



No. 284  
October 2016



# Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

## A Family in Crisis

In and Out of the Mental Health System



One day I returned from shopping and my husband met me at the door with a strange look on his face. "Your mother is dead. I just got a call from the Knoxville police and they said she was a homeless person. She was a victim of a hit and run accident."

Late that night the tears stopped. I went into the guest bedroom where my husband was sleeping and woke him up. I don't remember how I started, but I told him about my childhood, about my father and about my mother and about the shame I felt.

*Also in this issue:* **An Old Veteran's Last Roar**

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*Domie Lewter*  
*Mac Lewter*

# A Family in Crisis

by Janie Martin, as told to Tom Carney

If Dad had lived in a different era, or another time, he might have been a sea captain or maybe an explorer. He may have never found what he was searching for but I think he would have been happy

Dad was twenty-four years old the day he met my Mother. He was going to school under the G.I. bill studying to be an electrician. Mother was a secretary at the school and a mutual friend introduced her to Dad. Six months later they were married and when Dad got out of school they moved to Huntsville.

Huntsville was booming in the 1950s and jobs were plentiful. Both Dad and Mother went to work on the Arsenal, him as a maintenance electrician and she as a bookkeeper. Life was good for them. They bought a home in Blossomwood, had two cars, a perfect yard and from all outward appearances seemed to be the typical mid-

dle class couple. Walls can hide secrets, though, and the brick walls of our home held many.

Mother had always been a little different than my friends' mothers. She was more demanding and erratic in her behavior. She might spend days planning a Sunday dinner and then when she had it on the stove cooking, would forget all about it and go shopping. Other times we would plan a trip to the movies and at the last minute she would announce that she thought the movie "gave her bad feelings" and refuse to go.

I was nine years old the first time I realized there was something wrong with Mother. Her parents came to visit us for Christmas and while we were eating dinner Grandpa made a joke about the turkey. Mother seemed to get a glazed look on her face, like the calm before the storm. Suddenly she got up from the table and went into the kitchen where we heard the sound of breaking glass. She was emptying all the cabinets and throwing everything on the floor and out the back door.

When Dad tried to calm her down she began cursing him, telling him that he had planned the whole thing, that he had made her life Hell and he would pay. Dad finally talked her into going to bed and my Grandparents left. Dad spent the rest of the evening clean-

**"Blowing out someone else's candle doesn't make yours shine any brighter."**

**Sara James, Gurley**



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ing up the kitchen and the back yard.

Later that night Dad came into my bedroom and sat on the edge of the bed. I could tell he was worried but he tried his best to make me feel better. "Mother's just having one of her spells," he explained.

At about this time Dad brought a boat home. He was always doing work for other people on the weekends and someone had traded him a boat for his labor. Even as a child, the boat looked pretty sorry to me. It was about thirty feet long and looked as if it had been through a tornado. Much of the decking was missing and the rest was so warped you couldn't tell what it was supposed to be. The motor actually had green moss growing on it.

I suppose everyone thought Dad was crazy but it made him happy. It was the only thing I ever remember that he did for himself. He would spend hours sawing a piece of wood and fitting it into place. It was obvious the project would take years

but he didn't seem to mind. For his birthday that year I bought him a Captain's hat. It became a private joke between us; I would call him Captain and he would call me First Mate.

Mother's "spells" started becoming more frequent. She developed a fixation that people that she worked with were conspiring against her and that the books she worked on contained hidden messages. She could never quite explain what the messages were, except that we "would know when the time was right."

Finally Mother's employer let her go, citing "disruption of the workplace" as the reason. Losing her job seemed to push her further over the edge. In her mind she was convinced that her employer and Dad had conspired to make her lose her job. She had a fantasy that they were part of a "good old boy" network and, after she was destroyed, the "good old boys" would take care of Dad forever.

Dad and I both realized she had serious problems. He tried

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# My reason for joint replacement Hoops with her

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to talk her into seeing a doctor but she refused, saying he was the sick one. In our own bizarre way we learned to cope with her spells. When she thought the Huntsville Times crossword puzzle was sending her coded messages, Dad simply canceled the paper. If she complained about the light bulbs sending out "strange rays" we would replace them.

Looking back, the only time I remember Dad being happy was when he was working on his boat. He had worked on it for several years at this time and it was still no closer to completion, but Dad didn't care. Sometimes, late at night after Mother had gone to bed, he would string an extension cord with a light out to the boat and work on it till the early hours of the morning.

With Mother no longer working it gave her more time to shop. Before long Dad started getting bills in the mail for thousands of dollars that Mother had charged. When Dad confronted her with the bills she began accusing him of having girlfriends, saying it was all his fault. The more she screamed, the more violent she became. She began hitting Dad with her fists and when he tried to restrain her, she butted him with her head, bloodying her nose.

Almost immediately she smeared the blood all over her face and hair and then ran screaming to the neighbors next door. The neighbors, not knowing what was happening, called the police. Dad spent the night in jail and had to attend

domestic violence classes while I had to go to counseling. No one offered to do anything to help Mother.

With all the new bills Mother had charged, Dad could no longer make the payments. Sadly he put our house on the market and we moved into a rental house on Rison Avenue. Regardless of how he tried there was not enough money to pay everything. In the end, Dad filed for bankruptcy. The only fight my father and I ever had happened at that time. Dad had called several people trying to sell his boat. One person came out and looked at it but only laughed when he saw its condition. Still, Dad was willing to sell it for scrap if he had to. To me, that was heartbreaking. Dad had scrimped and saved and worked countless hours on it, and even though it wasn't much to look at, it was still his dream. I told him if he

sold it I was going to sell everything I owned too.

He finally relented and agreed to keep it, most likely because no one would buy it.

That same summer Dad lost his job. Mother had decided, in her mind, that Dad was no longer working and the "good old boys" were supplying him with phony pay stubs, money and girlfriends. She would call him at work sometimes fifteen or twenty times a day. If he could not come to the phone she took it as proof he was not working. If a clerk answered the phone Mother would accuse her of being one of Dad's girlfriends. A short while later the company had a "cutback" and Dad was laid off.

Dad got another job with another company but Mother soon found the phone number and Dad lost that job too. In the next couple of years the same thing would happen over and




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**If tomatoes are technically  
fruit, is ketchup a  
smoothie?**

over again. One employer actually called Dad into the office, and before laying him off, gave him a lecture about "controlling your wife."

We begged Mother to get help. The preacher from our church talked to her as did her parents. Mother ignored the pleas, blaming her situation on some vast unknown conspiracy that was trying to silence her. Dad and I both knew Mother had to get professional help. Unfortunately, if you are broke, with no insurance, your options are limited. Our preacher recommended a place in Georgia that treated people like Mother - for \$1,200.00 a week. Dad was struggling to pay \$300.00 a month rent.

One afternoon I came home from school and saw a crowd of people in front of our house. Mother had thrown all of our belongings into the front yard and told people to take what ever they wanted. Neighbors were carrying off furniture and strange people were picking through my clothes like buzzards picking a carcass clean.

The police took Mother to the hospital where she was admitted for psychiatric evaluation. A few days later a judge ordered her committed to the mental hospital in Decatur.

As sad as it may sound, those three months when Mother was in the hospital were some of the happiest in my life. Dad and I would take long walks in the evenings, and for the first time, really talked to one another. Dad began to smile again and even started working on the boat. When he didn't have the money to purchase a new piece of wood, he would simply sand the same piece all over again. It was about this time that I realized Dad would never complete the boat. Working on it was therapy for him, allowing him to forget his problems and escape into a simpler world for a few hours at a time.

I asked Dad why he didn't get a divorce. He thought about it a long time before answering. "If it was me who was sick," he finally replied, "and your mother was normal, I hope she would take care of me."

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When Mother was discharged, the doctors told us that she could live a productive life if she would take her medicine and continue to see a psychiatrist. They told us it was up to us to make sure she took the medicine.

No one ever explained how we were supposed to do it.

When Mother came home she was a different person. It was as if a dark evil force was lurking in her body trying to escape. Dad and I both tried to make her take the medicine but it was useless. She would lie about it, hide the pills and make excuses. If we confronted her and made her take the medicine in front of us, she would go to the bathroom and throw them up. Dad was spending almost three hundred dollars a month on medicine that Mother would throw away.

We kept trying but within a couple of months she was back in her own private world.

Despite Dad's problems and the lack of money, he always tried to be a good father. He always attended the different school events I was involved in and encouraged me to have friends. Most of my friends realized there was something

different about Mother and accepted the fact that I never invited anyone home.

Mother had been a pretty woman at one time but as her condition worsened she rarely ever took time to brush her hair or take a bath. Sometimes she would wear the same clothes for a week before Dad could coax her into changing. Anytime she left the house, even in the hottest parts of the summer, she wore a long coat that she had gotten out of someone's trash.

One day after school some friends of mine asked me to go to the Parkway City Mall. While we were parking one of my friends noticed an "old bag lady" sifting through a trash bin. Immediately, as most kids would, they began making jokes about her and the family she must have.

They never knew it was my Mother.

Dad tried to get Mother committed again but was told that as long as she was not a danger, there was nothing the authorities could do. Of course we heard the famous words again, "Just get her to take her medicine."

Mother started disappear-

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ing; at first for a few hours, and then days at a time. Dad and I would ride up and down the streets trying to find her and coax her into the car. Several times business owners called to tell us that Mother was harassing their customers. Finally it got to the point where Mother would only show up at the house every couple of weeks for a few days and then disappear again. When she did come home she always smelled of alcohol and often had ugly bruises on her arms. Dad would always try to clean her up and make her a bed on the couch but in a day or two she would be gone again.

Finally one time Mother was gone for about six months. Every few days Dad would call the police department and the hospital but no one had any knowledge of her. Suddenly late one evening Mother showed up at the house with a


man whom she introduced to me as "your Uncle Charlie."

"Uncle Charlie" and she were going to get married, she explained, just as soon as Dad signed the divorce papers. Almost on cue, Charlie handed the divorce papers to Dad.

Dad took the papers into the kitchen where he read them carefully before finally signing them. Giving the documents back to Mother he wished her good luck. After they left Dad turned to me and said, "It's over."

Neither one of us ever talked about Mother again. It was a subject too close and too painful for both of us. Occasionally I would receive a package in the mail but they would usually be filled with bizarre newspaper clippings or perhaps several pages of stock quotes from the "Wall Street Journal".


Several years later, while I was in college, Dad received a



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phone call from her. She had been picked up for shoplifting in Valdosta, Georgia and wanted Dad to send her money to pay the fine. Dad agreed to send the money but when she wanted to come home he said no. "It would only have made matters worse," he later told me.

Dad died that same year. A few months after that phone call he had gotten rid of the boat he had spent twenty years working on. Perhaps he didn't need it any more.

Years passed and I married a wonderful man. When he asked about my Mother I always lied, saying she had died when I was small and I didn't really know her.

One day I returned from shopping and my husband met me at the door with a strange look on his face. "Your Mother is dead. I just got a call from the Knoxville Police and they said she was a homeless person. She was a victim of a hit and run accident."

Suddenly all the bitterness, shame, frustration and sadness from a whole life time swept over me. I ran to my bedroom, locked the door, and spent the rest of the day and night crying. My husband was wonderful. He didn't know what was going on but knew I needed the space and time to sort it out.

Late that night the tears stopped. I went into the guest bedroom where my husband was sleeping and woke him up. I don't remember how I started but I told him about my childhood; about my Father and about my Mother and about the shame I felt.

I told him that I believed my Mother was a good woman and she couldn't help the sickness that had ravaged her mind. I talked about how Dad

had stood beside her and tried to get help from a system that was uncaring.

We didn't turn the lights on. It seemed easier without them.

When I finally finished talking my husband didn't say anything. He just took me in his arms and held me for the rest of the night.

Two days later we drove to Knoxville where we made the funeral arrangements. My husband helped pick out a dress for her and we found a burial plot that overlooked a peaceful wooded valley.

For the first time in my life Dad, Mother and I were all finally at peace.



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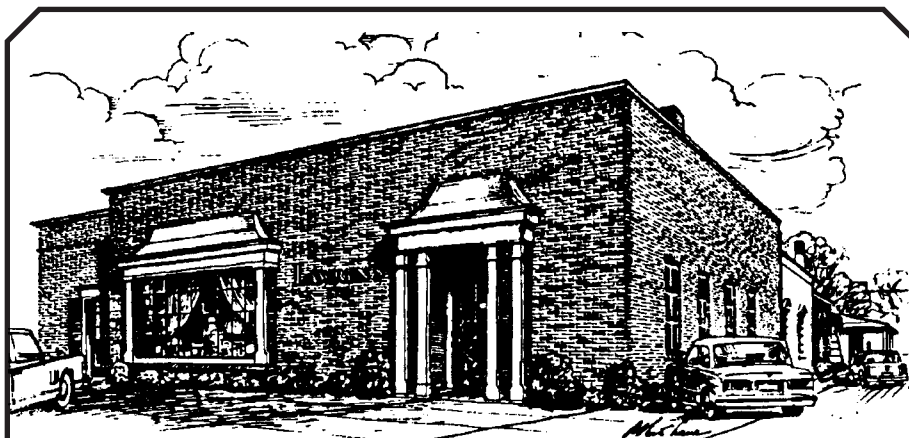
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# Grandma's Kitchen Tips

- Here's a good way to save time and prevent a mess when making meatballs: Use your ice cream scoop to shape them. You can also make hamburger patties this way – scoop out the meat, then flatten with a spatula.

- Ever have trouble keeping the hard-boiled eggs in the icebox separated from the uncooked eggs? Here's an easy solution:

When boiling eggs, either add a little food coloring to the water or put a drop of it on each egg. Now you have color-coded eggs!

- Chilled cookie dough often crumbles when you slice it. But if you first warm the blade of your knife in hot water and then wipe it dry, you can avoid the crumbling. When the blade cools, warm it again the same way.

- Cooking hamburgers on a very hot fire? Poke a hole in the center of each one while shaping it. That will help the center cook faster...and the hole will be gone when the hamburger is cooked.

- You can store opened but unused whipping cream in the freezer by simply putting the leftovers in 1-oz. paper cups. Cover the cups and place them in transparent freezer bags. Then thaw and use as needed.

- When making a juicy berry pie, sprinkle the bottom crust lightly with sugar and flour mixed in equal proportions. This keeps the bottom crust from becoming soggy before the pie can

be completely eaten.

- Bury avocados in flour to hasten their ripening.

- One way to keep hamburgers from falling apart is to add a little flour to the meat when you shape the patties.

- Some foods not only leave an odor in your refrigerator... they can add an unwanted "taste" to the other food. To guard against this, I've learned that a small charcoal briquette placed in the refrigerator quickly eliminates the odor of items like onions and broccoli.


- If you don't have enough

cooling racks, try using inverted muffin tins instead. Just place pies and cakes on the upside-down tins. Works great!

- Before chopping raw meat, cut it into small pieces and freeze slightly. This will help the meat go through the chopper without clogging, and the loss of juice will be minimal.

- To store leftover tomato paste, spoon tablespoon-size dollops onto a small cookie sheet and freeze until firm. Transfer to a plastic bag, seal and freeze. Remove as needed and add to sauces, vegetables, soups or stews.

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**Bud the Great Dane to his owner**

# Ryan, My Rescue

by Jen Adams



After having to put down my beloved cat after 16 years, I was devastated. My daughter insisted I go through photos of animals in need of rescue at my local shelter, but at first I declined as I knew my beautiful tabby Daisy could never be replaced.

About a month or so later, I did browse through the site my daughter had recommended and stopped when I saw small dog sitting on a chair with a look on her face that said, "Please come get me."

When I first got to the shelter and saw her, I thought the dog was white but it was hard to tell because she was so filthy. Her hair was wild but her eyes very gentle. And it was love at first sight.

Ryan has been with me for four years. She hasn't replaced Daisy, as she will always occupy a special place in my heart. However, she has brought me more happiness than I can ever express in a short story. This 8 pound former shelter dog owns my heart.

When anyone asks if she is a rescue, I tell them she is but not the way they think. My now beautifully groomed Maltese rescued me.

I heartily recommend that anyone reading this adopts a shelter pet. I promise your life will be changed for the better.

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# Coping with Parkinson's Disease

by *Charlie Lyle*

I would like to give a little more hope, in my humble opinion, about this disease. Let me divide it up into two parts. One is about hospitals and the other is about the physical aspects of the disease.

As hospitals are overcrowded, it is hard to sleep in a hospital. The hospital has a policy that they have a communication system that sounds like ding-dong or a whistle. I had talked to a male nurse who said it got to him and after two nights and then a third one, that it could cause him to leave.

Good things do happen. For instance I ran into that wonderful and likeable Martha Joffrion and Adalene (Kelly) Bledsoe. Adalene who was there with her husband, Teddy and also Carl Grote, Sr. who is one of the founders of Huntsville Hospital.

I am very happy to say that Huntsville Hospital has the best doctors, nurses and physical and occupational and home health care people anywhere.

I know for sure one must stay active with this disease. I am so fortunate to be under the medical care of Dr. Zeheer Khan. He sees patients who are 65 and older and prescribes medications that are appropriate for the aged.

The therapists have a list of all of the exercises that one with Parkinson's should do. For instance, one is to stand as long as 25 seconds without holding onto their walker. I integrated into physical therapy and it might be appropriate to use the old adage "if you don't use it, you lose it". Walk as much as you can. After sleeping, stretch your body.

I found out about a good old remedy if you have a cough, especially at night. Rub Vick's salve on the bottom of your feet, wear socks and it will stop your coughing. Yes, I didn't believe it until I tried. It worked for me. My feet didn't smell so good but the results were better than the smell.

I hope that this article

may give one more hope with regards to the disease of Parkinson's.

In closing, things are looking up for people with Parkinson's Disease. I know, because I have it too.

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**"Politicians should have two terms - one in office and the other in prison."**

***Billy Schmidt, Athens***

## OLD SUPERSTITIONS

- If you answer a witch's question, she will take something from you.
- If you blow out all of the candles on your birthday cake with the first breath you will get whatever you wish for.
- If you break a mirror, seven years of bad luck will follow.
- If you carry a hoe, spade, or shovel in the house, you must carry it out the same door you came in by or death will follow.
- If you catch a falling leaf on the first day of autumn you will not catch a cold all winter.
- If you cut your hair or fingernails at night, ghosts will come around.
- If you drop a dish towel on the floor, a worse housekeeper than yourself is coming to visit you.
- If you drop a fork, a man will come to visit you.
- If you drop a piece of silverware someone is coming from the direction it is pointing.
- If you drop a spoon, a woman will come to visit you.
- If you live someplace where you usually don't hear a train whistle, and suddenly hear it, the weather is getting ready to change.
- If you sneeze, cover your mouth so your soul doesn't fall out.
- If you spill some salt, pick some of it up and throw it over your left shoulder to stop bad luck from coming.
- If you start to go somewhere and come back for something, you will have bad luck.
- If you sweep under a person's feet, that person will never get married.
- If you turn three times in a circle in a dark room lighted by candles and say Bloody Mary the whole time, you will call her spirit to you.
- If your index finger itches, you should go play the lottery.
- It is unlucky to rock an empty rocking chair.
- Keep a shallow bowl of water at your kitchen window to keep out evil spirits from coming in through the glass. Evil cannot cross over water.
- A cricket in your home is good luck.

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# Huntsville Many Years Ago

by Evelyn Hayden Hodge

Old Huntsville was quite different from the Huntsville we know today. The old town's businesses were built around the Courthouse. Almost the entire business section was bounded by Eustis Street and the Square on the south; the Square and Jefferson Street on the west; Meridianville Street to the north; and Green Street to the east.

Back in the teens and twenties May and Cooney was Huntsville's most exclusive department store. They sold women's, men's and children's ready-to-wear, shoes, piece goods, ladies hats, etc.

Their store was located on the east side of the Square. When May and Cooney closed their store, J.C. Penney moved in and remained on the Square until they moved to The Mall on North Parkway. Then James Record, Madison County Commissioner, established the Law Library there, where it still remains on the east side.

The Williams Grocery was also on this same block. It was well stocked and had a good trade. They had three large pickle barrels, one each for sour, sweet and mixed pickles. They used a long-handled wooden dipper, put the pickles in a cardboard tray and wrapped it all up in white paper.

The cheese was in one large round piece called a hoop. It was placed on a round revolving metal base that had a small lever and a large blade attached. A certain number of up-and-down movements of the lever meant a pound, a half pound, etc. Then the large blades would cut the right amount of cheese.

There was a bakery on Washington Street just back from where Lorch's Jewelry store is now. They made bread, rolls, cakes and cookies. They sold their bread for 5 cents a loaf or six loaves for a quarter. The bread was not sliced nor was it wrapped in plastic. They wrapped the bread in white wrapping paper and tied it with a white string. Most of the time the bread was so fresh that it was still warm and smelled so good that one could hardly wait to get home and have a slice spread with fresh butter.

Next door to the bakery was Shields Meat Market. The meat was not cut and wrapped in packages as it is done today. Back then the carcasses were hung in halves or quarters on hooks from the ceiling. Mr. Shields would take your order, then cut and saw your meat while you waited. He had fresh oysters in season and sold them in square pint and quart cartons with wire handles. There was no dressed poultry in meat markets back then. Everybody had to buy the poultry live and dress it themselves.

The jail was a two-story brick building located on East Clinton Street behind the old downtown Dunnavants store. The jail was almost even with the sidewalk and the prisoners would look between the bars and call out to the passers-by below.

"After the game, the King and the Pawn go into the same box."

*Old Italian Proverb*

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The next jail was on North Washington Street. It was across the street but down near the railroad tracks. It was across Washington St. from Yarbrough Coal Co. That jail was relocated to the new Madison County Courthouse and now is located in the Public Safety Building on Wheeler Ave.

The old Post Office, a large three-story brick building, was located on the southwest corner of Randolph Avenue and Green Street across from the First United Methodist Church. It was constructed between 1888-90 and was demolished around the middle fifties.

Huntsville had two hotels then - the old Huntsville Hotel on Jefferson Street and the McGee Hotel also on Jefferson Street. Each hotel had a driver take a small bus-type vehicle to meet every passenger train that came into Huntsville. Just as soon as the first passenger came into view, the drivers began to chant "Huntsville Hotel", "McGee Hotel". While still chanting, they were loading luggage and helping prospective guests into their vehicles to be transported to the respective hotels.

Almost all travel in those days was done by train. Even traveling salesmen, with all their sample cases and trunks, traveled by rail. When they arrived at a central location such as Huntsville, they established headquarters at a hotel. Then they hired a hack and driver to take them to call on merchants in the outlying areas.

Before the Arsenal, Madison County was the largest cotton producing county in Alabama. In the fall, after the cotton had been picked and ginned, the farmers would bring it to Huntsville to be sold.

The Square around the Courthouse would be literally filled with wagons loaded with bales of cotton. Most of the cotton buyers were located on the west side of the Square, and that is how it got the name Cotton Row.

There was a large store on the south side of the Square which was owned by Mr. Thomas T. Terry. It was what you may call a general mercantile store. They sold ready-to-wear for the whole family, groceries, hardware, farm supplies and sold school books to the pupils of the city of Huntsville schools. Before the State of Alabama began to furnish the textbooks, T. T. Terry's store on the Square was a well-known business not only to the citi-

zens of Huntsville but to the people living out in the county as well.

There were no malls then and on Saturday nights everybody went to town. They would park their cars on Washington Street or the Square and then visit with all their friends and acquaintances as they strolled past.

Yes, Huntsville of old was much different than it is today. *(Written in the early 1990s)*

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**"Wood burns much faster when you have to cut and chop it yourself."**

**Harrison Ford**

# Heard On the Street

by *Cathey Carney*



The winner of the photo of the month for September was **Ray Garner**. Ray is a retired Firefighter with the City of Huntsville and worked for years out of Station #1, across from Big Spring Park. He and wife **Mercy** knew that the little boy in the picture had to be **Donnie Thigpen**, who with his wife owns Po Boy Factory on Andrew Jackson. Congratulations Ray.

Due to popular demand, I have hidden a tiny object somewhere in the pages of this issue. It happens to be an **autumn leaf** to help bring in the cool weather season. It will be very tiny and **NO ONE** will find it. If you find it you may call anytime. But I expect to get no calls because this one will be hardest ever to find.

**Dr. Richard "Dick" Rhoades** was a beloved neighbor in Old Town with wife **Dale**. He was just 78 when he passed away Sep. 1. Dick was "at his core" a teacher of AMRDEC employees and of his UAH graduate students. In 1997, Dick became Director of the Werner Von Braun Research Institute and was appointed to the faculties of the Colleges of Engineering and Administrative Science as Professor of Management in Engineering. In 2013, he stepped down to become the Principal Research Engineer of the Von Braun Research Institute. He is survived by his wife of 49 years, **Dale Turner Rhoades**; daughters **Lawren Paul (Rodney)** of Huntsville, **Elizabeth "Liz" Rhoades ( Tobias Baumgart)** of Swarthmore, Pennsylvania and **Lee Sugg (Wes)** of Charlotte, North Carolina in addition to grandchildren, great grandchildren and many friends. Dick was a kind, sweet man who lived life to the fullest, and will be so missed.

Thousands of history buffs attended last year's **Maple Hill Cemetery Stroll** and didn't want to miss 2016. Well, it's taking place on October 16th, Sunday, from 2 - 4:30 pm. There will be over 75 costumed characters that portray the famous & infamous buried at the cemetery. The event is free (with donations accepted) and rain date is the following Sunday if needed. See you there!

**Ruth and Lyle Taylor** have

lived in Old Town for decades and loved the area, with Lyle taking so many photos of events, old houses and old people. Lyle passed away a year ago and just last week his wife **Ruth** passed away, at 91. They weren't born here but loved Huntsville so much. They leave son **Lowell Taylor** and his wife, **Carol**. We send our deepest sympathy to the family.

So proud of my grandson **Evan Troup**, who just turned 13 and lives in Nashville. He got a little cash for his birthday and the next week he asked his Mom to take him to Habitat for Humanity so that he could donate \$50 to them for the work that they do. Love that kind of generosity.

You know how sometimes you're all bloated and miserable and just feel fat? Well it may be something to do with **your gut health**. There's more and more about that now in the news and it turns out that what you eat can have lots of effect on your moods, your immune system, everything in your life. It really makes sense to read up about that and make better choices in what you put

## 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 works at HudsonAlpha and loves Huntsville history.



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into your body! You want to feel good, right?

You still have time to mark Oct. 1 at 10 am on your calendar to take part in the **Historic Walking Tours** around the historic districts. **Jan Williams** will be conducting the tour through Five Points District on that date and you need to meet at the corner of Wells Ave. and Maple Hill Dr. before 10 am. The next one is on Oct. 8 and will cover Old Town Historic District. It will be conducted by **Mike and Cathy Self** and you should meet at 122 Walker Ave. by 10am.

The **Shiloh United Methodist Church** on Ryland Pike is celebrating its 208th anniversary on Oct. 8. That is amazing and alot of years to be in existence. They invite all to come see them on that day for their lunch celebration at 11:30am.

Got a lot of comments about the story last month called "My Ragtime Baby." **W. C. Handy** was Headmaster at Alabama A&M College and after his time here he moved to Memphis where he wrote the all-time classic, "Memphis Blues." Amazing talent.

**John Bzdell** is marrying his long-time sweetheart **Margaret Watson** on Nov. 12 this year. They've been lovebirds forever! And John makes all the healthy meals for his sweetie! He'll make a good husband.

Like alot of others I have a busy life and find it hard to remember

everything. I've discovered that the calendar you can find on your computer if you have **Outlook or Outlook Express** for your email works great. It'll show month, week or day and as soon as you put your appointment in there it's there for good. Then when the time comes for you to go to your appointment a beep sounds so you're reminded. So simple to use and once I put it on my calendar I can erase it from my brain!

That handsome and really charming **Darryl Goldman** had a birthday in September on the 14th and I know his sweet wife **Linda** planned something fun!

Also **Barb Eyestone** had a birthday Sep. 17th and she probably had a great day with Mom **Ruth Hursh** and Barb's husband **Ron Eyestone**.

Did you ever read **Edgar Allen Poe** back in high school and college? He was one of my favorites for his poems and stories and scared the wits out of me. His stories will be presented at the **Historic Lowry House** for several weekends in October. Contact them at 256.489.9200 for ticket info. You'll be glad you went!

**Lowe Mill** just continues to get more interesting and has gotten national attention. There are art shows, a place to eat called Happy Tummy, place to get the best popsicles ever, a whiskey distillery where you can get small samples of the whiskey that's made, a huge swing, many artists and cigar box guitars. What more

could you ask for? Also the Concerts on the Dock continue every Friday night from 6-9 through October, free to the public with a donation for parking.

We wish the best of life to **Dr. Casey Wardynski** in his new endeavors - he spoke before the Golden K Kiwanis several times over the past year or so and the group was very impressed with his passion for the kids and their education. Lots of progress made with him at the helm.

**Garden Cove Produce** closed their doors after being in business for 31 years. They had fresh and organic produce and juices and you never knew what you'd find! Owners **Artis & Edna Sidney** started it at Alabama A&M and it just blossomed. Some really good shopping there over the years. If they open up a smaller store here we'll be there!

I needed some hardware supplies the other day and went to **Lewters Hardware** on Washington Street. When you go to Lewters someone offers to help you as you walk in the door. For you new residents of Huntsville, it's an old business in an old building and has been in business since 1928. It's fun just to walk around in there. You'll find what you're looking for and get help doing it! And remember shopping local helps our neighbors!

Remember to keep an eye on your older neighbors who may be having problems but too proud to ask for help.

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## Deep South Favorites

### Bride's Salad

- 1 pkg. lime gelatin
- 1 c. crushed pineapple
- 1 c. cheddar cheese, grated
- 1 c. toasted pecans, chopped
- 3/4 c. real mayonnaise

Prepare gelatin and when partially congealed, add the pineapple, cheese, nuts and mayonnaise. Mix well. Pour into molds, chill in fridge to firm, top with whipped cream to serve. (Optional)

### Cherry Cheese Crunch

- 2 c. plain flour
- 1 c. pecans
- 1 stick butter, softened
- 1 - 8 oz. cream cheese
- 1 box confectioners sugar
- 1 container whipped cream
- 1 large can cherries for pie

Mix first 3 ingredients and press in baking dish. Bake at 350

degrees til brown and let cool. Combine cream cheese and sugar, cream well then fold in the whipped cream. Spread mixture on crust and pour cherries on top. Keep in fridge til serving.

### Macaroni and Cheese

- 1 c. uncooked macaroni
- 3 eggs, slightly beaten
- 3 c. milk
- 1-1/2 lb. cheddar cheese, shredded

Cook macaroni in boiling water for 7 minutes, drain and run cold water over it to stop the cooking. Mix the eggs and milk, pour the macaroni into egg mixture. Spray a 9 x 13" baking dish with garlic cooking spray and layer in this order: macaroni, cheese, macaroni, cheese. Sprinkle top with bread crumbs, bake at 400 degrees about 35 minutes.

### Tater Puffs

- 2 c. mashed potatoes from day before
- 2 T. butter
- Salt and pepper
- 1/2 t. garlic powder
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1/2 c. cream

Combine all ingredients and form into small balls. Either bake in oven at 400 degrees til done or fry in deep fat.

### Fried Ham with Red-Eye Gravy

- 4 large slices country ham
- 1 T. plain flour
- 1 c. cold water
- 4 t. strong black coffee

Put your ham slices in a hot skillet and fry over medium heat, turning a couple of times. Cook for 10 minutes til browned. Re-

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move ham from pan and keep hot on platter. Leave a tablespoon of fat in the hot pan, toss in the flour, raise the heat and stir til it browns. Pour in the cold water and coffee. Bring to a boil, stirring real well to get all that good stuff off the pan. Lower heat and simmer for about 5 minutes.

Throw your ham back in, get some really good fresh biscuits and start soppin up all that good juice.

### Cream & Cheddar Biscuits

2 c. self-rising flour  
1 c. heavy cream  
1/2 c. grated sharp cheddar cheese

Melted butter to coat biscuits

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. In a medium bowl combine flour, cream and cheese til mixture forms a good ball. Roll this out on a floured surface to about 1/2 inch thick. Cut with 2-inch biscuit cutter and dip each biscuit into melted butter. Place these on a buttered cookie sheet, spaced 1" apart. Bake for 10-13 minutes til lightly browned.

### Sweet Potato Pecan Balls

1-1/2 c. mashed, cooked sweet potatoes  
1/4 c. orange juice  
1/2 t. vanilla extract  
3 T. sugar  
1/2 c. chopped pecans

Mix first 4 ingredients and shape into balls, using about 2 tablespoons for each ball. Roll them in the pecans and bake in preheated oven at 350 for about 20 minutes.

### Green Beans with Ham & Pecans

1 lb. green beans  
3 T. butter  
4 T. chopped pecans  
1/4 t. pepper  
1/4 t. cayenne  
1/2 c. chopped cooked ham

Wash and prepare your beans. Bring 4 cups water and a dash of salt to a boil, add the beans. Cook uncovered for 15 minutes, drain and set aside. Melt butter in a skillet, add the pecans and cook til golden, stirring often. Add beans and chopped ham, toss til heated.

### Best Coconut Pie

1/2 c. self-rising flour  
1-1/2 c. sugar  
4 eggs, beaten  
1 t. vanilla extract  
1/2 stick butter, melted  
7 oz. flake coconut  
2 c. milk

Blend together the sugar and flour, stir in the eggs and remaining ingredients. Pour into 2 greased 9-inch pie plates and bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.

Your family will love these sweet, Southern pies!



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# Jimmy O'Rear, My Friend from Long Ago

by Malcolm W. Miller

Back during the late thirties and early forties, when I was a young man, all across the country small local radio stations began springing on the scene and Huntsville, Alabama was no exception. One of the very first in Huntsville was WBHP. This was something new for most of the station owners and managers and most were new on the job. They did not have network ties and they had to rely heavily on local programming. This was very difficult back then because they did not have modern taping equipment that the stations rely on today. Actually there has been so much improvement in the radio stations since that time that you can hardly compare the two.

One of the most popular programs to come out of this era was the live local radio show. Most of these programs were what everyone then called "hillbilly" music. As I look back on those times today I realize this was the real beginning of what is now called modern country and blue grass music. The good ole country boys who had never played for anything bigger than a community square dance or a school program suddenly were before a live "mike" singing and playing their hearts out for thousands of listeners.

For many years as a young boy, from the time we got our first battery-powered Philco radio I was one of their biggest fans. I would rush from the cotton field as fast as I could at dinner time on Saturdays; because that was the day most of these shows were broadcast. I remember one of my very favorite entertainers of that era was Jimmy O'Rear. He had a show known as "Jimmy O'Rear and His Radio Gang".

This program inspired me as much as anything to try to be an entertainer myself. It was many, many years after I heard the show for the first time that I actually stood before a live "mike" and sang for the first time on Jimmy's program. Friends, you just cannot imagine the

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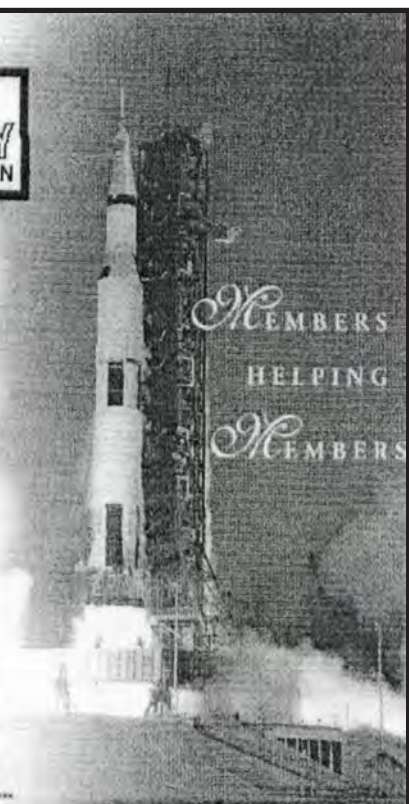


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thrill that I experienced standing there singing "Many Tears Ago." I thought I had died and gone to heaven that day and I will never forget the experience as long as I live. Later on I sang on other live radio shows in Huntsville; however that first time was the most exciting for a young man.

I need to mention a few things about the dedication of Jimmy O'Rear to his radio program. He played for approximately eighteen years. Also during this time he worked full time in the old Lincoln Cotton Mill, played for school programs in North Alabama and Tennessee and played on other radio stations as well. He was as dedicated to making all his personal appearances at the various school programs and barbecues as he was to his radio show. Basically he was one hundred percent dedicated to his music and his many fans and they were well aware of that dedication and loved him and his entertainment.

After I played on his radio show I began to travel with Jimmy and his band to his various performances. One time I was playing with his show and we were going to play at Skyline School in Jackson County. The car we were going in broke down, and not to be stopped, Jimmy hired a cab to take us there. This cab cost him much more than we had ever gotten for playing any show; however he was determined to not let his public down. He asked each of us that were playing to chip in, but I remember we were all too broke so he had to foot that bill himself.

Just this week I was waiting to have a minor procedure at Huntsville Hospital Surgery Center and I met a young lady from Estill Fork, Cindy Evett, she lives near and still remembers the old school house. She said that it

had been torn down and all that remains was the cement foundation. She enjoyed my story about the old school house. We talked about country music and I found out her son is a distant relative of Curly Putnam.

Another time we went to play a show at Estill Fork School. As the old saying goes at this time this school was about as far back in the mountains as you could drive a nail. When we arrived we found a two-room school house with a very small stage in the corner. There were no electric outlets to plug in the equipment; however Jimmy went ahead with the show by light of a coal oil lamp. There were around twenty people in the two-room school, however outside was another seventy-five or so clamoring just to hear the music and many taking turns looking in the windows.

I cannot count the times I performed with Jimmy and his band, but they all very exciting and memorable. People would probably say Jimmy O'Rear never really made the "big time", however I know this much: he brought joy to the hearts of many, many folks during some hard years when there just wasn't a whole lot to cheer about.



## Huntsville Area Committee

*On employment of people with disabilities*

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### PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

The Huntsville Area Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities (HACEPD)

Annual Awards Luncheon will be held on

Wednesday, October 19, 2016, from 11:00-1:00p.m. at

The ADRS Building Large Conference Room

3000 Johnson Road SW

Huntsville, AL 35805

The public is invited and lunch will be served

Please RSVP by Tuesday, October 14, 2016 to Patty Myles at: 256-772-0400

For questions

Please call Sarah Arnette @ 256-562-1343

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# Little Boy Lost

by John E. Carson



I remember some things. I remember riding in the back seat of the big old black Mercury. The gray cloth upholstery that surrounded me. I had to get on my knees and turn around to look out the back window. I remember my little brother riding next to me, holding tight to his side of the car and looking out his window the whole trip.

He was mad at me again. Because I was here first, I think.

We always did everything together. Sometimes he just wanted to be alone. I knew how that felt. A family of seven didn't get much privacy! The girls had all left home as soon as they could. They were tired of baby sitting the boys. Our older brother wouldn't do it either so I was stuck with the job of watching the other two.

**"When I die, I want my last words to be, 'I left a million dollars under the ....."**

**Sally Fordham, Arab**

Up front, my parents were quiet. At least they weren't fighting. It was one or the other I guess. We started out this Saturday morning to have a "family outing". Our older sisters were going to drive themselves to the old farm they had lived on before we were born. The radio was playing "Twilight Time" by The Platters. I liked the song but wondered why they were playing it in the morning. I stared at the big chrome face of the car radio.

It seemed like you could hear it better if you stared at it. That's what we used to do before we had TV.

The whole family would gather in the living room and stare at the polished oak cabinet of the radio. We had to use our imaginations more that way, my dad always said. I think he was right but it seemed like it was all used up trying to picture what we were hearing. TV was better.

The rolling of the tires and the exhaust leaking in soon put me to sleep. I never saw this

*Woody Anderson*



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place before and I was curious. Waiting to get there made the trip seem longer than it was.

"It will be fun!" Dad said, "Your mother has wanted to go on a picnic for a long time. We'll have a nice family outing!"

I hoped it was true. So many hopes for happy days had vanished in the alcohol and smoke. I did not understand it. Everyone said they wanted to be happy. So why weren't they? What did they find to fight about all of the time? Even my little brother and me were doing it now. Still, there was hope...

That's what I was thinking when I fell asleep. When I woke up the radio was playing "The Great Pretender", also by The Platters. Somehow it seemed to fit.

The car was pulling off the gravel road onto an old weed-filled path. There were tracks in dirt made by years of tires where not even weeds grew anymore.

I sat up taller to look out the window. Dad was blowing the horn and I could see my sisters' Chevrolet. The three girls had ridden together in the oldest one's car. They were climbing out as we approached the old weathered farmhouse.

I don't remember what happened next. The neighbor kids that remembered my sisters had all grown up now and came over to visit them. My brother and I were shy because we didn't know them and went to explore the old house.

Someone had stopped to take a picture of me in front of the house. I stood with my hands in my pockets, smiling obediently.

For a brief few minutes we all forgot our troubles and enjoyed the day. I did not want to leave and return to the real world of fighting and struggle.

Maybe it was the exhaust.

Their voices faded as I stepped onto the old porch.

I roamed about the old house, looking at the lathe

and plaster walls, bare in some spots and eaten by mice here and there. The old floors were uneven and the wind blew through the rooms. I tried to imagine life in this empty place. I saw the famous hole in the ceiling that my dad had cut to fit the Christmas tree in. "Now, the girls



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can have a tree in their room, too!" He had told my mother. Dad had some brilliant ideas! The tree was so big it would not fit in the living room and he did not want to cut it shorter. It was one of my mother's favorite stories, usually told when she was drinking and pointing out our father's many flaws.

The winters must have been cold in here. Even on this summer day I was cold. Maybe it was the exhaust...

I thought I heard them calling me. Was it time to go already? I called back and carefully walked down the old narrow steps to the first floor. The stairs were rounded and smooth, easy to slip on. I called to my brother but he didn't answer.

Reaching the front door, I turned the old painted knob. It would not open! Panic rose in my chest and throat. My heart beat faster and faster. I had the terrible feeling they would leave without me!

Finally, the knob turned and the door opened! I ran outside, blinded by the light. "Here I am! Here I am! Wait! I'm coming! I'm coming..." But they were gone. Maybe it was the exhaust. Maybe I'm a ghost. I've been eight forever! I've tried to go home but I cannot leave the yard! I must have done something bad to make them leave me here!

Comeback! I'll be good! Who will watch my brothers?

Every day I walk the ruts in the old driveway and look up and down the road waiting for them to come back. They must have given up looking for me long ago.

Now and then a dog or cat wanders in and I have a pet for a while. But eventually they leave too.

I remember hunger, the picnic. The blanket on the ground and the sandwiches, my Mother smiling again. "Be careful!" She said as we

**"After crunching the numbers, there's no way we can afford a cat in this house."**

***Jake the poodle, to his family***

ran off to play. But that was a different life. It seems like I've always been here. It's harder and harder to see my mother's face.

I remember some things... I remember riding in the back seat of the big old black Mercury...



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\* Earache - Have someone blow tobacco smoke into the ear five times while saying, "Hurt, hurt, go away; go into a bale of hay."

\* Flu - to cure the flu, put sulphur in your shoes.

\* Foot Gone to Sleep - Wet your finger with spit and put the sign of the cross on the sole of your foot.

\* Freckles - To get rid of freckles, get up at five-thirty on Sunday morning and go outside. If there is a lot of dew get your hands real wet in the grass. Rub the dew on your face and turn around nine times, saying, "Dew, dew, do, do, take my freckles; wear 'em on you; dew, dew, thank you." Say this nine times while turning around. Do not wash the dew off and do not wash your face until the next day.

\* Diarrhea - eat several coconut cookies (some say this really works).

\* Hiccups - Hold your arms above your head and pant like a dog; or take a drink of water while standing on your head; or stick your head under water and count to twenty-five (don't breathe); or put your head between your legs and look at the sun.

\* Measles - Put burned cornmeal in a tobacco bag and hang it around the neck.

\* Ingrown Toenail - tie a lizard's liver to a leather string. Take the leather string and tie it around your left ankle. The ingrown toenail will disappear in nine days.

\* Nosebleed - Every night pour a bucket of cold water over your head. Keep this up for fourteen days and you will be cured.

\* Pain - Find a rock that is partly covered with dirt. Remove the rock from its resting place and spit on the bottom or covered side. Replace the rock in the same hole exactly as you found it.

\* Sprains - Take a dirt dauber's nest and make mud out of it with vinegar. Dab it on the sprain and wrap a stocking around it.

When she saw her first strands of gray hair she thought she'd dye.



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# AN OLD VETERAN'S LAST ROAR

by Walter S. Terry

For New Year's Eve 1941-42, someone I knew well, home from college for the holidays, concocted a most ambitious plan: The largest cannon on the Madison County Courthouse lawn - a World War I camouflaged, five-inch-bore, long-barrelled gun - would be fired once again at the stroke of midnight - an early precursor of World War II, as it turned out.

The plotter of this plan set forth a week ahead of New Year's Eve to prepare a "round" for the cannon. This involved the task of filling a Double Cola bottle with powder from umpteen zillion broken-open Zebra firecrackers. Once the bottle was close to full, a length of dynamite fuse, predetermined to burn for thirty seconds, was inserted into the powder and excelsior was packed into the neck of the bottle around the fuse. The bottle was then wrapped with string and black electrician's tape until it had grown to twice its original size. This was to create compression and an explosive burst at ignition.

Shortly before midnight on December 31, the bomb maker and a friend, a fellow conspirator, both in handed-down tuxedos, left a New Year's dance at the Russell Erskine Hotel and hastened to the Courthouse Square. There they waited in the shadow of a store across the street from the cannon. The plan was it would occur as the courthouse clock was striking twelve.

A wind was blowing and the friend got to worrying about being able to light the fuse after the charge had been placed in the cannon's breech (the breech block was missing). The friend asked, "Why don't we

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**"Heat makes things expand.  
Therefore I'm not overweight,  
just hot."**  
  
*Sandra Hyatt, Woodville*

light it over here in the shelter of this building and carry it to the cannon?"

The bomb maker, more respectful of his creation's awesome potential, said in effect, "Man, I may be dumb, but I ain't crazy!"

So they followed the original plan and were successful in lighting the fuse a few seconds before twelve. Then they raced away down the lawn at the northeast corner of the Square. Before taking to the air to clear a heavy iron-link chain strung between concrete posts, the bomb maker had not heard his companion's warning cry. In mid-air, the toes of both shoes were snared by a wire put there to keep people off the grass he had been running on. The leap became a headlong dive as the bomb maker cleared the chain and tumbled head over you-know-what across the rough street pavement. There was injury, but, because of the artful tumbling act, confined to some missing hide on the face and hands - nothing life-threatening. But that's another story.

The retreating duo reached the shadows of the Henderson National Bank building and waited. Not in vain - after the clock had struck six or seven times, there came a brilliant flash, as of vivid lightning, followed by a tremendous blast, with a glorious ring of smoke ejected from the cannon's muzzle. Within seconds came the sound of a hail storm as pieces of Double Cola bottle rained down on the roofs of surrounding buildings. Cars stopped, with occupants agape. Mission accomplished.

Miraculously the bomb maker's tuxedo was none the worse for its owner's sensationally acrobatic (as later related by the accomplice) exit from the Courthouse lawn, and the bomb maker survived to relate the event to his grandchildren (if not to the local authorities).

**"We plan big things for tomorrow in spite of absolutely no knowledge of the future."**

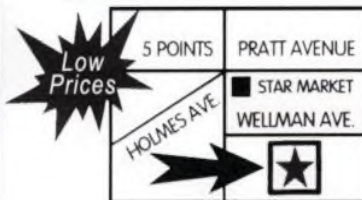
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# MAKING PICTURES WITH WORDS

by Harold Lee Vest

I once believed that poems were for people very much different than me. But for ten minutes in 1974 my world stopped spinning... I was taking Freshman English 101 when I was hit with a life changing event.

Our English teacher at Jefferson State Jr. College had a very interesting name; Mrs. Box. She was not only smart, but cute as well. She wanted to introduce her class to the world of poetry. However, my classmates and I were less than excited about visiting this new world of poems. But Mrs. Box, we could tell, loved poetry and wanted to shake up her students' worlds by bring something new into their lives.

Mrs. Box had a number of poems written by fellow classmates of hers while she attended the University of Alabama. During one particular class she asked us to interpret those nameless friends' poems. She handed the person in front of me a handful of poems. I reached forward and took the po-

ems being passed back to me, all the while fearful of making a fool out of myself. Now, let me not be misunderstood. I can read, but unknown to me at the time was a condition known as dyslexia. That word had little meaning to me then, as I had not heard of it in 1974. It wasn't until 1980, after getting married to my wife Rita Kaye, that this had come to my attention.

I had taken a job with the John Hancock Insurance Company and paid three hundred dollars for a top-of-the-line answering machine in order to screen telephone calls for this new job. Wow, what a shock! As I would listen to the playback, I learned just what dyslexia was all about. I explained to my wife that I was reversing words and phone numbers while taking the messages.

Rita, a retired college professor, explained to me just what dyslexia was and aided me in fighting this learning disorder that I never knew I had lived with my entire life. She taught me to screen all of my calls to make sure I had new information cor-

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Desmond Tutu

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rect and to write everything down. That way I could always recheck my numbers, words, and even left and right turns. This helped me greatly; however, reading out loud to others was still painfully slow, no matter how often I would practice.

That brings me back to 1974 and the poem which I had picked out to interpret. The poems themselves meant nothing to me and I was too ashamed to admit that I would not be able to read due to my stage fright. At this point my only intention was to not embarrass myself. As I glanced through the pages of poems, I was looking for two things. I wanted a short one, with simple words so I would not make a mistake, and something in the poem that might make it easier to interpret. The shortest poem I could find had 16 lines, and the only thing that meant anything to me was a stanza describing a lone airplane sitting at the end of a long runway.

I read the poem one word at a time, painfully slow. While I was deep in study, suddenly every word came alive to me. In pictures, or flashes, the words became images that I could not have known anything about. I poured out what I saw. The poem told the heartfelt story of a young man and his desire to be with his girl and their new baby, but also the need he felt to serve America in the Armed Forces. The thing that shocked me while I was painting this vivid picture with words, was my teacher with her mouth wide open. Only Mrs. Box knew anything about the poem and the young man who wrote it. I was so taken aback by Mrs. Box's expression that after ten minutes or so I stopped reading and interpreting the poem for fear I was making a fool out of myself.

That ten minutes of fear I felt landed me a B+ in Freshman English 101 and was the highest grade I ever made in all of my years of school. It also inspired in me a desire to write. Who would have ever known that a simple poem could make such an impact?

**“My family Coat of Arms ties at the back - is that normal?”**

*Jesse McGruder, Madison*

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## A Bird's Way with Words

Like many other parrots, Willie is a fine mimic. He says, "Give me a kiss," "Come here," and, "I want out." But unlike most parrots, Willie has a truly remarkable tale. When he spontaneously added a new word to his repertoire, he saved a life.

Last November, 19-year-old Meagan Howard volunteered to watch her roommate Samantha Kusk's two-year-old daughter, Hannah. "I suggested she stay with me instead of going to day care because she seemed cranky," Meagan says.

The apartment in Denver, Colorado, was warm and bright, and Meagan's 11-month-old Quaker parrot, Willie, kept up a genial patter from his cage in a corner of the living room. Kusk, 27, left for a morning class at a nearby veterinary college. Meagan toasted a Pop-Tart for Hannah and put it on the dining-room table. But it was too hot to eat, so the child toddled into the living room to watch television. She seemed content, so Meagan dashed to the bathroom.

Seconds later, Willie began "freaking out in his cage," she recalls. "He was flapping his wings, screeching, 'Mama, baby! Mama, baby!'"

Meagan rushed into the room to see Hannah's face turning blue as she choked on her food. Willie kept crying, "Mama, baby!"

Meagan performed the Heimlich maneuver, and the food dislodged from Hannah's throat. "The minute I took charge, Willie quit squawking, as if he knew things were under control," Meagan says. "He

calls me Mama, so he was clearly trying to get my attention. He's loud and talkative, but what really amazes me is that he added the word 'baby' on his own."

Arriving home shortly after the incident, Kusk found her daughter playing happily. "I don't even want to think what would have happened without Willie," she says.

Now Hannah lavishes the bird with attention. "First thing in the morning, Hannah wants his cage uncovered," says her mother, "and when she gets home in the afternoon, she runs to him. It's 'Willie, Willie' everything."



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Maple Hill Cemetery, circa 1822, listed on the National Registry of Historic Places is the oldest continuously in use cemetery in the State of Alabama. As of 2014, there were 80,000 known graves in the cemetery. There are individuals representing all walks of life in this unique ledger of Huntsville with veterans of all wars are buried in the cemetery. However, the greatest single number of interments occurred in 1918 as a result of the influenza epidemic.

Since the 1980's we have been celebrating our community's heritage and history in one of Huntsville's most beautiful autumn venues. The Maple Hill Cemetery Stroll is currently the largest character driven cemetery stroll in the country. Over 75 costumed actors portray in first person historical characters important to this area. This "living history" part of the stroll makes it so much more entertaining. Additionally, traditional music, special exhibits, a student scavenger hunt, and an antique auto show augments this family friendly event.

New this year will be a special ceremony dedicating new Revolutionary War Veterans plaques for our two known Revolutionary War Veterans buried at Maple Hill beginning at 1:00 pm beginning in Section 2 and then moving near-by to Section 12. Also new this year will be an opening ceremony with the historical characters promenading down Main Street following the Revolutionary War Veterans' Dedication and a closing ceremony with "Taps" around 4:30 pm.

The Stroll is free to the public but donations are enthusiastically accepted as this is the way we can continue making the repairs and restorations.

Maple Hill Cemetery is located approximately 0.75 miles east of Huntsville's downtown square at 203 Maple Hill Drive off of California Street. Shuttles will run from the downtown Square from 1-5p.m. and local parking is also available. Rain date for the Stroll will be Sunday, October 23 from 2:00 - 4:30p.m.

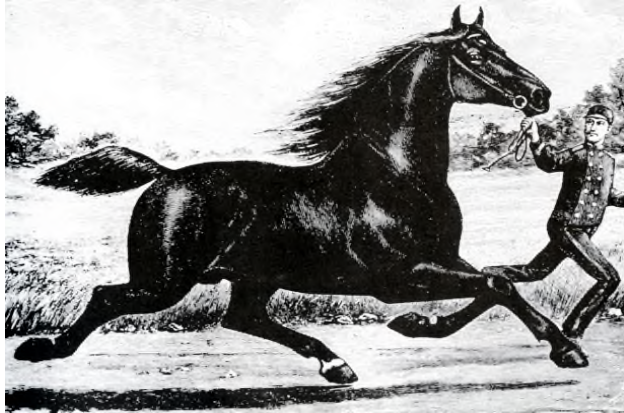


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# A Beautiful Horse, But.....

by Ernestine Moody



Before I begin my story, I need to acknowledge that perhaps one small item in this feature is fictional. The horse's name, Big Buck, was the spontaneous invention of the writer. Other family members seem to recall Lightning, or other ways in which he was addressed. However, at seventy-eight my memory sometimes falters on small details, but in my eyes he was Big Buck!

It was in the 1960s, Tom, my husband, and I lived in Murfreesboro, TN. There we had met our dear friends Jane, Jim and their four small daughters. Often we shared meals, conversations concerning the rearing of our families, and many friendly, competitive card games.

Saddened, one day we were told that Jim was offered a job with the then thriving company, IBM, in Huntsville, AL. Knowing only that the city was approximately a two hour drive from our home, gave us the satisfaction that our visiting could certainly continue. Packing the family in the old reliable light blue Ford station wagon, which in those days was minus seat belts and air conditioning, we would make the "Big Trip" to Huntsville. Wow, I shudder recalling our three small ones in the back of the vehicle, unrestrained and venturing around in the car. In those days, this did not seem to cause parents to worry, and we steered the vehicle to the big city in Alabama.

Because of our friend's successful career, they could now afford an "in the ground" swimming pool. Probably it was with a twinge of envy that we often hungered for this life's status.

At this point you are beginning to wonder about the horse, when was the story writer going to mention The Horse. It won't be much longer now!

On a hot summer evening, under the piercing bright moon, kids tucked, snoozing in dreamland, the four adults began to plan their next day's adventures. Excitement was in the air as both Jane and Jim

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began expressing their thoughts. On Monte Sano we would be able to have fun venturing out on horse trails, and moving to the graceful beat of the big friendly animals. As three in the crowd chattered with enthusiasm, I sat quietly in the background. You see, I had always been a sheltered city girl. No one I knew had a horse. In fact, the only horse I ever saw was attached to the Annette's Dairy Delivery Wagon, or sometimes in a movie.

Okay, I told myself, I could be the smiling observer as these folks would begin their ride. Oh no, there seemed to be no option. Either I went too, or no one would go, and there would not be any fun that day in Huntsville, AL. The conversation with myself was brief. I was not going to be the cause of unhappiness. I would be a "Big Girl", and ride the horse too. On the way to Monte Sano, everyone was trying to build my self confidence. "The horses do this everyday. All they know is to follow the other horses and slowly provide the rider with comfort and ease as each could enjoy the surrounding sights. It would be simple, no fuss, no hassle, just a leisurely quiet time."

Everyone was having this trend of thought except one, the beautiful equine, Big Buck. I spoke softly to Big Buck, "My, you are a big fellow," I whispered gently. In the meantime Jim and Tom pursued the task of lifting the shaking rider to the back of a now skeptical horse. The jovial mood was flourishing except in one corner of the trail. Big Buck was, to his disappointment, not going to be the lead horse on this trip. Of course, adding to his discomfort was the fact that his rider was grasping his reins so tightly, smothering and confusing his movements.

Oh, the ride began, and as I had been told, all the horses fell into a definite rhythm; all that is except Big Buck! He had been patient long enough. He had been demoted from his chief position, and now had the humiliation of a frightened, inexperienced rider shaking on his back.

He almost leaped to the front of the

line, neighing, or whatever sound horses express when they move, and move he did. My surrounding neighbors all gasped as they expressed, "Oh we wouldn't want to be on THAT horse." Well, they weren't, but this city gal from Tennessee began to pray for her future. "I would like to live to a much older age, raise my kids, and perhaps someday own a big 'in the ground' swimming pool."

If it had not been for one of the brave horse owners I may still be heading south on that horse's back. He failed to follow the pack as they drew near the end of the trail. He was not going back to a home that no longer respected his rank. He was running away! Yes away, and taking me with him.


My gallant hero, whoever she was, rose to my rescue. I feel badly that I did not properly thank her, but I kept telling myself, "I'm not going to die today!"

Truthfully I shouldn't blame Big Buck. For anyone else he would have, I'm sure, succumbed to their demands. He didn't need a distressed rider, only someone who would have shown him love and guidance.


By the way, that was and will be my only horseback riding adventure!

**"He may look like an idiot and talk like an idiot, but don't let that fool you. He really is an idiot."**

**Groucho Marx**



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## OUR PETS DO HAVE SOULS

*by Gale Nichols*

I remember bringing you home. You were so small and cuddly with your tiny paws and soft fur.

You bounced around the room with eyes flashing and ears flopping. Once in a while you'd let out a little noise just to let me know, this was YOUR territory.

Making a mess of the house and chewing on everything in sight became a passion and when I scolded you, you just put your head down and looked up at me as if to say: "I'm sorry, but I'll do it again as soon as you're not watching!"

As you got older, you protected me by looking out of the front window, just to say "I'm right here."

When I had a tough day at work, you would be waiting for me with your tail wagging as if to say, "Welcome back, I missed you."

You never had a bad day and I could always count on you to be there for me.

When I sat down to read the paper or watch TV, you would hop into my lap, looking for attention. You never asked for any more than to have me rub your head, so you could go to sleep with your head on my leg.

As you got older, you moved around more slowly. Then one day, old age finally took its toll and you couldn't stand on those wobbly legs anymore. I knelt down and patted you as you lay there, trying to make you young again. You just looked up at me as if to say, "I'm old and tired and after all these years of not asking for anything, I'm asking you to do one last favor for me."

With tears in my eyes, I drove you to the vet. One last time you were lying in my lap.

For some strange reason, you were able to stand up really straight in the animal hospital, perhaps it was your sense of pride.

As the vet prepared you, you stopped for an instant, looked up at me as if to say, "Thank you for taking care of me."

And I thought, "No, thank YOU for taking care of me."



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# The Hockey Puck

by Don Broome



Sitting on my front porch having my first cup of coffee, I began to notice the young man who lived next door. For a couple of years he had been practicing shooting hoops every morning before school and all afternoon and I learned he dreamed of being in the NBA. Eventually he realized that he was never going to be tall enough and so that hope faded.

A neighbor invited the young man to go with him and his son to an ice hockey game and he was given a damaged stick and puck to take home. A new dream appeared; he was going to be a pro hockey player.

I watched for months, sitting where he wouldn't see me as he roller bladed his driveway, furiously batting his puck thru the imaginary goal, raising his arms at each score. I imagined his dream was possible because he worked all summer on his game. Until he lost his puck.

I watched for about a week as he skated his driveway pretending to shoot and a half-hearted attempt to raise his arms in victory. I could see the wind was out of his sail. It isn't easy keeping your chin up without a puck.

Now it just so happened that at the time of this story, I had a recycling business and my biggest customer had several WEBB printing presses. These presses use a large roll of paper that has a wooden plug to keep the core from getting warped. I could see that the puck he had was about the same size as these

plugs. One morning I snuck over to their driveway and placed one of my "pucks" just to see how he would react.

That summer morning he came out in the yard with his stick and his skates on and started his practice run when suddenly he realized he had something that would work as a puck. The young man was back in his game. I knew if he had lost one, he would probably lose this one too.

I called his mother and told her that I have a paper box full of them for him. She was concerned that they would get hit by the lawn mower and might damage something. I told her that all it will take is one rain storm and the pressed wood puck would dissolve into powder. So I got him back in his game. Weeks later he asked me if I could get him another box because the pucks kept getting lost. I walked over to his yard and was helping him look for his pucks. I began to notice the dead spots on an otherwise perfect lawn. The pucks did melt, but the acidity of the wood killed a circle of grass. I didn't tell his mom about it and kept furnishing him those pucks.

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# A GOOD SAMARITAN

*Submitted by Terry D. Lee*

Ezra P. Wilcox was a commission merchant from Onondaga County, New York. He was fifty-four years old and a widower. It was early January 1834. A month before, he had loaded twenty-five tons of various mercantile goods aboard a flatboat near Knoxville. He and his hired hands had made delivery of most of the goods to various merchants in the small towns along the Tennessee River.

Wilcox had just the day before made a large commission on a sale of goods to Benjamin Patteson of Madison County. The small town of Huntsville had a bank, but Wilcox didn't trust his money to these small town establishments. Nor did he wish to carry large sums on his person. He therefore deposited

\$836.22 at Whitesburg with John Hardie and Alfred Stovall, two wealthy gentlemen he trusted.

The flatboat had now crossed the river and was approaching Decatur to make its final delivery. The morning was very cold. A fine coating of ice lay upon the logs making up the flatboat. As they prepared to dock, Ezra Wilcox slipped. He fell over the short two and a half foot high siding and into the cold, swift water.

Robert H. Watkins was a young bottomland cotton farmer. His land lay alongside the wild Tennessee River. It often flooded in the winter and spring when the heavy rains came. He had seen it spread two miles wide in places. This morning Robert and his slave Jim were walking along the flooded riverbank on the lookout for a strayed cow when they spotted something at the water's edge. Not something, but someone - a

man, drowned.

Together, the two men dragged the body from the water to higher ground. A cotton wagon was used to carry him to the farm house. Upon searching the man's muddy winter coat, papers were found that identified him as Ezra Wilcox and that he had recently done business in Huntsville. Robert Watkins would notify the Madison County Sheriff, but first he would care for Mr. Wilcox.

Slaves cleaned and washed the body. Robert Watkins gave his best Sunday clothes. A grave was dug. Words from the Bible were read. Ezra Wilcox was buried in the Watkins family cemetery.

Five years later, John Wilcox, son of Ezra, would travel from New York and finalize his father's estate. He would visit his father's grave and give thanks to Robert Watkins - truly a good Samaritan.



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### Furry Facials

Let's be clear: Shaggy Chic, located in Las Vegas, is not a groomer. It's an all-out salon for pets, aimed at providing pampering services that your animal will relish. Treatments include blueberry facials, paw pad massages, and "pawdicures" (paw pad massage and nail polish), along with more traditional services, such as bath, blow out and nail trim. All of the products the salon uses (and sells separately) are human-grade, natural, made in the United States and tested on humans, not animals. While you're there, check out their toy selection, which includes the salon's own signature "Guilty Pleasures" toy line, complete with a stinky sock that smells like the feet of teenaged boys.

### Great Dog Hotels (also for Humans)

The ever pet-friendly Kimpton Hotels take the canine cake when it comes to services. Upon your arrival, you may be greeted by one of their many directors of pet relations. At Kimpton's Hotel Monaco in Chicago, Illinois it's a Lhasa Apso named Oliver. At Hotel Monaco Alexandria in the Washington, D.C. area it's a Bichon Frise named Charlie and in Kimpton's Canary Hotel in Santa Barbara, California it's a boxer/lab mix named Riley Nubular Wilhide. Plus, many of the resorts offer pet-friendly patios and "yappy hours." And for fans of the fur-free variety, Kimpton's "Guppy Love" program loans guests a bowl of goldfish to keep them company during their stay.

### Doggone Adventure

Want to see your dog leap from a dock, flopping into the water? Google DockDogs, there might be one in our area. DockDogs has grown rapidly in recent years as owners realize that dogs, water and jumping make a remarkable combination. The sport is open to any dog that likes water. Simply bring along your pup's favorite toy, throw it into the clear blue yonder and watch him follow.

### There's an App for That

Pet lovers, rejoice, because now you can translate, entertain and annoy your dog with the touch of a button. Animal-centric apps abound. Here are the ones that caught our eye: Petcentric fills you in on the pet-friendly businesses and dog parks that are nearby; "Squeaker!" makes dog toy noises that will have your pup on high alert. Whistle GPS Pet Tracker allows the owners of wanderlust woofers to track them on their smart phone via GPS (requires additional hardware). Pet First Aid cues you in on how to handle a wide range of maladies, from breathing issues to poisoning and more.

### This is the Dog that Never Ends

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## From the Desk of Tom Carney

# The Short Career of "The Great Davisini"

One of the most popular forms of entertainment in Huntsville's early history was the traveling troupes of magicians, spiritualists and hypnotists who traveled from town to town performing one-night stands.

Edward Young, or the "Great Galvani - Master of the Hypnotic Trance" as he was more popularly known, was a frequent visitor to Huntsville in 1911, performing at the Elks Theater. His show consisted of selecting volunteers from the audience and after placing them in a trance, having them perform various tricks. The highlight of the show always came when Galvani placed a small bowl filled with water on the floor and told the subject he was drowning. The resulting antics always brought down the house.

Sadly, the Great Galvani was also a master of the whiskey bottle, consuming prodigious amounts of the fiery liquor at every opportune moment. Oftentimes the show would have to be delayed while a search party scoured the neighborhood bars for him.

Despite Galvani's shortcomings, he attracted a large group of admirers. One of them was Carlisle Davis, an employee at a nearby carriage shop. To Davis, Galvani represented everything

he had always dreamed of. The allure of traveling, being idolized by admiring fans and performing on stage was more of an attraction than anything Huntsville could offer the young man.

The biggest attraction for Davis, however, was the awesome power Galvani seemed to hold over his subjects while they were hypnotized. Davis began spending every spare moment with Galvani. Before long he had committed the whole act to memory.

The Great Galvani was scheduled to appear at a local park as part of the 4th of July celebrations. According to a 1911 Huntsville newspaper of the day, over two thousand people thronged the park to see the mystic. Unfortunately, the great man had mysteriously succumbed to a quart of Kentucky bourbon and could not

be roused.

The committee in charge of staging the event was frantic. There seemed to be no alternative except to call the show off.

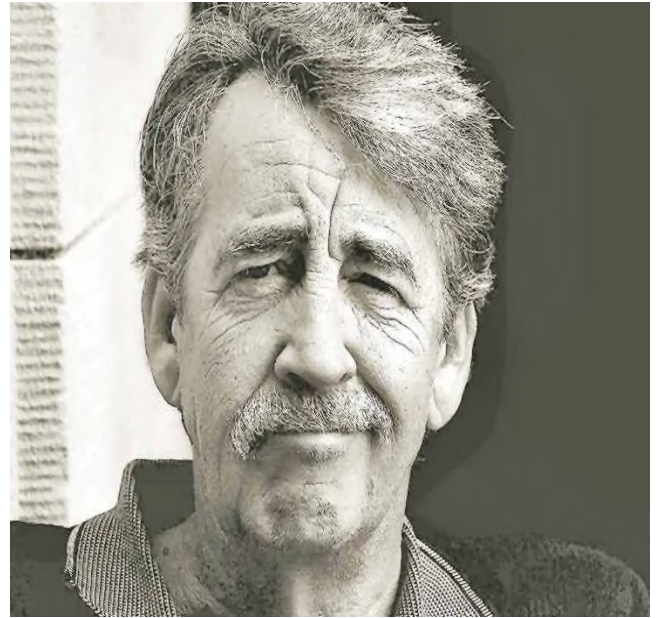
Suddenly their gloom was interrupted by Carlisle Davis. "I can do the show!" He proclaimed. "I've been watching him and I know exactly what he does."

The offer was met by stunned silence and disbelief.

Finally one of the men who had been standing in the back of the room stepped forward.


"The boy's right." He said. "I been seeing those two together every day for the past week."

Any other qualms the committee had were probably dis-



**"Put the treats in the bowl and nobody gets hurt."**

**Jay the Schnauzer to his owner Don**



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pelled by the angry rumblings of two thousand people clamoring for the show to begin.

"Get your stuff," he was told. "You're on in five minutes."

And so it came to pass that Carlisle Davis, a local small town boy with dreams of stardom, was magically transferred into the "Great Davisini."

Davis was superb. He had copied Galvani's patter exactly. After a brief "lecture" he chose Ivan Benson from the audience to be his subject. Again, everything went perfectly. Davis had Benson crow like a rooster, bark like a dog and even forget his own name.

The audience, though skeptical at first, begin to warm up to the budding star. Many of the crowd seemed to believe Davis had found a new career and would soon be headed toward riches and fame.

The grand climax of the show finally came. Davis carefully placed a small teacup of water in the middle of the stage. Now turning to the subject he announced in a loud voice that the teacup was the Atlantic Ocean and he was out in the middle of it about to drown.

Benson, the subject, immediately threw himself on top of the teacup and began thrashing about, as if he was swimming. The effect was everything one could have hoped for. The whole audience was on their feet laughing uncontrollably.

After about five minutes of swimming, the audience became silent, waiting for Davis to waken Benson.

The committee was waiting too. Finally one of the members approached Davis on the stage and told him it was time to stop.

It was evident Davis was in trouble. He was sweating profusely and his eyes kept darting about as if searching for a hole to crawl into.

"I said that's enough!" This time the committee member's voice left no doubt that he was

to be obeyed.

"I can't!" Davis cried in a trembling voice.

"What do you mean you can't? I want him wakened right now!"

"I can't!" repeated Davis once again. "Galvani always whispered those instructions and I never got a chance to hear them!"

Realization dawned on the audience at about the same time. First there were a couple of cat calls and then a few hurled insults, followed closely by a barrage of rocks and bottles aimed at the Great Davisini.

Davis, deciding that escape was his only alternative, quickly took to his heels, leaving the hapless Benson lying on stage still swimming.

With the angry crowd in close pursuit, Davis took refuge under the floor of a nearby house.

Fortunately for all concerned, Dr. Westmoreland, a

noted Huntsville doctor, had observed what happened. After dragging Davis from his hiding place, the doctor marched him back to the park where he coaxed Davis on how to waken Benson, who was still swimming and near exhaustion.

It was the Great Davisini's one and only performance. The next week, Huntsville's city fathers passed an ordinance barring hypnosis from being used for entertainment.



**"As I hurtled through space, one thought kept coming to mind - every part of this rocket was supplied by the lowest bidder."**

**John Glenn, Astronaut**

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# LIVING IN A SIMPLER TIME

by Jan Williams



Let us step back a few years to a simpler time – not twenty, not thirty, but sixty years ago to the 1950s. When the Bop was the rage in dancing and the Friday night sock hop were the big events of the weekend. When "smooching" was our favorite past time and when we dressed up, we wore a white sport coat and a pink carnation. There were the white socks - bobbie socks for the girls and crew socks for the boys. Poodle skirts were in.....

And although Wild Bill Haley and his Comets were singing "Rock Around the Clock," we still had to be in by eleven o'clock.

The girls wore sack dresses and "making out" at the drive-in movies in the back seat of

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our '57 Chevy with fogged-up windows was all the talk...but the fact was not many of us had a '57 Chevy and as for the making out, well, there probably wasn't near as much as we talked about.

Malts and milk shakes were the favorites along with cherry and vanilla Cokes.

There were blue suede shoes and Fats Domino sang about "Blueberry Hill."

There were songs with depth and meaning, like: "Bee Bop A Lula, She's My Baby, Bee Bop A Lula, I Don't Mean Maybe."

Of course we all watched our TV sets, snow and all, in black and white, and we saw our version of "Dirty Dancing" as Ed Sullivan introduced us to Elvis "The Pelvis" Presley, shaking his way to fame and fortune - and he would surely corrupt us all!

There was the "Lucky Strike Hit Parade," "Mickey Mouse

and the Mouseketeers." All of us guys remember Annette! The Platters sang of "Twilight Time" and going steady was "in".

On the western front was: Roy Rodgers, Gene Autrey, the Lone Ranger and his faithful companion, "Tonto."

For the family: Robert Young taught us "Father Knows Best" and there was "Ozzie and Harriet."

For the more simple-minded of us there was "Howdy Doody" and "American Bandstand."

On the space frontier was "Super Man," "Mighty McUse" and "Buck Rodgers."

In "Animal Kingdom" there was Mickey and Minnie Mouse; Donald Duck; Hewie, Lewie and Dewie; Lassie; and, of course. Goofy.

3-D movies with the cardboard glasses.

On a more serious note, there was the Korean War and two prominent generals - one,

the more popular and well-known, fired by the President - General Douglas McArthur. The other less well-known, became President of the United States - Dwight David Eisenhower.

Our "high tech car" was the famous "Batmobile" as our caped crusader roamed the streets of Gotham City combating crime.

There were the football players - the team captains - basketball players, cheerleaders, and homecoming queens. Then there were the rest of us, the somewhat silent majority who were not labeled for our rightful place in history until many years later - the slightly unusual, somewhat weird and often clumsy - THE NERDS - always the weirdos.

Return with us now to those thrilling days of yesteryear when out of the past come the thundering sounds of ROCK & ROLL!

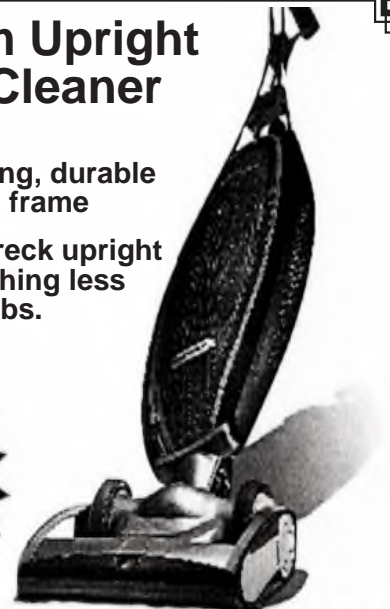
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# Ageless Beauty Tips



- Don't like to use soap? Use milk or yogurt on your face instead.

- In the morning no one's face looks too good. To tighten up those pores take an ice cube and rub it all over your face - be sure and rinse the cube briefly with water so it doesn't stick to your skin.

- Instead of those heavy night creams, try these. For normal skin use sesame oil, warmed just a bit. For oily skin use safflower oil. For very dry skin use olive oil or peanut oil - I have even tried castor oil mixed with a teaspoon of almond extract for scent.

- Wrinkles on your top lip? Apply Vitamin E oil to it at night.

- If you just hate those dark circles under your eyes, consider using an extra pillow at night. Also, freeze a baby's teething ring, wrap it in soft cloth and place over your eyes for a few moments.

- Want long, luxurious lashes? Try a nightly brush of olive or castor oil, slow but sure results, or snip a capsule of vitamin D oil and put the contents over your lids and lashes. Fantastic results have been reported after just 3 months of this treatment.

- A French woman's secret for beautiful skin - mix a tablespoon of honey with a teaspoon of strained lemon juice - apply to a clean dry face and leave on for 10 minutes, rinse with tepid water.

- Face lifting exercises - Pretend you're biting an apple - tense up your neck and hold this for 5 seconds. Repeat.

Or, push your tongue up to the roof of your mouth as hard as you can - hold for 6 seconds and repeat several times.

Push your tongue to either side of your cheeks and finally, lift your eyebrows one inch and hold them there.

- For Baldness - try massaging garlic into your scalp. Or concoct a plaster of boiled quince mixed with wax and spread it over the bald spot. Quince has a fuzzy skin and it is thought that the scalp might follow suit. If all else fails, heed the European superstition that a thick mane will result if you allow a pregnant woman to give you a haircut.

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# GUIDED HISTORY TOURS

Every spring and fall, the Huntsville/Madison County Convention & Visitors Bureau shows off Huntsville and Madison through its free walking tours. Tours are guided by local experts and focus on the historic districts of both cities.

Mark your calendar for these fun, free guided history tours which are part of the Alabama Tourism Department's walking tours initiative. **Alabama is the first state to coordinate these annual, state-wide events.**

## SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1:

Historic Five Points District

10 a.m. departure from Maple Hill Cemetery (at the corner of Wells Avenue and Maple Hill Drive)

Tour Guide: Jan Williams

## SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8:

Old Town Historic District

10 a.m. departure from 122 Walker Avenue

Tour Guides: Mike and Cathy Self



Saturday, October 1st: Historic Five Points District

October 8th: Old Town Historic District

**HUNTSVILLE**  
Alabama

Huntsville/Madison County Convention & Visitors Bureau

Tours depart at 10 a.m. Visit [huntsville.org/walkingtours](http://huntsville.org/walkingtours) for locations and more info.

# On Being a Gentleman

by Thomas Mailey

What is a gentleman? The dictionary put it this way. A man who is courteous, gracious and honorable. He is a man of good breeding and manners with kindness and charm. Perhaps we can say that he would also exhibit humility.

Learning gentlemanly behavior should begin at a young age. As a youngster my mother always told me to give my seat on the bus to any lady who was standing. In addition I got a refresher course in manners when I took a lady from a Latin culture to a college dance. She expected gentlemanly behavior from her escort and to ensure that she carried a muff. At the door she put her hands into her muff and waited for me to open the door. Again she used the muff at the car door and with the chair at the dance.

A number of historical instances come to mind of gentlemanly behavior. Sir Walter Raleigh is forever known as a standard for gentlemanly behavior. He spread his cloak over a puddle so that Queen Elizabeth would not get her feet wet. Never mind that she later sent him to the Tower of London for marrying someone who did not meet her approval. When the Titanic was sinking it was discovered that there were not enough life boats for everyone. The only acceptable solution for that time in history was for the women and children to take the life boats and the men should go down with the ship.

Although we judge a gentleman by his actions, the virtues of gracious and polite behavior are outward manifestations. Rudyard Kipling would suggest that a gentleman should internalize these virtues.

"If you can keep your head when all about you men are losing theirs and blaming it on you."

"If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you, but make allowances for their doubting, too."

These forms of behavior reflect the cultural norms in the time and place where a gentleman lives.

Therefore, we can say that a gentleman learns the rules of good conduct from appropriate cultural norms and

adopts them as his own. He then exhibits these instinctively, but in particular, in the company of women.

But in the United States, he will adopt the cultural norms of our society. Even if his attempts at gentlemanly behavior may be rebuffed with a sharp comment such as, "I can open my own doors," or "I will deal with my own chair." Then he must trust his instincts even if all about him doubt him.

A gentleman never stands quite as tall as when he stoops to help a child, or when he bows his head at the graves of his fathers, or kneels in prayer at the altars of his gods. He may even engage in random acts of kindness to strangers. Also he may defer to the instincts of his mate, for she is the mother of the species.


That leaves just one question unanswered. We know what a gentleman is, but what is a lady?

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## Growing Up Yankee in Alabama

by Kelsey Jordan

I'm a Yankee by blood and a Southerner by choice. My mom was raised in Nebraska, my dad was raised in Green Bay and I was born in Phoenix, Arizona. We moved to Huntsville back in February 1995, I was 4 going on 5. We lived in a subdivision near the Huntsville International Airport, my parents still live there. Back then the neighborhood was surrounded by cotton fields and wetland swamps for us kids to explore until the street lights came on and we had to shuffle back home for dinner. Well, the cotton fields and wetlands are long gone, replaced by new modern homes. I feel bad for the kids who won't get to explore the area anymore. Huntsville is much different now than it was back 20 years ago.

Growing up we lived off Zierdt Road and we were considered to live "out in the country", we were even past the suburbs. The only things near us were the airport and Redstone Arsenal. I remember our trips to Walmart, the closest one was the one on University Drive, I never minded going along because if I was good I'd get some McDonald's that was located in the back of the store. In fact we had to go to University Drive and the Parkway for most of our shopping then. If your parents bought in bulk you better find you something to entertain you for the ride all the way up North Parkway to the only Sam's Club (it's now Gander Mountain).

Even the "fun" places have changed. There's still the Carousel Skating Rink, the Iceplex and Kids Space off of Airport Rd. We all had birthday parties at the Fun Zone, now it's the 88 Buffet. And when we wanted to go to the movies we didn't have the Monaco or Rave, we had Madison Square Mall or Hollywood 18 on North Memorial Parkway. As far as malls go you had two choices: Madison Square or the old Parkway City Mall.

It seemed like a requirement for all kids in Huntsville to go on field trips to the Space and Rocket Center, before they had all the fun rides and before the full scale Saturn V was built. We also went on many field trips up to Burritt Museum on the Mountain, I remember we used to play hide-and-seek around where the old Monte Sano Hotel stood, that was before I knew the history of the famous hotel.

Every kid I know used to love going to downtown Huntsville. I'd beg to go into Harrison Brothers Hardware so I could get piece of candy and watch the cashier use

the big old cash register, it still fascinates me! We'd run through Big Spring and John Hunt Park, other kids would feed the ducks, but not me, I'm still scared of them. We'd go see plays at the Von Braun Civic Center in the Playhouse, and every year we'd go see the Nutcracker. We may not have had the Huntsville Havoc but we had the Huntsville Channel Cats. Every Friday during hockey season me and my parents would eat dinner at Rosies Cantina on University Drive and then go see our Channel Cats play. And during baseball season we'd get all the neighbors together and go to Joe Davis Stadium to watch our Huntsville Stars play.

Now kids sit inside and play video games all day and all weekend. I may not have kids yet but some of my friends do and I'll drag their kids up to Monte Sano mountain for an afternoon, or to the skating rink, the Iceplex, the VBCC for special events, Kids Space, Big Spring and John Hunt Park, to the Constitution Village and Early Works Museum. I'm sure they get tired of me trying to tell them the history and stories I remember about growing up in Huntsville. I've had at least one roll their eyes and another say "I didn't think you were that old!"

Well, I'll be 25 this year and I just wish these kids could have grown up in the same Huntsville I did. There are many other stories I have but that is for another time. I'm a Yankee by birth and Southerner by choice and I wouldn't have it any other way!

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# Shifty

*by Chuck Yeager,  
Maj. Gen. Ret.*

This hero died with barely anyone's notice.

Shifty volunteered for the Airborne in WWII and served with Easy Company of the 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment, part of the 101st Airborne Infantry. If you've seen "Band of Brothers" on HBO or the History Channel, you know Shifty. His character appears in all 10 episodes, and Shifty himself is interviewed in several of them.

I met Shifty in the Philadelphia airport several years ago. I didn't know who he was at the time. I just saw an elderly gentleman having trouble reading his ticket. I offered to help, assured him that he was at the right gate, and noticed the "Screaming Eagle," the symbol of the 101st Airborne, on his hat.

Making conversation, I asked him if he'd been in the 101st Airborne or if his son was serving. He said quietly that he had been in the 101st. I thanked him for his service, then asked him when he served, and how many jumps he made.

Quietly and humbly, he said "Well, I guess I signed up in 1941 or so, and was in until sometime in 1945 ..." at which point my heart skipped.

At that point, again, very humbly, he said "I made the 5 training

jumps at Toccoa, and then jumped into Normandy ... do you know where Normandy is?" At this point my heart stopped.

I told him "Yes, I know exactly where Normandy is, and I know what D-Day was." At that point he



# Jetta

Hello, the Ark named me Jetta. I am a black kitten. I guess you might say I am lucky to be alive. A boy found me and guess what he did to me. He put a firecracker in my mouth! I was in terrible pain and while the kids were all laughing at me a kind lady took me away from them and cried with me all the way to the Ark. Ms. Nina sent me to the Kitty

doctor right away. I had to have the skin on my little chin stitched back to my lip. Some of my teeth were broken and some were missing. I had a bad burn in the corner of my mouth. I recovered and I am a happy kitten now. I just need a forever family.

All the Ark volunteers could not believe that I was purring while in so much pain. I think it was because I was in loving and caring arms. I am almost 4 months old now. Please teach your children to respect all living creatures. When you come to the Ark, ask to see Jetta. That's me.

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John Purdy  
Loretta Spencer  
Sarah Chappell



said "I also made a second jump into Holland, into Arnhem ."

I was standing with a genuine war hero ... and then I realized that it was June, just after the anniversary of D-Day.

I asked Shifty if he was on his way back from France, and he said "Yes... And it's real sad because, these days, so few of the guys are left, and those that are, lots of them can't make the trip." My heart was in my throat and I didn't know what to say.

I helped Shifty get onto the plane and then realized he was back in coach while I was in First Class. I sent the flight attendant back to get him and said that I wanted to switch seats. When Shifty came forward, I got up out of the seat and told him I wanted him to have it, that I'd take his in coach.

He said "No, son, you enjoy that seat. Just knowing that there are still some who remember what we did and who still care is enough to make an old man very happy." His eyes were filling up as he said it. And mine are brimming up now as I write this.

Shifty died on Jan. 17, 2012 after fighting cancer.

There was no parade.

No big event in Staples Center..

No wall-to-wall, back-to-back 24x7 news coverage.

No weeping fans on television.

And that's not right!

Let's give Shifty his own memorial service, in our own quiet way.

Rest in peace, Shifty.

**"I don't trip over things - I do random gravity checks."**

**Billy Sams, Scottsboro**



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## MR. HALL REMEMBERS

(As told to Edith Moon Sherentz)



Mr. Hall is ninety-one years of age and lives on Nolen Avenue, on Monte Sano. The following are his memories of living in Huntsville back in the "good old days."

"To most folks in the early 1900s, 'Downtown Huntsville' really suggested the Courthouse Square, for this was the gathering spot to meet friends for a chat. Telephones and cars were not available in order to run over or to call. Farmers needed to share information about their crops, wives needed to share a recipe or a helpful hint and the girls and boys needed to socialize."

"Washing clothes and planning what to wear on Saturday, the special day, occupied an important part of the work-a-day week. This outing might have then or even now labeled gossiping. Men chewed and would spit while talking politics - some might have shared a drink or two. As I once read in a country newspaper, 'A good time was had by all.'"

"On weekdays people gathered in smaller groups. One old character went to Ragland Brothers Wholesale Grocery and purchased a box of candy with twenty-four pieces for seventy-five cents. By selling this treat for five cents each he cleared 45 cents! This was good sense because he had no overhead and the customers were every-

where."

"I was a young father then and a good provider and told the 'candyman', 'If my son Buddy wants candy let him have it and I will pay.' I am quite sure no books were kept and no money was lost. What fun for Buddy, who was nine at the time! A man who was 'well-connected' usually became a merchant. A peddler would make his cart, using two large wagon wheels and he had a variety of goods on it."

"As late as the '60s one saw carts of this type on the streets of Huntsville. Trading and selling from vehicles and from a sack on the peddler's back was a part of sales history. Mr. Dunnivant started out as a peddler and he later became our favorite merchant with the best quality and the most stylish clothing in town. His pleasant manner and his easy credit plan made it the place to shop! Every one of us oldtimers miss Dunnivant's.

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## A Man for the Ages

by Hugh Michaels

Can you imagine anyone teaching school for 33 years? Can you imagine the headaches anyone would encounter during that time? However, there were many enjoyable times that erased the headaches.

Chalma "Red" Fossett of Scottsboro, Alabama taught school for that many years and was the recipient of many awards. "Red" passed away several years ago. He left many happy memories and he touched the lives of many people.

When he wasn't teaching school he would be busy in his carpenter shop. He would build cedar chests, beds, cabinets and many other household items that he sold at very low prices.

"Red" would help anyone who was in need. Many times people would come to him for help. He would drive sick folks to Scottsboro to see a doctor because there were few cars in the communities where he lived.

"Red" taught school at Pierston, Langston, Fabius and Skyline (Jackson County). He was the Principal at those schools. He taught math and science. While teaching at Langston he only had 3 students in the fifth grade.

All five of his children were, at onetime, his students. They were Quiniss Fossett, Glenda Manning (deceased), Phyllis Hall, Wanda Green and Karen Vandiver.

These children had the unusual privilege of having a father and teacher to help guide their lives. All of them are thankful for having a parent who was such a guiding light. "Red" would have been proud of them. He also taught his brother-in-law, Hugh Michaels.

"Red" attended Jacksonville State Teachers College. He attended many classes on how to be more effective as a teacher or principal.

Punishments for unruly kids were either a paddle or "stand in the corner". There was no drug problems during this time frame.

"Red" was the oldest child in a family of ten. His wife, Flora Michaels Fossett, was very supportive of his efforts and was there when he needed help. Salaries of teachers were very low. They only got paid for a period of 9 months, so they were forced to get odd jobs during the 3 months they were off. "Red" was always busy doing something.

The period of time for his teaching was 1935-1968. Red Fossett was a good man. He was a devout Christian. In his little bit of spare time he volunteered to drive a school bus! He taught Sunday school for many years and was very knowledgeable about the Bible. He loved everybody. He was compassionate and kind hearted. He died at the age of 61.

He left a memory that will last forever. The kids he taught still remember the good lessons he taught. Not only education but how you live your life. School teachers are an important part of our lives.

"Red" Fossett was one of a kind. He was a good man.



### Jackie Reed

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