instructions to stay outside.

There were women and more women all dolled up and everyone busy as a bee. At the end of the living room there was a small table with white lace and candles. They called it an "improvised altar" with beautiful flowers placed around the mantle in the background.

Lucile's father was a Baptist

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minister who would perform the ceremony and this was the spot they would say, "I do." In the dining room there were more tables with white cloths and one with a big wedding cake in the center. On the other tables there was food of all kinds - turkey and dressing with all the trimmings, salads, and breads because folks coming to a big country wedding expected more than just a piece of cake.

I remember the women whispering to each other and looking at their watches saying something about, "over an hour late now." I was sent back out on the porch and it was easy to see that the menfolks were getting impatient too. The whole problem was the groom was late - very late! In fact, some folks had begun to leave.

I slipped back inside and heard a lot of commotion coming from one of the bedrooms and just got a quick peek inside

long enough to see Lucile sitting on the side of a bed in her white dress crying hysterically with a bunch of womenfolk trying desperately to console her.

Daddy's brother, Uncle John, must have figured it all out however, and saved face for the disastrous situation. He left the house for a while, then drove up in the yard, got out of his car, hurried up the steps, came into the living room and called everyone together. He then pulled a yellow Western Union telegram from his inside pocket put on his glasses and began to read. I don't remember all the words but it said something about being "unavoidably delayed" and they would have to be married at a later date. By then it was almost dark and everyone left, disappointed and feeling very sorry for Lucile. It was the topic of conversation for weeks afterwards. They did marry later, but I never saw her again.



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# Monte Sano Memories

by Helen Hamm Ford

Huntsville was my home from the age of five until I married and moved to Atlanta, where I still live. You might say that both Huntsville and I grew up together, as the two decades from 1945 to 1965 were momentous both in my personal growth and in Huntsville's. During that time, the town changed from a sleepy Southern burg of 10,000 to a metropolitan city of 200,000 residents from all over the world. Likewise, I developed from a child to a woman in the city that to me was characterized by both freedom and opportunity.

As I look back on the events that shaped my life during that time, Monte Sano Mountain is central to many of those memories.

When I was very young, we lived on Bonita Circle in a small, two-bedroom house with four children and my parents. Behind the house were huge cotton fields that regularly enticed us to explore them. The fields were contoured with rows of trees separating the fields and a creek whose trickle was a siren's call to us. We only needed a banana and a peanut butter sandwich and off we went on yet another jaunt into the wild.

After a few years, we moved to a bigger house on Bierne Avenue that was close to one of

the access roads to Monte Sano. From there, we kids could roam all over town. If we had the money, we would catch the bus to town for a movie, the library, or a swim at Big Spring Pool or the YMCA. On many days, though, we would head in the other direction—up the mountain. Following the dummy line, my brother Ken and I would hike all the way up Monte Sano. No matter where we went, it was always a fun adventure. Fear never entered our idyllic world.

I took part in many events on the mountain, such as church trips, Girl Scout outings and sports team parties. We kids loved playing among the ruins of the 1800s resort hotel that graced the slope. It of-



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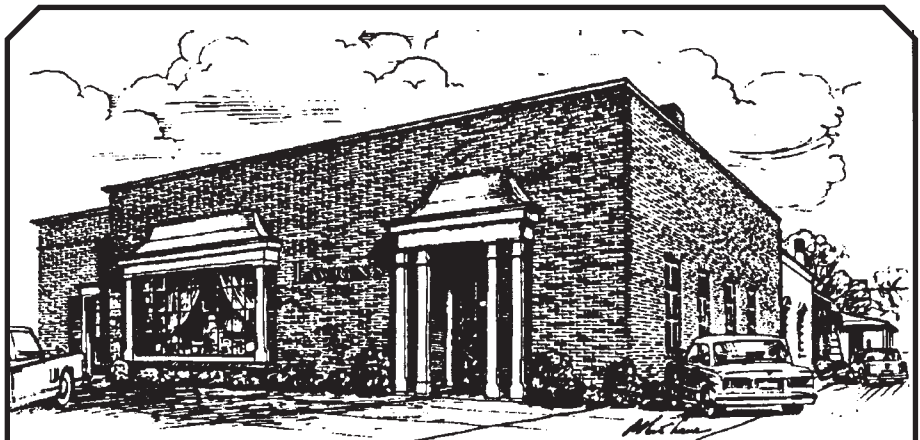
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*Phyllis Diller*

ferred cooler summer temperatures and fewer mosquitoes to guests from the lowlands. We would imagine what it would have been like to be a guest in what must have been (at the time) a fine hotel. The ghosts of the past were never far away in our young imaginations.

On weekends, my family would often enjoy a picnic up on the mountain. One traumatic memory was from one of these outings when I was 6 or 7. My dad had car trouble on the way up the mountain, and he stopped on one of the lookouts at the top of the mountain. When he thought it was safe to resume driving, he told us to get into the car. I refused to ride back with my family and pitched a monumental fit. My dad took it as a sign that I didn't trust him and was not happy with me. Finally, after he was fully exasperated, he flagged down a car headed down the mountain, and I rode off sniffing in the back seat with strangers. Today, even I wonder what I was thinking. In any case, neither my father nor I ever forgot the incident.

Having grown up in the Arkansas Ozarks, my father always loved horses and he was a skillful rider. He liked to take us up to the Monte Sano Mountain stables where we rented horses to ride. There were always at least six of us, and sometimes there were many more.

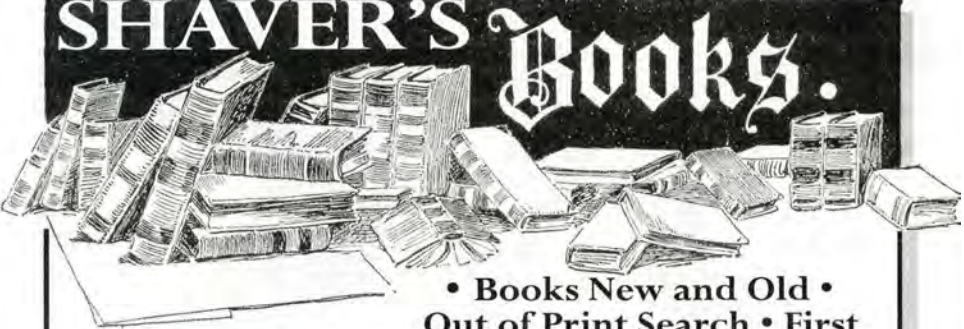
Unlike my father, my mother was never totally comfortable on horseback. One time

when we were returning to the stables, the horse Ken was on caught a sniff of the barn and broke into a run. My dad went after Ken. Becoming impatient, my mother, who was bringing up the rear, felt she had to go and help save her son. In a quavering but brave voice, she said to us, "Watch out girls, I'm coming through!" She gave her horse a few pokes in his flank, but he didn't move. She said again, this time with more bravado, "Okay, girls, I'm coming

through!" With an effort, she was able to get a reluctant walk from her horse, and she passed us by—albeit slowly. Even at the time, I thought this was a very funny scene. It was almost a movie in slow motion!

Monte Sano also played an important role in helping me find the love of my life. At 23, while teaching English at Lee High School, I was one of Huntsville's "old maids." Everyone was introducing me to brothers, cousins and even

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cranky old men in hopes that I would settle down. Most of my high school buds were long married.

On a fortunate blind date in July of 1964, I met Dave, a handsome Air Force officer from California who was serving his military obligation as a NASA "Rocket Scientist." I was soon smitten. We dated slowly at first but the pace rapidly picked up. After all, we were "old" at 23 and 28!

One night in late October, we decided to go on one last picnic supper on the mountain. Dave made fried chicken and brought a bottle of wine. I had Mother's housekeeper make baked beans and potato salad that I let Dave think I had prepared. (My sisters, Pat and Maureen, thoroughly chastised me for this deception.) We stayed long after dark and had a lovely picnic. By the time we were ready to walk out, it was very cold and we were very relaxed. I remember in the dark we blindly walked off a 3-4 foot stone wall arm-in-arm. Fortunately, we landed safely on our feet, laughing all the way.

We were married in December, and I'm sure that picnic cemented the relationship that remains firmly in place 51 years later. As I look back on the early years of my life in Huntsville, they seem both ordinary and yet extraordinary at the same time. While we were given many opportunities and great freedom, we were also expected to be responsible from an early age.

Now sometimes when I take a walk out of my current home in the foothills of the Appalachians, I imagine I'm heading up Monte Sano one more time with a smile on my face, the sun in my eyes and the wind in my hair, and I know I am blessed.

My love of being outdoors forever binds past and present and I realize that the girl of long ago is still very much here.

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Patrolmen Walter Sanders and Frank McKissack last midnight raided a crap game on Winston Street and arrested seven men, all of whom found lodging later in the city prison, where these same officers also furnished accommodations for the four drunken men and two others who mixed up in an affray on west Clinton Street. This was one of the busiest nights the police have had since the Christmas holidays.

## Worst Sleet falls here in many years

North Alabama is beneath a mantle of sleet and snow, making this the worst winter day that has been experienced in

**"When I get a headache, I take 2 aspirins and keep away from children, just like it says on the bottle."**

**Fran Smithey, mom in Gurley**

this part of the south in many years. Both telephone and telegraphic service are partially crippled and street car traffic is difficult because the trolleys fail to perform their duty. Trees are hanging with icicles and in every way the entire outdoors presents a frightful sight of winter.

## Progress in Huntsville

Yes, it seems Huntsville really is big enough to do more than one thing at a time. She can go ahead bringing in new people, factories, capital, Fair Association, packing plant, corporate limits extension, celebrations etc. etc. and then have time to cooperate in Mussel Shoals development and other worthy undertakings.

## The Decatur Daily Celebrates a Birthday

The Daily Times extends its hearty congratulations to the editors and publishers of The Decatur Daily, which has just celebrated its fourth anniversary. The policy of our Decatur contemporary is sound. It has made a splendid reputation by always taking the moral side of every public question and is today regarded as one of the ablest newspapers in the state. W. R. Shelton is the splendid publisher; H.D. Harkreader, the brilliant edi-

tor and T. H. Alexander, the gifted associate. Together with all the others who make or contribute in any way to the publication of that wonderful journal, they deserve the plaudits of that delightfully progressive community. We are proud of

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The Decatur Daily and wish it a hundred years of usefulness and general public service.

**Man's Foot Amputated**

John Murray, of Athens, an aged and well known man, recently agreed to submit to the amputation of his foot and insisted that it be severed without the aid of any anesthetic. The old man gritted his teeth and watched the doctors as they cut thru flesh and bone as they used to do in the old days before the discovery of ether.

The operation was entirely successful and Mr. Murray recovered but a few days afterward he began to have excruciating pains which seemed to be localized beyond the end of the severed limb just where the foot used to be. The amputated foot was dug up carefully, straightened out and wrapped in cotton and reburied with the result that Mr. Murray is now resting in perfect comfort.

W. H. Walton and prominent citizen of Athens vouches for the truth of the above facts.

**Statistics in 1915**

- The population of Las Vegas, Nevada was 30.
- Crossword puzzles, canned beer, and iced tea hadn't been invented yet.
- There was neither a Mother's Day nor a Father's Day.
- Two out of every 10 adults couldn't read or write
- And, only 6 percent of all Americans had graduated from high school.
- Marijuana, heroin and morphine were all available over the counter at local corner drugstores.
- Back then pharmacists said, "Heroin clears the complexion, gives buoyancy to the mind, regulates the stomach, bowels, and is, in fact, a perfect guardian of health!"
- Eighteen percent of households had at least one full-time servant or domestic help...
- There were about 230 "reported" murders in the entire USA.



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Two majestic figures soaring in the sky  
over the Tennessee River, a mile high.

On a bright sunny day a thousand feet in the  
sky, a silver glint catches the eye....

it's the head of a Bald Eagle that you spy.

As they dance and prance  
on spreaded wing,

you watch in awe as they do their thing.

Parents that protect their young with great  
devotion

no other animal cares for their family with  
such emotion.

You have heard of the eagle's eye

they swoop down from the sky,

and catch fish from the river, on the fly.

Then back to the American symbol's brood  
with the fish....an eaglet's favorite food.

With people watching from the ground,  
the eaglets put on a show that will astound.

Standing on the edge of the nest  
they put their inexperienced wings to the test.

They leap into the air in a synchronized  
explosion and with immature wings  
flapping.... settle back to the nest as if in slow  
motion.

Too soon the nest will be hollow  
but as years before, many eaglets will follow.  
Again the cameras will be aimed at the nest,  
a photographer's dream....to outdo his  
previous best.



*Anonymous*

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# The Therapy Pool

by *Houston Hodges*

If you want something to help you realize how fortunate you are - or blessed - you need to hang out at a therapy pool. I've done this for the past five years, since having a total hip replacement; I was assigned to aqua-therapy as part of rehab. Since then I have continued my visits about three times a week for some stretching and soaking, to keep that titanium and plastic joint limber.

All sorts of people come to soak in the lovely 90-degree water - all ages and stages of life, and all sorts of bodily configurations, which are evident because you have to show up in your swim suit. There are people with back pain or arthritis, those recovering from strokes, or accidents - people with that vexing stuff called fibromyalgia, or with post-polio syndrome. Some are wheeled down the ramp in wheelchairs built for immersion.

Last week there was a class for some really little kids from the cerebral palsy center, each with a parent. Most were about two - some profoundly affected, others able to splash about and laugh. For most of those who come to the pool, they're there because of no moral flaw or failure, just "the luck of the draw."

There are a couple of ALS guys, young men in their thirties whom I've seen in gradual, inevitable loss of their abilities over a year or so of that awful stuff, first named for that golden Yankee first baseman, Lou Gehrig. "I'm the luckiest man on the face of the earth," he said at his retirement.

One guy was there last week - it takes two attendants to care for him, plus wonderful Ande, the woman who's proprietor of the place and an incredibly skilled therapist. They wheel him down into the water, totally unresponsive (so far as one can tell). They put floats under limp arms and knees, put his breathing pump in a plastic bin that floats beside him, then move his unresisting arms and legs back and forth as he lies there, eyes closed and silent "Push!" Ande says to him. "Pull."

I finished my routine and walked over to where he was

propped up with the lovely warm jet pulsing on the back of his neck. I called him by name, and said, "Good morning! - you're one of my heroes!" and then I started up the incline to the stairs. One of his attendants called after me, "He gave you a thumbs-up!! That's all he can do."

Lou Gehrig was something else, but he was somewhat mistaken. He wasn't the luckiest guy on the face of the earth; I am.

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# Heard On the Street

by *Cathey Carney*



Congratulations to our Photo of the Month winner for April. The adorable little boy was **Brad Travis, meteorologist of Channel 48**. We had so many calls on this one because Brad still looks like that little guy! The first correct caller was **Tammy Boulanger** of Madison, and she says she remembers meeting Brad when he was programming weather radios at the Sure SAV Pharmacy on County Road & Highway 72 in Madison. She said she recognized the face right away!

**Bobby Smith** was our first correct caller for the hidden butterfly - it was on p. 37 - did you find it? We had another caller who called at 12:15 am on the 15th and was the winner as well - **Patricia Rice** of Lacys Spring! Congratulations to you both.

We were so very sad to learn of the death of **Vic Grimes, Sr.** who passed away in late March at the age of 95. Vic was very active with the Golden K Kiwanis not only in restocking his "Old Huntsville" boxes, but in taking pictures at all of the events. He was a sweet, Southern gentleman and will so be missed. He leaves son **Victor Grimes, Jr.**; daughter **Jane Grimes Posey**; son **Jim Grimes (Peggi)**; and his beloved grandchildren, great grandchildren and

two great-great grandchildren.

**Merrimack Hall Performing Arts Center** will be sponsoring its annual **Recital Run 5K and Fun Run** on June 11. Proceeds go to the Johnny Stallings Arts program that helps so many special needs children. The route goes through a 3 loop course through the historic Merrimack Village. It starts at 8am for the 5K and 9:30 am for the Fun Run - call Merrimack for more information or go to their site [www.merrimackhall.com](http://www.merrimackhall.com).

Many readers have commented on the heartwarming story in the March issue about **Mr. Freckles** by **John E. Carson**. Mr. Freckles is John's rescue dog. Thanks go to **Judy Schrader** who correctly identified Mr. Freckles' breed; he is indeed a Kooikerhondje just like her dog, **Lily**.

The **Downtown YMCA** is just a treasure. If you haven't been there you should just drop in to look around. It's quiet, where you see mostly adults, and there are fitness experts to advise you. I've been going now for 3 years and my back has never felt better - it was hurting before I started.

It's hard to believe that this year is the 10th anniversary of the

opening of the **Historic Lowry House**, after years of intensive renovation. The house was originally built in 1850 by John Tate Lowry, and was found to be part of the Underground Railroad that protected and cared for escaping slaves. Thanks go to **Jane and Louie Tippett** who gave much time and money to bring the old lady back to her former elegance. A ghost has been spotted there, thought to be **Ann Lowry**, wife of **Dr. Lowry**. It doesn't keep people away when there are concerts, reunions and other events there.

Mark your calendars for the 2016 **Rock 'N Roll Reunion** at the Elks Club on June 11. Remember the old-time bands we rocked out to like the **Ticks, the Precious Few**, etc? They'll be back and it looks to be sold out! More about this next month!

Happy May 8 birthday to our friend **Ron Eyestone** - we love you! And that sweet lady whom everyone wants to be around, **Linda Goldman**, is celebrating her birthday on May 25th. I know she'll be celebrating with hubby **Darryl** and two French Bulldogs **Lily** and **Tux**. We love you Linda!!

We were very sorry to hear about **James Blair Lary**, who

## 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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This little girl grew up to have 8 kids, taught dance and loves antique cars.



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passed away at the age of 70. He is survived by his brother **Dr. John H. Lary, Jr.**; his niece **Andrea Lary** and his nephew **Gregory Lary (Ann)**; great niece **Miranda Lary** and longtime family friend and caretaker **Joe White**. He lived in Huntsville all his life and worked 40 years as a 911 supervisor for Huntsville Fire and Rescue. We send our deepest condolences to the family and friends.

We wanted to send a special hello to our dear friend **Mr. A.J. Casey** who lives in Satellite Beach, Florida. He's had some medical issues lately and we just want him to know we love him!

Get better **Malcolm Miller!** Our favorite writer has had some medical challenges and we're thinking about you!

**Lowe Mill's Concerts on The Dock** have started! Love These! Every Friday 6-9pm on the grassy area behind the Mill - different and talented musical bands perform for free (\$2 parking) and you bring drinks, kids, pets and chairs.

Happy Birthday to **Rosemary Leatherwood's sweet husband Billy** who has a May 2 birthday!

**Jan Williams** led a very entertaining and informative historic walking tour in very cool weather around the Twickenham Historic District in early April as part of Huntsville's Tourism and Conventions Bureau with **Bob Rogers**. While there I met a lady named **Arena** who works as a CPA for **Amy Uptain's** accounting service. A very interesting lady and fellow pet lover. I highly recommend any historic tour around downtown -

walking made it even better!

The **Golden K Kiwanis Club** will turn 30 years old this month and we're so proud of their hard work. You know that every time you buy a copy of the magazine, all profits from the proceeds of "Old Huntsville" go to the Golden K for their childrens' charities.

It was so good to hear from **Norm Harris**, ex-NASCAR Pit Crew Member and Feb/March 2016 Employee of the Month at Huntsville Hospital! What an honor, as the hospital has quite a few employees (12,000). Norm also oversees **Driven2Read.org** and works very hard to provide health awareness such as "Reading of Health and Heart Disease Awareness" information and promotes healthier eating habits in the black community for heart health. You'll be hearing more about Norm!

The **Annual Antique & Classic Car, Truck & Motorcycle Show/Flea Market** will take place May 21st, Saturday at the Senior Center on Drake Ave. Email Gene at gjjrmoran@gmail.com for more info.

It was hard to believe that someone in another state had just put gas in their car, overfilled it, then drove off. Lit a cigarette and somehow the fumes must have still been very strong - the car caught fire and caused a wreck, which involved 3 other cars that also caught on fire. Several women and kids were badly burned.

Gas fumes are so dangerous with any kind of spark - just be very careful.

May is **Mother's Day** month and we want to send love and admiration to all the Mom's out there who work so hard for their families. If you are lucky enough to still have your Mom in your life, be sure and let her know you love her.

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## Mother's Day Treats

### Lentil Salad

- 1-1/2 c. lentils sorted, rinsed
- 1/2 t. salt
- 1/2 c. fresh cilantro, chopped
- 6 green onions, chopped
- 1/2 c. olive oil
- Juice of one lemon
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 t. ground coriander
- 1/2 t. ground cumin
- Pepper to taste

Soak lentils in water to cover in saucepan for 2-3 hours. Bring to a boil and simmer until tender, then drain.

Combine lentils, salt, cilantro and green onions in bowl; mix well. Pour mixture of remaining ingredients over lentils; toss to coat. Serve chilled.

This salad is even better the next day when all the spices combine!

### Pure Heaven Bars

- 1 c. graham cracker crumbs
- 1/2 c. butter melted
- 12 oz. chocolate chips
- 1/2 c. chopped walnuts
- 1 can Eagle Brand Condensed Milk
- 12 oz. butterscotch chips
- 6 oz. flaked coconut, pre-toasted

Spray a 13 x 9" pan with butter spray. Mix graham cracker crumbs and butter, press into the bottom of the pan.

Layer chocolate chips, sprinkle with half of the condensed milk, then a layer of walnuts, a layer of butterscotch chips, the remaining condensed milk and top with coconut. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes and top is light brown. Your family will love this!

### Cinnamon Apple Nut Cake

- 1-1/2 c. vegetable oil
- 2 c. sugar
- 2 eggs
- 3 c. finely chopped, peeled apples
- 1/2 c. golden raisins
- 1/2 c. chopped walnuts
- 1 c. chopped pecans
- 1-1/2 t. ground cinnamon
- 2-3/4 c. self-rising flour

Combine oil, sugar and eggs, then add remaining ingredients. Pour into grease loaf pan. Cook one hour at 325 degrees. Try this hot with home-made vanilla ice cream or whipped topping.

### Strawberries & Cream

- 1 qt. fresh strawberries, washed (not hulled)

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2 c. sour cream  
 1 c. brown sugar  
 Put the strawberries, cream and brown sugar in 3 separate serving bowls. To eat, dip each strawberry into the sour cream, then into the sugar.

### Pineapple Muffins

2 c. plain flour  
 1/2 c. sugar  
 1 t. salt  
 1 t. baking powder  
 1 c. raisins (optional)  
 1 egg, beaten  
 1 t. vanilla extract  
 2 T. vegetable oil  
 1 t. baking soda  
 1 16 oz. can crushed pineapple with juice

Sift flour, sugar, salt and baking powder into a bowl. Stir in raisins. Add egg, vanilla and oil; mix well. Dissolve baking soda in crushed pineapple in bowl. Add pineapple mixture to flour mixture, stir just until moistened. Fill paper-lined muffin cups 2/3 full. Bake at 325 for 20-25 minutes and toothpick comes out clean.

### Sweet Chew Cakes

1 box brown sugar  
 1 stick butter  
 1 t. vanilla extract  
 3 eggs  
 2 c. self-rising flour

1-1/2 c. pecans, chopped  
 Melt sugar and butter together in a saucepan. Mix well and add nuts. Batter will be stiff. Pour into a greased 9 x 13" pan and bake at 325 degrees for 20-30 minutes. Cool and cut into squares when ready to serve. These won't last!

### Hazelnut Butter Crunch

1/2 c. plain flour  
 1/3 c. chopped hazelnuts  
 1/4 c. packed brown sugar  
 1/4 c. butter  
 Mix all til crumbly, distribute evenly in an ungreased 9 x 13" pan. Bake at 400 degrees til golden brown, 7 to 10 minutes. Stir and cool. Store in covered container.

### Sweet Noodle Pudding

1/2 lb. egg noodles  
 3 eggs  
 1-1/2 c. milk  
 1 c. sour cream  
 1 lb. cottage cheese  
 1/2 c. sugar  
 1/2 c. raisins (optional)  
 Cinnamon & sugar  
 Cook noodles for 7-8 minutes in boiling water. Add next 6 ingredients. Pour into a greased casserole and sprinkle with cinnamon and sugar. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes.



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# As They Cooked

*Privately Published by Elizabeth Humes Chapman, from "Changing Huntsville, 1890-1899"*

Cooking was a fine art in Huntsville. No woman was ashamed to learn how to cook or to serve as cook at Church bazaars, fairs, or picnics. Hospitality demanded that every woman be prepared to feed a guest who came at unexpected hours. Stoves were heated with wood, coal, or oil. They were hard to regulate and uncertain for baking. Utensils were iron, tin or copper. There were iron pots for cooking vegetables, boiling water; iron skillets for frying; iron griddles for broiling meats; iron molds for muffins and cakes; and iron waffle rings. They were heavy and retained heat long after the fire was low which was their value in a wood stove. The things cooked in them tasted better, too.

Materials were bought in wholesale quantities and stored in a pantry. Every household of any pretension bought coffee and sugar by the hundred pound sack, flour by the barrel, sides of bacon, and bushels of meal. Coffee was roasted in the pan and ground in a small hand-mill on the kitchen wall, or a smaller one which could be held in the grinder's lap. The grains were put into an open top, passed through grinders, and fell into a little drawer in the bottom. Experienced cooks knew exactly how much coffee to grind for a meal. Preserves were canned by the gross.

A few women were successful in canning vegetables, but most families did without vegetables out of season. In winter, sweet and Irish potatoes, cowfield peas, dried okra, turnips and turnip salad, cabbage, and butter beans were the ordinary menu. Meals were heavier than they are now. For breakfast, oatmeal, muffins and biscuits, or battercakes or waffles, steak or chicken, eggs, milk, coffee and cream were a normal meal. In season, five vegetables, not counting rice or Irish potatoes, two meats, and a dessert were the ordinary dinner which was usually served between one and three o'clock. Supper was simple. Biscuits, jams, cold meat, grits, bread and milk, tea or coffee, supplied their needs. Children were fed about five o'clock and were put to bed by seven.

In the following recipes please note the "quick heat." This is important as your baked goods will collapse unless you use it. A modern, quick oven is not quite as indicative.

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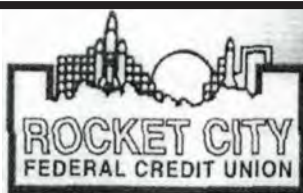
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**Butter Jumbles**

Rub a pound of butter into a pound and a quarter of flour; beat four eggs with a pound and a quarter of sugar; when very light mix them with the butter and flour; mix in a glass of rosewater and a nutmeg; roll them in rings and bake slowly; sift powdered sugar over them after they are baked.

**Date Rocks**

One pound of shelled pecans or scaly barks; one pound of seeded dates; three eggs beaten together; two cups sugar; two light cups flour; one-quarter pound of butter; one teaspoonful of soda sifted with the flour; one teaspoonful of cinnamon; one of cloves; two of allspice, also sifted with flour. Buttermilk as needed.

Cream butter and sugar; add the beaten eggs; sift flour and spices in gradually. Add nuts and dates. If it is too stiff add enough buttermilk to make it the consistency of fruit-cake dough. Drop on greased tins. Bake in quick oven until light brown.

**Beaten Biscuits**

One pound flour, three ounces lard, one teaspoonful of salt, one teacupful of ice water. Cream the flour and lard. The salt is sifted with the flour. Beat on a biscuit block until the dough blisters with every stroke. Rollout. Cut with small cutter. Stick each biscuit four times in rows in the middle with fork. Bake forty-five minutes in a quick oven.

**Stuffed Ham**

Cut off all extra fat. Boil in a pot of water until it is tender. Remove, dry, and put in baker. Run in the oven until it is dry. Take out. Prepare meal or rolled cracker crumbs with some of the juice of the ham, two eggs beaten together, sweetened vinegar, salt and pepper. Slice 1/8 inch strips out of the ham about four inches apart. Chop sweet pickles into the breadcrumbs. Stuff strip with mixture. Cover the ham with it. Decorate with hard boiled eggs. Take the yolk out, slice into disks. Use these as the center of a daisy.

Make petals out of strips of the white. Cut pickles for stems of daisy. Run into oven until the dressing browns. Take out, set aside to cool. Serve on large platter when cold.

**Chicken Croquettes**

Boil hen until the meat leaves the bones. Strip skin and meat off the bones. Grind through a meat grinder with onions. Mix the chicken with bread crumbs and chicken gravy. Red pepper adds to the flavor. Beat two eggs together, mix in. Form meat into balls and roll in beaten biscuit crumbs. Fry in deep fat until a rich brown. Serve hot on parsley leaves.

*Woody Anderson*



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**Sponge Cake**

Take twelve eggs, the weight of them in sugar, and the weight of six of them in flour; beat the yolks with the sugar, and beat the whites alone; season with nutmeg or grated lemon peel; put altogether, adding flour last; stir it quickly after the flour is added as it will make it heavy to beat it much; you then grease several small pans and put it in; bake with a quick oven and they will be done in half an hour or less. They are pretty when iced.

**Light Bread**

Boil Irish potatoes. Mash them in their own water, cup for cup; add one cup of luke warm water; one yeast cake dissolved in a cup of luke warm water, one cup of sugar. Beat to smooth consistency and let rise in a warm place two hours at least. Add one tablespoonful of lard; one teaspoonful of salt, half the yeast mixture and enough flour to knead into a light dough.

Form into rolls or into loaves. Let rise in a warm place until they are double their original size. Butter tops. Bake. The remaining half of the mixture may be kept in a cool place and used two days later.

Recipes were passed from friend to friend. There was a smokehouse on all of the old places. Hams cured with saltpetre, pepper, salt, brown sugar, and smoke hickory chips. A few people cured beef, also. The fire had to kept up three weeks. The hams and other pieces of meat swung from the smoke house rafters. There were no windows in it nor was there a floor. The door was fitted as closely as possible so that as little air as possible could get in.

A good many families made their own wine or cider, used hard presses, left the new wine in barrels with a siphon leading into water to take off the impurities. After it stopped fermenting it was siphoned into bottles. They were corked and stored in cellars with the date on a label.



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## TEMPERANCE HILL SCHOOL MEMORIES

by Earlene Swaim Storey

*"One day the Little Red Hen found a Seed. It was a Wheat Seed."* Those were the first words from my reading Primer. The book contained other age old stories for beginning readers such as "Three Billy Goats Gruff", "Chicken Little" and the "Gingerbread Boy". I developed a lifelong love of reading from that. I learned how to spell correctly from a book called the "Blue Back Speller". There were many lessons learned in grammar school. Temperance Hill School was closed in 1966. I attended first through sixth grade there beginning in 1926. Some memories of my days there remain fresh in my mind in my ninety-sixth year.

My seven brothers and sisters had attended Temperance Hill before me but to me it was a mysterious place I'd only heard about. The school was a mile and a half away from my Route 4 home, straight down the road. Our house was considered in the country and even the town of Scottsboro seemed far away. We lived on a farm as did all the families in that area.

I was seven years old when I started. I was the youngest out of nine children. I remember for a while I only had older people to talk to at home. School was a strange new place and something you hadn't done before. The build-

ing seemed huge to me. That first day I don't think I'd ever seen so many kids in one place. The older kids seemed almost grown.

My brother, Mose, and sister, Vicky, would accompany me on the mile-and-a-half walk down the dirt and gravel path that first year. We would meet up with other kids that came across the ridges along the way. For the next seven years I would learn reading, writing and arithmetic and things that would come in handy for many decades afterwards.



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Here are a few of my recollections about the big white Temperance Hill School building. There were large windows in the front. From the inside they were high up and you couldn't look out. The outside steps seemed steep to my small legs. There were no rails. The building had three classrooms with high ceilings and wooden floors. One of the rooms was much larger than the other two rooms and had a stage. The large room belonged to Miss Madge Porter. She taught the older kids in fifth and sixth grade and she was also the Principal.

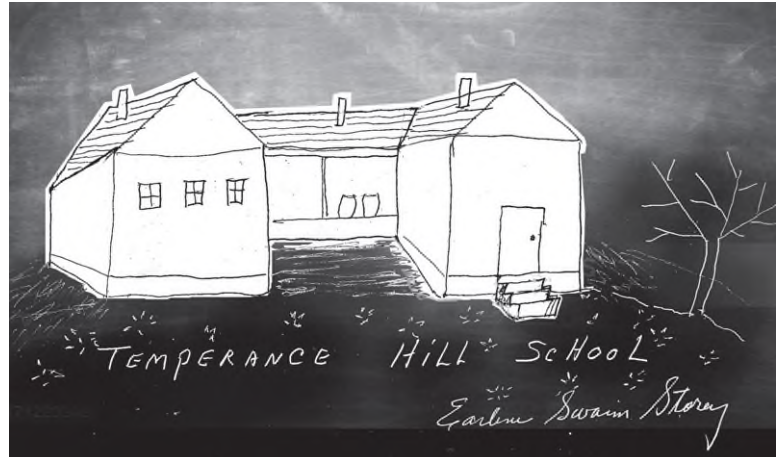
My first grade class was taught by Miss Dorothy Gold. Miss Gold taught the first and second graders in one of the smaller rooms. She had sandy colored hair and looked young. I thought she was pretty even though I was a little afraid of her... and all of the teachers. Miss Janie Bryant taught the third and fourth grades. The classrooms were arranged by grades, two grades to a room. Each grade had a couple rows of desks on opposite sides of the room. My brother Mose sat in the same room as I did but always in the next grade so I didn't get to talk with him in class. It seemed like Mose was always the teacher's pet.

A rural school building then was much like the houses we all lived in. There was no electricity or running water. For drinking water they had two huge wooden barrels with a spigot sitting on a covered porch area outside the classroom. Everyone had their own drinking cup. I had a collapsible tin cup. Our lighting was mainly the large windows and oil lamps as a backup.

Our rooms would get really hot in the summertime. During the winter, heating was provided by a coal burning pot belly stove in each room. The restrooms were located outside the school in outhouses; one for boys and

one for girls. There must have been a separate one for the three teachers because they never went to ours. We had things at Temperance Hill that schools have today I think. We had a school bell that the teachers rang. There were blackboards hung on the walls and a pencil sharpener. We had recess and a lunch break. We also had report cards and homework.

Everyone had to buy their own textbooks and school supplies. Those things didn't cost that much but money was scarce. I always seemed to be out of paper.



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Our school sessions lasted until May. We went back in July. School would let out during cotton picking season. All children were expected to pick cotton with the grown-ups and help their families. I remember they also used to close the school for funerals when someone in the area died. Everyone in the school would be at funerals of people we didn't know, which looking back seems kind of odd.

My closest friends at Temperance Hill were Opal Benson, Edith McKelvey and Kathrine Rice. We usually sat at the back of the building and ate our lunches together. I had a metal lunch box. I once used it as a weapon when a boy I didn't like too much tried to kiss me.

Everyone brought something from home to eat. Something like a ham biscuit and a tea cake. My mother made the best tea cakes and I've never been able to figure how she made them. This was before the great Depression. As I said nobody had much money but we didn't feel like we were poor. We always had plenty to eat. Some families were better off than others though. I remember a few children every day had only cornbread with molasses in their lunch pail.

When the Depression came later we weren't any worse off that I could tell.

At recess the older kids played basketball. The playground had two basketball goals and a dirt court in between. The boys and girls alternated days using it.

Everyone else played children's games. We had tugs of war. We picked flowers that grew on the grounds. There was a little creek near the school that some kids said had water moccasins but I never saw any. There was an opening to the crawl space under the big room. Sometimes we would go in there when we were playing hide and seek. We heard vagrants would occasionally sleep there, which was a little scary to me. Once I remember catching little frogs that were in puddles after a rain. I lost interest when somebody said they would give you warts. The teachers kept us inside during the cold and rainy weather.

We always addressed the teachers as Miss Madge, Miss Janie or Miss Gold. I remember Miss Janie once got mad at a big boy from Larkin's Landing. I'm not sure what he did but she took her stick and slammed it on his desk. He stood up

Never run away when you see a bear, unless you know for sure you can beat some of the other runners.

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and grabbed the switch away from her and broke it in two. Needless to say he got sent home. They paddled kids that got out of line back then.

That boy also had a cousin who liked to pull my hair. I had to lean forward in my chair to keep away from him but I never told on him. There were always bullies and kids that wanted to pick on you.

I always had sore throats. I can't remember missing school because I was sick. A county welfare doctor would come out to school on occasion to check on the students' general health. The county doctor told my parents my tonsils needed to come out. I still have them today though. I also wormed out of getting shots. The school never closed for bad weather that I can remember. In the winter sometimes my hands would be so cold I'd almost be in tears. The school was always warm when we got there. It was nice to warm up by the stove. If it was raining a man named Ira Bradford whose children walked with us would drive us to school, otherwise we made the mile and a half walk ourselves. Mr. Bradford was one of the few people who owned a car. When I was in my later grades Henry Jones, a guard at the nearby convict camp, gave me a ride a few times.

The teachers were strict but were nice when you got to know them. Every so often the teacher would let me or someone else go outside to help dust the erasers. It always seemed like an honor to do that.

I made my only stage appearance at Temperance Hill. Every year they would put on a play. I never enjoyed being on stage but with my classmates around me I didn't mind it too much. I was Little Miss Muffett in one play and the Queen of the Fairies in another. An old black lady once loaned us these really beautiful old dresses that we wore as costumes for one of the shows. The play performances we had were the only times I remember my parents actually coming to the school.

One night my best friend Opal and I got to spend the

night with Miss Janie and her husband. It might have been while we were doing the play. They lived near where the old Goodyear Plant is. I remember Opal wanting a drink of water in the middle of the night and waking the teacher.

Miss Janie cooked a wonderful breakfast for us. That was a real treat.



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Hundreds of kids passed through the doors of that old three room school. Some names of families I remember during my time there were Tanner, Carter, Chandler, Martin, Finney, Edmonds, Gentry, Sharp, Murray, Anderson, Cordell, Law, Reed, Frazier, Treece, Shook, Oden, Miller, Moss, Foster, Crye, Cornelison, Hawkum and Olinger.

I actually attended Temperance Hill beyond sixth grade. High school was seventh through twelfth grade. For some reason Mose and I went back to Temperance Hill because it cost too much for us to go to high school in Scottsboro. They called it conscription school and we could go to High School at Temperance Hill for two dollars a month. So Mose and I went to seventh grade there instead of high school. Our teacher was Lawton Kennamer.

When I got to high school, the kids from Temperance Hill were kind of looked upon as outsiders. I liked high school but in grammar school the other kids weren't as judgmental about clothes and what you had.

Many years later I saw Miss Madge Porter in Scottsboro and she told me she had kept some of my drawings and stories I'd written while in her class. She asked me if I wanted them. I was very surprised Miss Madge had held on to them for so many years. I was not scholarly like my sister Vicky - just an average student. Miss Madge told me that she had observed through the years that the average students usually did better in life.

According to Joyce Kennamer, who taught at the Temperance Hill

School until its last day in 1966, the building continued to use pot-bellied stove heating as late as 1964. They installed a butane system only a couple years before the school closed." Her husband, Alfred, also a former teacher at Temperance Hill, would arrive at 5:30 every morning to start a fire in the stoves. The building still had outhouses and running water only in the kitchen.

During her tenure (1959-1966) the school enrolled about 75 students. She concluded the school was closed as the area had been incorporated into the Scottsboro city limits and was not considered economically practical to continue operating. The school building would later be used as a trucking company and today is a private residence.

Fifty years after closing the little school named in honor of the temperance movement; its old white facade still stands as a reminder of a bygone Jackson County era and a monument to both the many educators and children who taught and learned there.

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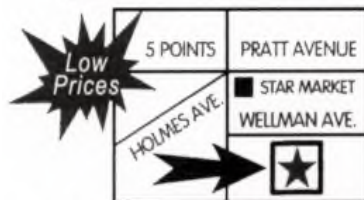
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## Nineteen Puppies

On December 5, 2015, the world got a little bit sweeter. That's the day that Velma, a 4-year-old Great Dane from Alabama, stunned her owners Josh and Terri. You see, Velma was pregnant and they expected her to give birth to a litter of 10. But imagine their surprise when they learned Velma was pregnant with a whopping 19 puppies!

Averaging a delivery of one puppy per hour, the entire birthing process took about 19 hours in total. Incredibly, all of the puppies are healthy, happy and just adorable.

Velma's brood is nearly unprecedented – it officially ties with the largest known litter of goofy Great Danes!

Keeping one baby fed is difficult enough, let alone a pack of 19 plump and hungry Great Danes, which is said to be the largest dog breed.

Terri and Josh were stunned when the puppies "just kept coming," after a 19-hour-long birthing process. Expecting 10 puppies is a whole lot different when you see 9 more that weren't expected! Even the vet wasn't prepared.

All of the puppies are healthy and happy, and Terri says each one is precious and unique. Velma is also doing great. She was, understandably, extremely worn out after the delivery but as she was healthy to start with, there were no issues later.

However, nursing the brood is a whole other story. Great Danes grow rapidly and so do their food needs.

Velma has proved to be a wonderful mom, but she simply cannot nurse all of the puppies at once without it looking like an adorable yet chaotic game of

musical chairs. So, Terri and Josh have stepped in to help feed the puppies every 3-4 hours. Velma's milk supply is supplemented with goat milk and Esbilac formula. Half comes from Velma and half comes from the formula. A very busy new family!

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# Scruffy

## Part Two

by John E. Carson



Though my eyes had adjusted to the dim light of the poorly lit space and the early darkness of mid-winter, I could not make out the details of the animal that stood panting in front of me. But my ears could hear the ragged breathing of his lungs as both of our racing hearts began to slow down.

Crouching slowly I reached out like a blind man searching for his cane and felt the coarse, matted fur of a dog I was sure must be some kind of German Shepherd.

"Easy, boy," I said as I stroked his back, guessing at the gender of my defender. The dog responded with a turn of its head and sat complacent at my feet.

"Where did you come from?" I asked, thinking out loud and feeling his neck for a collar and tag. A collar was all I found. It was an old, thin, leather collar coming apart at the stitching, its layers beginning to separate and I knew that it had seen a lot of time and weather.

Still shaking from the attack I wondered if he would follow me into the restaurant that I had hoped would be my sanctuary from the pursuing gang. Should I report it? Would anyone even care? The gang was already long gone; what could the police do anyway?

I knew from reading yesterday's newspapers that many homeless people had been attacked here recently. It had become so frequent that social media sites were calling for the city to take action. Meanwhile, local residents and businesses were calling for more restrictions against

the homeless. Ordinances outlawing vagrancy, feeding the homeless and sleeping in public places were being passed to placate businesses along the streets and tourist areas. People like me were a thorn in the side of the under-budgeted police force and the outcry on the National scene was an embarrassment to the city council and the mayor.

No, maybe the best thing to do was to just go in and use the restroom, wash up and dig up enough change to buy a burger and a drink. If the dog was still outside I would share with him.

After cleaning up the best I could, I dug into the deep pockets of the thin, gray topcoat finding an assortment of change that embarrassed me further as I spread it noisily on the metal counter under the glare of the cashier who rolled her eyes as if to please the few people watching from the tables behind me.

Success! I had enough for a \$1.00 burger, fries and a small drink! "That's to go, right?" "Yeah, to go." I agreed. I wouldn't eat in here anyway; I thought to myself. Once

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outside, I sat at one of the metal tables - the kind that reminded me of a cheese grater - and looked around for the dog.

It did not take him long to find me and in the light I could see that he was indeed some kind of Shepherd mix; the black and brown coat being the strongest clue. But the somewhat floppy ears and the shorter, stouter muzzle of his face suggested a possible Border Collie mix.

I am no dog expert but I had a few pups while growing up and saw enough combat dogs during my service to be able to recognize them.

The brown eyes looking up at me hopefully as he sat patiently at my side were too hard to resist, and half of the small bag of fries disappeared one by one between his long

white canine teeth while I ate my burger, saving a fan-sized bite for my new friend.

No longer alone, I felt a little bolder and took the paper drink cup back inside, ignoring the disgusted looks of the high-nosed patrons. I would have ordered coffee but I knew I could get more soda in the cup if I skipped the ice.

Back outside again I sat at the unwelcoming table and regarded my new partner.

"I don't know what I am going to do with you," I said, as if he could understand me. "I can hardly feed myself let alone a dog. But still, I sure am glad you came along." I reached out and petted him as I talked and he looked up at me, seemingly content to stay with me.

From the condition of his coat and his worn, frayed col-

lar, I was pretty sure he was a stray. That he hadn't had a bath for quite a while added to his homeless appearance and I felt an immediate connection with him.

"Well hell," I said, "I don't know what I am going to eat tomorrow anyway so what's the difference? Tell you what; if I can find greener pastures for you, I will. In the meantime I would not mind having you watch my back. Maybe we can find a warm place to sleep tonight," I said smiling.

A mutt like me, the dog looked up as if smiling back. "So," I said, "We have a deal? Good, now what do I call you?"

I knew the answer as soon as I asked the question. "Scruffy," I said. "We'll call you Scruffy!"



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# THE BOOK SHOP

by Lee Burkett

I was born in Huntsville in 1947 but only lived here a short while in the forties until 1969. I grew up in Santa Fe, CA; Aiken, SC; and mostly Gulf Breeze, FL. My Grandparents A.W. and Wanda Burkett moved here in the early 20s. He worked at a furniture store, the school board and managed Laughlin Funeral Home in the forties. My Grandmother ran a sandwich shop on the first floor of the Times Building. They worked at Oak Ridge during the war years.

The story goes that the Grandparents were going to buy Bibles for their two sons Thomas and Sam (my father). They couldn't find what they were looking for and the selections were scant. They decided to open up a book shop and carry Bibles and did so on the Clinton side first floor of the Russel Erskine Hotel. This was in the early fifties.

One time a customer told Grandma that she didn't have what she wanted in Bibles. Grandma told her that they did not have the most but had the biggest selection of Bibles in the whole state of Alabama and if she didn't see what she wanted she could forget it.

I came up every summer for a few weeks and pretended to work in the store. I was supposed to be paid 50 cents per hour. I could sweep the cigarette butts from the sidewalk cracks but not sweep the actual store or walk. That was James' job. James was a convicted felon but they trusted him with everything they had. He was a great guy and a jack of all trades. At that time, he also did the imprinting. He always took me and my Great Grandmother back and forth to Lynchburg. I took mail to the Post Office which was at the Federal Building on Holmes and made runs out for things on occasion.

One time I took a big armload of packages to the Post Office and just left them. I don't know what I was thinking. I did make a hurried return trip with the money. I remember going past the bottling plant and the smell from there.

I guess I was also an original "loss prevention" officer. I never

**"I don't like making plans for the day. Because then the word 'premeditated' gets thrown around in the courtroom."**

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stopped a theft but I did stop some kids from opening games, etc. Maybe I helped by following them around. I especially "guarded" the Dinky Toys because they were so expensive. When it was slow, I raced them. I changed tires etc. I think I was ten years ahead of Hot Wheels.

Later when they started selling school books, she sent me up to the Square to see how long the line was at T. T. Terry's. One of my least favorite jobs was stuffing bags. This was where you put ads in the Book Shop bags.

I guess my favorite part was going to lunch with either of my Grandparents. There were many places downtown where we could walk. We ate at Central Cafe, Post Office Cafe, White Castle Hamburgers and rarely the Russel Erskine and many more which I don't remember.

One place near the Post Office had antebellum scenes on the wall. She liked the meatloaf at the Post Office Cafe because they used a combination of

meats in their meatloaf. I was fascinated with the cigarette collection there. Sometimes in the middle of the afternoon she would take me for a snack. We would go for pie at a very small place on Spragins on the hill where the parking is for the Utilities. Then we'd get a Coke at Dark Drugstore with the heart shaped wire seats, and her favorite snack was a Heath Bar Split at the Russell Erskine snack bar.

My Grandmother was a shrewd businesswomen. Many people will probably remember her with her skirt and blouse, with hair up in a bun and a number 2 pencil stuck in it. Also for her orthopedic shoes.

She never used tape when wrapping gifts. She tied up packages with yarn. She was always getting on me about that. One year when the cost of stamps went, I think, from 3 to 4 cents she just about worked me to the bone getting out the store charges that last day before the

increase. Some people were surprised to get a bill for something they charged that day, a day or so later. I carried a big stack to the Post Office that afternoon. This was July 1958.

One time a flimflam artist came in. He left with no additional money after being severely chastised by Grandma. Another time I was alone at the front of the shop and a customer came in and picked out a dollar item. I just collected the dollar and put it in the cash register. When she found out I didn't collect the tax, you would have thought the world was coming to an end.

One year we went out to North Parkway in the car to see the Goat Man. I was very surprised when she gave him some money.

Another time she decided we needed to go on a diet. She said Metrical was the way to go and so we started in. They had different flavors, kinda like Ensure today. After about the

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third one and third missed meal I said I think I would rather just go hungry. She agreed, so we stopped it.

One year I rode up here on the Hummingbird Train from Flomaton, AL to Decatur. I left about 10 in the morning and got to Decatur about 8 that night. That's another story in itself. Sometimes I would "hitchhike" on small planes coming up here for business from the Florida Panhandle. I landed at the old airport by Joe Davis Stadium.

My Grandparents lived at this time on the corner of Alabama and Dawn just off Whitesburg Drive. One morning she gave me the fare and I took the bus from Dawn and Whitesburg to downtown and walked from the stop to the store.

When I would come up, Grandma took it upon herself to get me fixed up. She took me across the street to get my glasses adjusted, to the dentist in the Hutchens building and to a clothing store on Holmes east of the Federal Building. They asked and I didn't know any better and put cuffs on my pants.

My Grandparents had many friends in the shops and stores around town. Every time I came up I had to go around to see them. Mrs. Shelton was one I liked to visit. She worked at Dunnivant's in the alteration department by the shoe section. I always marveled at the x-ray shoe fitting machine they had.

I hope I never used it. I think there was a sign that said it was for adults only.

The pneumatic tube system was a marvel, too. Mrs. Sanders and her son Darrell had the News stand and she always said come down and read the comics. Also the Hill's, Hilson's and Mason's were others I remember.

I got my hair cut at a shop in the Twickenham Hotel where the parking garage is now on Clinton and close to the News stand. I made the mistake of getting it cut there just before we got married in 1970 and got way too much cut off. I also got it cut sometimes at the Russel Erskine because Grandma said Wernher von Braun went there too and it was just next door.

My Aunt and Uncle and cousins entertained me too. My uncle took me to Hutchens Hardware on Jefferson and bought me my first Case knife. I think it cost \$2.50. We went to the shows on Washington and swimming at the Country Club or Thornton Acres pools.

I remember playing putt-putt on a course near the roundabout and power station in the Embassy Suites vicinity. Sometimes we would go to Big Spring Park to watch softball games or feed the ducks.

I always loved my trips to Huntsville and my visit and looked forward to it. Every time I drive by the Russel Erskine or through downtown, I think often about those times so long ago.

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# Curly Putman, Master Songwriter

by Malcolm Miller

Some time back I gave Jerry Brazier, owner of Jerry and Bill's Barber Shop where I worked for many years, a box of barber tools and parts that I had accumulated over the years since I was no longer able to cut hair. A few weeks later when I went to his shop he said that I had given him something I might want to keep. When I saw it I did indeed want it. It was a very old letter in pretty bad condition but when I saw Tree Publishing Company letterhead I knew it was from my good friend Curly Putman, ironically the date on the letter was June 2, 1964.

In the letter Curly said he couldn't use the songs I had sent but to send him some more. But most importantly he said that he was still trying to write that big hit. You see up till this time Curly had been struggling; but lo and behold a few months later he wrote "Green Green Grass of Home" and the rest as they say is history.

It was first recorded by Johnny Darryl then Porter Wagner, Jerry Lee Lewis and finally the biggest hit by Tom Jones. On January 8th I had a long talk with Curly and he said this particular song had been recorded five hundred times and in every known language.

This was only the beginning for this tall, somewhat shy man from Paint Rock Valley. His songs were recorded by many, many of the legends of country music. He wrote Dolly Parton's first hit "Dumb Blond", Tammy Wynette's "Divorce", T.G. Shepherd's "Do You Want to Go to Heaven", the list goes on and but the greatest of all was a song by George Jones that was named the number two country song of all time. "He Stopped

Loving Her Today" was co-written with Bobby Braddock.

Life wasn't always easy for Curly, when he got out of high school at Princeton he joined the Navy, and after his hitch in the Navy he met and fell in love with a pretty lass Miss Bernice Wilson, and like many couples back then they went to Iuka, Mississippi and got married. Another musician buddy of mine, Lamarr Cox, and his wife Laneva drove them there.


The first time I ever saw Curly he was traveling with a member of the Grand Ole Opry, I believe it was Bradley Kincaid. Later on he joined Slim Lay and Hap Wilson's band along with the late and great guitar picker Maurice Ramsey. Carolyn Gossett was the girl singer for the band.

Curly really worked hard trying to support his family, by now they had two sons. He had several jobs; shoe salesman, storm door and fence salesman, and a stint working in Slim Lays record


shop. I even tried to get him a job with the Huntsville Fire Department by talking to a City Councilman I knew, all to no avail.

As I look back over the many years I have known Curly I truly believe that all these jobs and hard times only proves that Curly Putman was a man destined for greatness. Now Curly can look out over his sprawling twenty-five acre estate near Lebanon, TN with pride because he overcame many obstacles and finally reached the top rung of the ladder of success.

And friends, the best could be yet to come for he told me that at age seventy-seven he has started writing again. With him writing again we may hear some real country music over the airways once more. I for one am certainly ready for it.



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slist, and she gave birth a few days later to five puppies. He didn't want the pups, so he threw them in a bag and came to GHHS. He insisted that if we didn't take them, he would leave them on the side of the road. 5 innocent lives, 45 minutes in this world, abandoned for dead.

We had no choice but to take them, but he refused to give us the mother. The only option was to nurse them by hand, which we've done for the last 5 weeks. We're proud to say all 5 pups are healthy & strong, and the staff have all picked out favorites.

Many thanks to Krystle Newby, our Kennel Manager, for fostering them through sleepless nights and many, many bottle feedings.

These guys have received a ton of interest on Facebook and will probably be adopted as soon as they're available, but we wanted to share their story. This is not an uncommon event for us, just one in the line of many. But we will fight, and we will save, every animal we can.





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# PET TIPS FROM ANGEL

Angel is quite a trivia dog and thought you'd enjoy these tidbits!



1. While Chow dogs are well known for their distinctive blue-black tongues, they're actually born with pink tongues. They turn blue-black at 8-10 weeks of age.

2. It pays to be a lap dog. Three dogs (from First Class cabins!) survived the sinking of the Titanic - two were Pomeranians and one Pekingese.

3. It's rumored that, at the end of the Beatles song, "A Day in the Life," Paul McCartney recorded an ultrasonic whistle, audible only to dogs, just for his Shetland sheepdog.

4. Wow, check out those choppers! Puppies have 28 teeth and normal adult dogs have 42.

5. Dogs chase their tails for a variety of reasons: curiosity, exercise, anxiety, predatory instinct or, they might have fleas! If your dog is chasing his tail excessively, you should talk with your vet.

6. Seeing spots? Or not... Dalmatian puppies are pure white when they are born and develop their spots as they grow older.

7. Dogs do dream! Dogs and humans have the same type of slow wave sleep (SWS) and rapid eye movement (REM) and during this REM stage dogs can dream. The twitching and paw movements that occur during their sleep are signs that your pet is dreaming

8. No night vision goggles needed! A dog's eyes contain a special membrane, called the tapetum lucidum, which allows him to see in the dark.

9. A large breed dog's resting heart beats between 60 and 100 times per minute. A small dog's heart beats between 100-140. Comparatively, a resting human heart beats 60-100 times per minute.

10. If your dog's acting funny, get out the umbrella! According to a Petside.com/Associated Press poll, 72% of dog owners believe their dog can detect when stormy weather is on the way.

11. It's not a fever...A dog's normal temperature is between 101 and 102.5 degrees Fahrenheit.

12. Unlike humans who sweat everywhere, dogs only sweat through the pads

of their feet.

13. In addition to sweating through their paw pads, dogs pant to cool themselves off. A panting dog can take 300-400 breaths (compared to his regular 30-40) with very little effort. But panting can also mean that your dog is feeling pain - so be very watchful.

14. Americans love dogs! 62% of U.S. households own a pet, which equates to 72.9 million homes

15. 45% of dogs sleep in their owner's bed (pretty sure a large percentage also hog the blankets).

16. Why are dogs' noses so wet? Dogs' noses secrete a thin layer of mucus that helps them absorb scent. They then lick their noses to sample the scent through their mouth.

17. Yummy! Dogs have about 1,700 taste buds. Humans have approximately 9,000 and cats have around 473.

18. Watch that hamburger! A dog's sense of smell is 10,000 - 100,000 times more acute as that of humans.

19. It's not so black and white. It's a myth that dogs only see in black and white. In fact, it's believed that dogs see primarily in blue, greenish-yellow, yellow and various shades of gray.

20. Sound frequency is measured in Hertz (Hz). The higher the Hertz, the higher-pitched the sound. Dogs hear best at 8,000 Hz, while humans hear best at around 2,000 Hz.

21. Dogs' ears are extremely expressive. It's no wonder! There are more than a dozen separate muscles that control a dog's ear movements.

22. Why do they do that? When dogs kick after going to the bathroom, they are using the scent glands on their paws to further mark their territory.

23. No, it's not just to make themselves look adorable. Dogs curl up in a ball when they sleep due to an age-old instinct to keep themselves warm and protect their abdomen and vital organs from predators.

24. Dogs have three eyelids, an upper lid, a lower lid and the third lid, called a nictitating membrane or "haw," which helps keep the eye moist and protected.

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## From the Desk of Tom Carney

### The Court Martial of Col. John Nickerson

by Tom Carney



The first hint of anything wrong came on the morning of Tuesday, January 7, 1957 when several people noticed a photograph of Colonel John Nickerson missing from the corridor walls of the Army Ballistic Missile Agency at Redstone Arsenal.

That in itself was not unusual as personnel were routinely transferred at the agency, but Colonel Nickerson was a highly popular officer and people were wondering why nothing had been said if he was simply being transferred.

A phone call to Headquarters produced an equally puzzling response.

"Any information about Colonel Nickerson will have to come from the Pentagon."

The Washington Bureau of the Associated Press was quickly alerted and began digging into the story. Late that evening a teletype came across the wires stating that Colonel Nickerson had been relieved from duty pending a possible court martial. Unnamed sources at the Pentagon confirmed that Nickerson stood accused of espionage and distribution of classified material.

The news hit Huntsville like a bombshell. Nickerson was a West Point graduate and a highly decorated front-line officer during World War II. More importantly for Huntsville was the fact that he was one of the key people involved in the Army's Jupiter Rocket Program at Redstone Arsenal.

The Jupiter Rocket Program was literally Huntsville's life

blood. From a small rural community of 16,437 people in 1950, Huntsville had grown to an astonishing population of over 50,000 people in 1955. Most of this growth was a direct result of rocket research and development being carried out at the Arsenal. Huntsville civic leaders were confidently predicting the prosperity would continue as the United States pushed its missile program forward.

Unfortunately, powerful forces in Washington were determined that Huntsville, Alabama would not be a part of the space program.


The missile program at Redstone Arsenal, under Wernher von Braun, had been patterned after the highly successful German effort at Peenemunde; with all the research and development being done "in house." The German scientists had advocated this system as being the most efficient.

Major defense contractors around the country were in-

censed at this "in house" concept. The space program promised to be worth billions of dollars in government contracts and if Huntsville got the nod for the first satellite, many of these contractors would be left out in the cold.

Put simply, the defense contractors wanted to disband the rocket team at Redstone and let private industry take on their roles.

The first salvo in the battle for government contracts was fired in February of 1956 when defense contractors leaked to the press information about the secret operation, Paperclip. The Army had begun the operation shortly after WW II as a secret program to bring German scientists to America. Although the vast majority of




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the Germans were of sterling character, a few possessed dubious backgrounds; a fact the defense contractors were only too happy to point out. Dossiers were compiled on many of the scientists, accompanied by lurid accusations of their Nazi past and distributed to influential politicians in Washington in an attempt to discredit the German influence on the fledgling rocket program.

The defense contractors had hoped that once Paperclip was exposed, many of the Germans, not wanting publicity, would flee their Army jobs and enter private industry - in effect crippling the Jupiter program. Although a few of the scientists succumbed to the offers of lucrative employment, the vast majority chose to remain where they were.

Undaunted, the defense contractors next took aim at the

Jupiter program itself.

Unlike the Army's missile program, the Air Force and Navy depended wholly on defense contractors for their research and development. The fact that their programs were riddled with delays and failures had no bearing on the lobbyists who descended on Washington like a plague of locusts.

On July 29, 1956, James C. Hagerty, Press Secretary for President Eisenhower, announced that the Navy's Vanguard rocket would be used to launch America's first satellite. Experts in the rocket program were outraged at the decision that was clearly made by people with close ties to the defense contractors. Not only was the Vanguard \$100,000,000 over budget, it was not capable of launching a satellite and no one had any idea when it would be able to, if ever.

On the other hand, the Jupiter rocket at Redstone was already capable of entering orbit, a fact the Defense Department was only too well aware of. On September 20, when Secretary of Defense Charles Wilson learned that von Braun was going to launch a Jupiter rocket at Cape Canaveral, he angrily ordered General Medaris, commander at Redstone, to personally inspect the fourth stage of the rocket to make sure it was not operational. Even without the fourth stage however, the missile still climbed to an altitude of 682 miles. It proved easily powerful enough to have entered orbit if permission had been granted.

Although von Braun and his team were pleased with the results, certain people in Washington were not. Contracts had already been issued and if word of the Jupiter's successful launch leaked out, it could

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prove to be a public relations nightmare. The problem was easily solved however by classifying the launch as "Secret" and forbidding anyone to talk about it. Wernher von Braun's team was also ordered to cease any further work on the project.

Adding insult to injury was an order that Wilson issued on November 26, 1956. The Air Force and the Navy were given jurisdiction for most of the rocket programs while the Army, possessing the most powerful rocket in the world, was ordered to limit their rocket's range to 200 miles!

Again, well aware of the public's outrage if it was to learn the facts, the Secretary of Defense ordered the memorandum, as well as any information about Redstone's Jupiter rocket, to be kept secret.

In a sense the Jupiter program was simply erased from the books by declaring it classified.

For Colonel John Nickerson this posed an insurmountable dilemma. Part of his responsibilities involved briefing Congressional leaders and gaining their support for further work at Redstone. He was in a position where he was forbidden to talk about the Jupiter program, but could not gain support unless he did.

Frustrated at all levels of the bureaucracy, Nickerson compiled a memorandum outlining the duplicity of the defense contractors and the Defense Department. In it he accused Generals and Admirals at the Pentagon of supporting the defense contractors in exchange for lucrative

positions when they retired. Even more damaging was documentation he enclosed showing the true cost and performance of the Navy rocket versus the Jupiter project. He also outlined the "Secret" orders that had prevented the public from knowing of the duplicity.

Copies of the memorandum were sent to influential backers of the space program with Nickerson requesting the source of the documents be kept confidential.

Among the people receiving copies was Drew Pearson, a noted columnist for The New York Times who immediately realized the explosive potential of the memorandum. Seeking confirmation of the story, Pearson confronted the Secretary of Defense with the documents. After hastily scanning the papers, Wilson angrily denied the accusations. When Pearson asked for the papers back however, Wilson refused to release them, saying they were "Secret."

W h e n

Pearson pointed out that none of the papers were stamped confidential, Wilson immediately pulled a rubber stamp from a desk drawer and stamped every one of the documents with the large red letters "SECRET."

Within days the memorandums were traced back to Colonel Nickerson at Redstone Arsenal. On January 2, 1957, Army investigators descended on Nickerson's quarters and after a prolonged search discovered several secret documents connecting him to the leaked material.

Nickerson was promptly relieved from duty pending court martial proceedings.

The court martial itself was almost a nonevent. Investigators, spurred by an inquisitive press, soon discovered Nickerson's allegations to be true.

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Technically, the information he had leaked was classified but as the press pointed out, "The public's right to know of corruption in the Defense Department far outweighed any criminal penalties that might be imposed."

Confronted by the public's outrage, the Army was forced to drop the espionage charges. Undoubtedly the Army would have preferred to drop all the charges and sweep the matter under the rug, but as Nickerson had already pled guilty to breaching security regulations, the court martial board had no choice but to proceed. On June 29, 1957, Colonel Nickerson was found guilty and received the relatively light sentence of loss of rank for one year and a \$1500 fine.

In the aftermath of the court martial the Secretary of Defense, Charles Wilson, as well as six Admirals and Generals were forced to resign and a special review board was set up by President Eisenhower to review all defense contracts.

Four months after the court martial, Russia launched the first man-made satellite, Sputnik, into orbit. With worldwide attention now focused on the United States, the Army literally wiped the dust off a Jupiter rocket mothballed at Redstone Arsenal and three months later used it to blast Explorer, America's first satellite, into orbit.

The hardware used to launch the satellite was the same hardware that had been laying on the shelf unused for years. One year after his court martial the Army restored full security clearance to Colonel John Nickerson.

On March 4, 1964, Nickerson and his wife were killed in a violent automobile accident near Alamogordo, New Mexico.



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# You Can't Get to Huntsville from Here

by Gene Primm

In 1955 I worked for Monroe Calculating Machine Company. I was sent to St. Louis, Missouri to a service school. I left Huntsville from the old bus station on Clinton Street.

After leaving Huntsville we stopped at what seemed to be every crossroads and country store we came to. It took me eighteen and a half hours to get to St. Louis.

While in school I met another employee who was from Nashville, TN. He had come to St. Louis by automobile. I told him about my trip by bus and suggested to him that I would pay his gas expenses if he would let me ride back to Nashville with him then I could get a bus into Huntsville, saving me many hours of travel time. He agreed to this and after the school was over we left on our trip to Nashville.

We arrived in Nashville some time after 12:00 midnight. I asked him to take me to the bus station so I could catch a bus to Huntsville. When we got to the bus station I found out the next bus to Huntsville did not leave until 7:00 that morning. I decided that was too long to wait so I asked my friend if he would take me to the Huntsville Highway so I could hitchhike on in to Huntsville. Hopefully, I thought, I would be in Huntsville long before the bus ever left from Nashville.

The first car that came by stopped and said he was going as far as Murfreesboro. He was a bus driver just getting off from work. I really appreciated him stopping and thought this hitchhiking was going to be easy; it was a piece of cake.

After he let me out in Murfreesboro I stood there for hours without getting another ride. As it started to get daylight I began to get worried. Then finally as the traffic started to pick up a man stopped and asked me where I was headed. After I told him I was going to Huntsville, AL he told me to hop in and that he would take me as far as Tullahoma, TN.

I thought for a minute and asked him how far Huntsville was from Tullahoma and he told me about seventy miles. I asked him how far it was from Murfreesboro to Huntsville and he said about seventy miles, but he

said it was a beautiful drive to Tullahoma.

After spending the night standing on the side of the road, I really was not interested in viewing the countryside. Despairing of any more hitchhiking I asked him if there was a bus station there, and after he replied "yes," I got in the car for the seventy mile drive to Tullahoma.

The stranger dropped me off at the bus station a few hours later. Hurriedly, I approached the ticket agent and asked if there was a bus leaving for Huntsville, AL anytime soon. He told me I was in luck, there was a bus just getting ready to leave that was going to Huntsville. Without even a pause I said: "Give me a ticket."

The agent gave me my ticket and pointed the bus out to me and I was on my merry way.

As I approached the bus I saw on the front that it was going to Nashville, TN. Puzzled, I ran back inside the bus station and told the ticket agent that the bus he had pointed out was going to Nashville, not Huntsville.

He then informed me you could not get to Huntsville from Murfreesboro without going to Nashville first!

I took the bus back to Nashville and caught the same bus to Huntsville that I would have caught anyway if I had not spent the night hitchhiking through the dark back roads of Tennessee.



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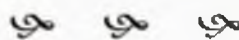
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# GRANDMA'S COOKING TIPS

\* When rolling cookie dough, sprinkle board with powdered sugar instead of flour. Too much flour makes for a heavy dough.

\* Slip your hand inside a waxed sandwich bag and you have a perfect mitt for greasing your baking pans and casserole dishes.

\* You can cut a meringue pie cleanly by coating both sides of the knife lightly with butter.

\* To keep icings moist and prevent cracking, add a pinch of baking soda to the icing.

\* Anything that grows under the ground, start off in cold water - potatoes, beets, carrots, etc. Anything that grows above ground starts off in boiling water - English peas, greens, beans, etc.

\* To clean aluminum pots when they are stained dark, merely boil with a little cream of tartar, vinegar or acid foods.

\* Pour water into your mold and drain before pouring in mixture to be chilled, it will come out of the mold much easier.

\* For extra juicy, nutritious hamburgers & meat loaf, add 1/4 cup evaporated milk per pound of meat before shaping.

\* Baking powder will remove tea or coffee stains from china pots or cups.

\* Washing silverware in which you have boiled potatoes will remove the stains.

\* Lettuce can be made very crisp by placing it in ice water for a short time and covering it with a damp paper towel in the fridge.

\* The best soup bones should be 2/3 meat and 1/3 bone and fat.

\* A strong thread is good for cutting a cake instead of using a knife.

\* Eggs keep in the fridge for about 5 weeks. Store them in the original carton, points down.

\* Take some bacon grease, pour a can of green beans, juice and all in it, cook for about 15 minutes. Just like you cooked it all day from fresh!

\* Finally, and this is NOT a cooking tip but I think it is important - as soon as you feel you are getting that scratchy throat and sniffles from a cold, take an Airborne tablet. They sizzle in water like an Alka Seltzer but are great for stopping colds. You can find them in any drug store like Propst Drugs or Walgreen's.

## A Loving Mother

Olga Llerena was the beautiful mother of Oscar Llerena. She passed away in February 2014 at age 93 with all her family around her. Oscar and his wife Maria want to wish all the Moms out there a wonderful and warm Mother's Day with the family and friends you treasure. Sending love to the Huntsville High Class of 1966!



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# What's in a Name?

by Hartwell Lutz

As a District Court Judge it was my job to listen to interesting stories of life experiences, told by ordinary people, who often didn't recall events the same way. One of them is about the case of a man we'll call "K.P.", who was charged with "harassment," which is a Class C misdemeanor, not the most serious crime on the books. Many such cases involve cuss fights and the like, most of which are resolved without coming to court, but not the one of K.P., not this one anyway. He did have others.

K.P. had some problems, one being that he was, as they say, "bad to drink." Another was that he had both a wife and a girlfriend. Everything considered, a situation fraught with problems. One day K.P.'s wife listened in on a phone conversation between him and his girlfriend, "Susie", the gist of which was that he was leaving shortly going to Suzie's house. The wife knew where Suzie lived, so she left home before her Romeo husband did, headed the same way, got there first and parked her car cross-ways to the narrow road in front of Suzie's house, blocking it to traffic.

Our hero, when he saw his wife's car across the road, attempted to go around it and in the process ran off the road, turning him upside down in a large ditch. Several minutes later, he emerged mad, covered in mud and spitting out teeth, into the yard of a very dignified elderly couple who had the misfortune to live next door to Suzie. The old gentleman, having seen and dealt with K.P. on previous occasions, and having a good idea about why the car was parked in the road, addressed K.P., saying, "Boy, I done told you befo'; I don't want no trouble outta you. Now git outta

my yard 'fo' I call the law." He testified that K.P. shook his fist at him, and said, "Get back in your hole, you ole ground hog, you ole skunk or I'll whip your 'a--." If true, that definitely fits the legal definition of harassment.

K.P. was represented by a now deceased lawyer, who himself had been a judge. He put K.P. on the stand, which I guess was about his only hope. Strutting around as lawyers tend to do when they are questioning witnesses, his first question to his client was: "K.P., did you call that man a skunk and a ground hog?" K.P.'s response was an immediate and clear denial of the complaining witness's testimony. He said, "Naw. I didn't call him no skunk, and I didn't call him no ground hog. All I called him was a m..... f.....s.o.b." (Language modified somewhat here to make this appropriate to a family publication.)

We have to wonder what K.P.'s wife was doing, most likely enjoying it, while all this was going on. But at least she had thirty days that she didn't have to put up with him.





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# The Indomitable Anna Knight: A Life of Christian Service

by Dr. Samuel London



Anna Knight was born in 1874 to parents Newton and Rachel Knight. During the American Civil War, her father Newton was the white leader of a paramilitary band of Union sympathizers in Jones County, Mississippi. About this time, Newton began an extramarital affair with Rachel - a black woman formerly enslaved. After the war, Newton left his wife and started a family with Rachel, whom he eventually married. The couple moved to Jasper County, Mississippi and had several children, including Anna.

Anna's early years were filled with the arduous toil and mundane chores of life growing up on a farm, but she had a very inquisitive mind. Yet, institutionalized racism denied her the privilege of attending school. She was not deterred, instead visiting the children of her white neighbors to learn the basic skills of reading,

writing, and spelling, and then teaching her siblings.

One day, a magazine salesman stopped by the Knight farm. Anna pressured her mother, who was illiterate, into subscribing to one of the periodicals. In the evenings, Anna read the stories to her mother.

Anna's love of reading prompted her to engage in an exchange program. Readers could request a pen pal, as well as free literature from other subscribers. Within a short period of time, Anna was receiving responses, including numerous Seventh-Day Adventist booklets sent by W.W. Eastman (a literature evangelist from Texas) and Edith I. Embree (an employee of "Signs of the Times" magazine in Oakland, California).

Anna's correspondence with Ms. Embree led her to join the Adventist Church.

A friend, L. Dyo Chambers of the Southern Missionary Tract Society and Book Depository in

Chattanooga, made arrangements for Anna's trip from Mississippi to the Adventist church in Graysville, Tennessee where she was baptized in 1893. Mr. Chambers also arranged for Anna's enrollment in the Graysville Seventh-Day Adventist Academy. When the parents of Anna's classmates learned that she was a mulatto, they immediately protested. Sadly, the situation demanded that the school matron teach her privately. Though bitterly disappointed in being barred from the classroom, Anna's faith did not waver.

After ten weeks in Graysville, she returned to her




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home in Jasper County, Mississippi. Her commitment to observing the Seventh-Day Sabbath brought her into conflict with family members. Undeterred, Anna obtained lodging in the home of her Adventist friends, Mr. and Mrs. Chambers. Mr. Chambers arranged (through his friend, Pastor G. A. Irwin) for Anna to attend Mount Vernon Seventh-Day Adventist Academy in Ohio in 1894, where race was not a prohibitive factor. Mr. and Mrs. Chambers paid her tuition. This Christian charity of Mrs. Chambers made a deep impression on Anna and was a constant source of inspiration. In late 1894 Anna transferred to an industrial school in Battle Creek, Michigan, where she was able to finance her education by doing laundry, and successfully completed her secondary education.

Next, Anna entered and graduated from the nursing program at Battle Creek College in 1898. Returning to Mississippi, Anna established a school for black children and adults where she taught arithmetic, literacy and health principles. Her objections to alcohol were met with threats from the local moonshiners, but Anna continued her message. Nonetheless, she carried a revolver and had a loaded shotgun propped against the wall in the corner of her one room schoolhouse.

Anna Knight was selected to serve as a delegate to the 1901 General Conference Session in Battle Creek, Michigan, where she delivered a report on her work in Mississippi. It was at this meeting that she volunteered to work as a medical missionary in Calcutta, India. Consequently, Anna became the first African-American female missionary to India.

By ship and railway, the trip from the United States to India took thirty days. In Calcutta, Knight worked as a lit-

erature evangelist and medical missionary, bringing her message well beyond Calcutta into other regions of the Indian subcontinent.

After nearly ten years of service in India, Anna returned to Mississippi where she continued educating the black people of Jasper County before accepting a job within the church to serve as the head nurse of a black sanitarium to be established in Atlanta. Residents of the neighborhood objected, so Knight used the facility to start a Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) program for the black women of Atlanta. Although the program was immensely popular, the national YWCA office refused to recognize this Atlanta chapter, because it was largely under the direction of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, which was not a member of the Federation of Churches.

Ultimately, the Southeastern Union Conference elected Knight to serve as its associate secretary for Home Missionary, Sabbath School, Missionary Volunteer and Education Departments. In this capacity, Anna was responsible for nursing, teaching and Bible study efforts within the Southern Union's black membership.

It was this position that led Anna to Oakwood College in the early 1920s where she

served on the Oakwood College Board and taught summer classes at the institution. She stayed in Huntsville and with Oakwood for the rest of her life.

In 1922, Anna became the founding President of the National Colored Teachers' Association of Seventh-Day Adventists. This organization strived to promote Christian education and help provide facilities for the training of black teachers in denominational schools. Knight served as its President until her death in 1972. A few months before her death, Anna received the Medallion of Merit Award from the Educational Department of the General Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists for a lifetime of service in Christian education. Today, the building that houses the Education Department at Oakwood University is named in her honor.

Despite the many obstacles she faced from outside the Church, as well as from within, Anna Knight was undeterred in her life of service to Christ and the Church she loved.

*Dr. Samuel London is an Associate Professor of History in the School of Education and Social Sciences at Oakwood University. He is also the Chairman of the Department of History and Political Science.*

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# Angelica Wilhelm

## A Beautiful Huntsville Lady - Who Will be 110 Years Old on her May Birthday

by Cathey Carney



Angelica told me her parents met in New York City, on 42nd Avenue, and married in 1904. She said it was love at first sight. Angelica Wilhelm was born in New Jersey, but grew up in west Texas, just below Dallas.

One event she remembers from her early days in San Angelo, TX was at the end of WWI. One evening in the downtown area it looked as if the entire small city was on fire - flames were shooting into the sky. It turned out that the city residents were celebrating the end of the war with a huge bonfire on Main Street and Angelica was ten years old.

Her parents were a mix of cultures - her father was English

Canadian and her mother was Danish. Angelica was the oldest of five children. Her father was an optometrist and had a business in San Angelo.

Angelica was the designated baby sitter as the oldest in her family. They lived 10 years in San Angelo, then moved to New York in 1924.

She recalls seeing women sitting on the sidewalk in front of Grand Central Station, with boxes on their feet to keep them warm. They were selling apples for a nickel each in order to make money for their families.

Angelica went to business school and began

working for McFadden Publications in 1926. When she met her husband Frank, she was visiting a friend's home and Frank was immediately smitten with her.

They married in 1933, during the time the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) were going strong. They didn't have children but loved pets and

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always had lots of them. They lived in Greenwich Village, NY for years.

In New York the noise goes on all night and she said after a while you just get used to it. While living there in a brown-stone Angelica remembers several nights when she would hear fighting down below. One night she remembers a women in a top floor flat throwing a bucket of water down on a couple of rowdy individuals below.

Frank got a job with Western Union and they moved to Westchester County in NY. In 1942 Frank was inducted into the Navy and Angelica went to live with her mother. After the war Frank took a job with Bendix and was relocated to Huntsville, they moved here in 1963. She remembers when she came ahead to find a place to live she went into a store to get some boxes. The person behind the counter asked if she had heard that President Kennedy had been shot. She had not, but by the end of that day, he had died.

Angelica's mother and sister would visit Huntsville for the winter months. When Angelica's Mom was in her nineties she would go to the local nursing homes in New York and take crochet and knitting needles with her. She would see ladies just sitting in their wheelchairs, alot younger than her, and ask them why they were just sitting there doing nothing? Why didn't they do something with their time and start knitting? She would teach these ladies how to knit.

In fact, Angelica's mother knitted up to the time her eyes gave out, but then she would take a ball of yarn and a wire hanger and just wrap each hanger with yarn to make padded hangers. She would put them together in packs of five and give them away. They would be completely covered with the yarn with a very neat seam on the bottom. The reason I know this is that Angelica gave me two of them after our first interview many years ago, which I treasure to this day.

Frank died 10 years after their arrival here in Huntsville, in 1972, of cancer. Her mother

died in 1989, at age 104. Angelica first heard about Redstone Village about 12 years ago and moved here in May of 2005. She said at that time she certainly had to get rid of a lot of items, but enjoys her life and friends very much.

Up til a year ago she was taking regular walks around the parking lot at Redstone, with only her walker and a friend.

On May 14 Angelica will reach 110 years old. A beautiful lady, inside and out, who still loves being outside in the warm and fresh air. She loves her friends at Redstone Village and looks forward to each and every day. She's very pragmatic and says she plans to be here next year when I write about her 111th birthday!



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# What Happened to Big Cove's "Old Baptist Church"?

by William Sibley

In 1822, Green Collier attended an annual meeting of the Flint River Association of Baptists, and presented statistical data of the Big Cove Baptist Church, which was requesting membership into the Flint River Association.

Big Cove Baptist Church was accepted into the Flint River Baptist Association and for years the Big Cove group sent messengers to the annual meetings of the Association.

Among the earliest Big Cove messengers were Green Collier and Ezekiel Craft, who began his service as a messenger in 1824. Mr. Craft was widely known in politics of early Madison County.

Before joining the Big Cove Baptist Church, Mr. Craft was a messenger in the Wheat Baptist Church and the Penal Baptist Church. He served the Penal Church in 1818 and 1819. Some researchers think that the Big Cove Baptist Church might have replaced the Penal Church, because the Penal Church disappears about the same time that Big Cove Baptist Church first appears.

When Big Cove Baptist Church joined the Flint River Baptist Association, the Big Cove Church had only ten members. Records show that the church's membership did not hold steady for the next several years. In 1827, the Big Cove Church had its greatest membership, which was eighty-eight. The lowest number was six, which occurred in 1854 and 1855.

In 1854, when attendance was very low, W. D. Hollowell deeded land for Big Cove Meeting House for Church and School, and that became home to Holmes Church, Holmes School (also known as Sandy Lane School) and Holmes Cemetery.

Although the deed to the Holmes Cemetery was issued in 1854, burials had occurred at the cemetery many years earlier. The first known burial was Revolutionary War soldier, Pvt. Richard Holmes (1738-1818). Buried beside him is his wife, Elizabeth (McGauhey) Holmes (1758-1831). McGauhey was an alternate spelling of McGaha.

Other messengers of the Big Cove Church include S.L. Vann, A. Lemley, John Jenkins (my great-great-great grandfather), G. (George) Anyan, J. Woodall, M. Smith, A.

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Lanley, B. (Bryant) Cobb, A. Lasley, Thomas Lamm, John Tindel, Thomas Leonard, Samuel Miller, Silas Glover, John Fortner, W.W. Webster, Moses Smith, and E. (Elijah) Drake. Records of the messengers listed above stopped in 1855. There were no letters to the association and no messengers from 1856 to 1875; from 1876 to 1890, there were no churches listed for the Flint River Association.

In 1837, the Liberty Baptist Association had its beginning and Big Cove joined that group. The Big Cove church had thirty-eight members at that time.

Elijah Drake was the father of Rev. John Henry Drake, a circuit-riding minister in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Big Cove residents called him "Parson Drake."

The 1854 deed by Mr. Hollowell states that other church groups may use the Big Cove meeting house, but they must never conflict with the worship services of the "Old Baptists," referring to the Primitive Baptists who held worship services one Sunday per month and the Saturday night preceding that Sunday.

The Missionary Baptists and the Methodists held joint services and the Church of Christ congregation worshipped on Sunday afternoons.

My mother and her family worshipped at the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, but during inclement weather, they worshipped with the Baptist/Methodist group or with the Church of Christ congregation. My mother attended grades one through

four at Holmes School before it closed about 1918 and transferred its students to Camp Ground School. The church/school bell was given to my Sadler grandparents, but was stolen about 1939 or 1940.

It appears that church services and school ended at Holmes in 1918. The 1854 deed states that nobody can be buried in Holmes Cemetery after 100 years have elapsed. It is sad that Big Cove's "Old Baptist Church" no longer exists. The church had very good leadership and some dedicated members.

There is an annual clean-up day each spring at Holmes Cemetery. That event was organized by retired educator Berns Miller, great-great-grandson of Messenger Samuel Miller. Friends and relatives meet at the Holmes Cemetery for some wholesome visitation and enjoy music by some of the group while cleaning off the graves. Later, we enjoy a picnic. Berns and others of us invite you to join us on clean-up day.

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## REMEMBERING S. O. HOLMES, JR.

by *David Holmes*

Daddy was born Samuel Otis Holmes Jr. on 3/3/09 in a two story country house just east of Huntsville, Alabama near the small community of Chase. He never went by Samuel, Sam, or Sammy. Early on a druggist nicknamed him Sodie Pop for his love of fountain drinks. This got shortened to Sodie, and S.O. by most who knew him. His best friend Tokey Walker called him Sunshine for his positive attitude and sunny disposition. To me he was Dad. Following are some memories I have of growing up very close to him. He always was in business for himself, usually more than one at a time, but he always found time for me, and often included me in what he was doing.

We're not sure what got Warrior in the end - something he ate. He was about 12 and had a full and much longer life than appeared early on. He was ordered from a Great

Dane breeder in Chicago as the largest of the litter. He lived up to his billing and then some. Warrior arrived by train to the small cotton town of Huntsville in the late 1930s. Even as a growing pup standing on his back legs, he could put his front legs

on the shoulders of my standing Mother or Father. I never got as tall, as a kid, as he was on all fours. He would give us kids rides, up to three at a time. Warrior was too tall for us to climb on, so he would lie down for us to board, slowly stand and walk us around. Having a sleek, tight coat, there was not much to hang on to, but I don't recall anyone being thrown off. When it came to kids, he was a gentle and protective soul.

As I mentioned he lived much longer than it looked like early on. When he was about two he rode to the small grass airstrip (now Mayfair playground) with Dad who had a small single engine plane in a wooden T hangar. Being summer, Dad left the windows partly down, not thinking Warrior could get out. As is custom Dad was warming up the engine in the hanger before taxiing out. Warrior had somehow gotten out of the car. He did not see the propeller



**Mortie Holmes, late 30s**

running full speed, and leapt up to join Dad in the cockpit. He hit the prop and was thrown to the far wall of the hangar. His two front paws were hanging by slivers of skin, tail split, and blood everywhere. Dad said it looked horrible. There were no animal hospitals or even small animal vets back then, so Dad drove home to get his pistol to end the suffering. On his way back he spotted a local doctor, flagged him down, and convinced him to go with him to the hangar. He sewed up Warrior and they took him home. The doctor was not optimistic and said he needed to be confined to prevent him putting weight on

**S.O. Holmes with  
Warrior**



his front feet. Dad built a large wooden crate. The doctor followed up a week later and found gangrene had set in. He said Warrior probably would not make it, dressed his wounds, and wished him well. One day, weeks later, Dad went out to check on Warrior and he had climbed out of his box and onto his way to recovery. To say it was a full recovery would be an understatement.

Dad kept a horse in the back yard and would go riding around town with Warrior trotting along side. On one such ride two pit bulls charged Warrior and a deadly battle ensued. Dad tried to break it up, but there was no way, it was serious. Warrior would hold his own with one, but the other would attack from the back side. It was not looking good, then Warrior figured out who was the leader, focused on him, ignoring the attack of the other. Warrior killed the leader and the other ran off.

The owner of the pits was on his porch and Dad apologized for Warrior killing his dog. The owner said it was OK, his dogs had killed most of the dogs in the neighborhood and he was going to have to do something. This was long before leash laws. In addition to rides with Daddy, Warrior roamed free. He was regularly seen and easily recognized all over town; North, South, West and as far East as the top of Monte Sano Mountain.

Warrior got along great with most people, except one milkman. In those days milk was delivered in glass jugs. You put the empties out with a note for your order in the top of one. I happened to be looking out of my window when a substitute driver arrived. Warrior was sitting by the back door. The driver was nervous and told Warrior to go. Warrior did not move and the guy hit him over the head with a full milk bottle - glass and milk flew in every direction as Warrior shook it off like a wet shower and leapt for the man running for his truck. He got all in except his left leg - and sped out of the driveway with Warrior still attached till they got to the street. That driver was never seen on our route again.

*Editors Note: There will be more memories of S. O. Holmes, Jr. in upcoming issues of "Old Huntsville" magazine.*

**"After 10 years of therapy my doctor said something that brought tears to my eyes. He said, 'No hablo ingles.'"**

**Ronnie Shakes**

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**David Holmes' sister Diane, 1944**



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