



No. 286

December 2016



Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

The Bootlegger's Gift

Finally, after searching for what seemed like an eternity, they located the house in a section of town called Boogertown. It was an older dilapidated house, the kind they used to call "shotgun" houses. Parked in front were two or three older cars in various states of disrepair, some on cinder blocks. A feeling of revulsion swept through Teresa as she realized this was her father's home.



Also in this issue: **Christmas Long Ago**

Lewter's Hardware Store



In 1928 our great-grandfather, D.A. Lewter, and our grandfather, J.M. Lewter, started the family business in a small store on Washington Street. They believed in offering fair prices, treating each customer with special respect and hiring great employees.

We are the fourth generation, proudly carrying on the same tradition.

While our prices have gone up slightly and we have a few more employees, we still provide the same quality service our fore-fathers insisted on. We are the same family, doing the same business in the same location. Stop by and visit with us.

A Hardware Store....

The Way You Remember Them

222 Washington St - 539-5777

Domie Lewter
Mac Lewter

The Bootlegger's Gift

by Tom Carney

The year was 1959 and it was a cold, wintry day in Nashville when Teresa Haney received word that her father had died. Her first thought was "good riddance." Her mother and father had separated before she was born and for the past forty-two years she had heard nothing from him. Teresa had tried several times to quiz her mother about him before she died but had gotten nowhere. All her mother would say was that he was shiftless and sold whiskey. About the only other thing Teresa knew about him was that his name was Luke.

The only contact she had with her father's family was Uncle Bob, a cousin of her father. Actually, it wasn't much of a contact as she had never met him, but on every birthday, Christmas or special occasion he would send her a card and present. Although she never knew for certain, she

always had the impression that Uncle Bob paid many of the bills and possibly, even her college tuition.

Once, while a teenager, she had written Uncle Bob a long letter asking about her father. She never received a reply.

Now, after all those years, he was calling about her father's death. "All the arrangements have been taken care of," he explained, "but I thought you might want to go through his belongings and see if there is anything you might want."

After talking for a few more minutes he gave her the address and said he would put the key in the mailbox. After hanging up she told her husband, Al, about the phone call. His first question was, "What do you want to do?"

The truth was that Teresa didn't know. Part of her wanted nothing to do with the man who claimed to be her father but had never so much as written her. On the other hand, she had a curious longing to know something, anything, about him.

Her husband settled the matter. "It's only a hundred miles to Huntsville. We can drive down there, go through his things, stop and have dinner somewhere and still be back home tonight. Who knows? He might have left you a million dollars."

"My ruthlessness terrorized the competition and can sometimes offend."

Seen on local job resume



L. Thomas Ryan, Jr. Attorney At Law

2319 Market Place, Suite B
Huntsville, Alabama 35801

Telephone (256) 533-1103 Fax (256) 533-9711

**ESTATE PLANNING, LIVING TRUSTS,
WILLS, PROBATE**

"No Representation is made that the quality of the legal services to be performed is greater than the quality of legal services performed by other lawyers."



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

(256) 534-0502

Email - oldhuntsville@knology.net
(Website) www.oldhuntsvillemag.com

Publisher - Cathey Carney

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

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

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

All material contained within is copyright 2016 and may not be reproduced or copied in any form without written permission of the publisher. Old Huntsville, Inc. assumes no responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts or content of solicited articles..

*Blinds, Shutters, Drapery
Woven woods, Cellular &
Roman Shades & More*
**Your Total Window
Treatment Provider**



Bus: (256) 650-0465

Aesthetically Pleasing

Interior Window Treatments

Visit us at:

www.randsblinds.com

The drive took longer than expected. A misty drizzle had begun falling and as the temperature dipped below freezing, sheets of ice began forming on the roads. By the time they arrived in Huntsville it was already dark.

Finally, after searching for what seemed like an eternity, they located the house in a section of town called Boogertown. It was an older dilapidated house, the kind they used to call "shotgun" houses. Parked in front were two or three older cars in various states of disrepair, some on cinder blocks. A feeling of revulsion swept through Teresa as she realized this was her father's home. She had been raised in an upper middle-class family and had never experienced poverty such as she was seeing now.

The home seemed even more impoverished inside. A few pieces of rickety furniture and a coal stove in the living room and a bedroom with an older cast iron bedstead. In the

corner was a dresser and on the wall were a row of nails where various pieces of drab clothing were hung. The kitchen was tiny, almost as if it was added on as an afterthought. There was a small table with a few wooden chairs and above the sink was a shelf where cans of food were lined up.

A quick walk through the tiny and barren house seemed to confirm the old stories Teresa had heard about her father. She had not known what to expect but had certainly been hoping for something better. "This is ridiculous," she said to her husband, "How could someone live like this?"

Meanwhile, Al had built a fire in the stove. Within a few minutes a roaring fire was forcing the icy chill from the room. When he went outside to get more coal, he returned in a few minutes with a grim look on his face. "We're not going anywhere tonight. We're in the middle of an ice storm."

Teresa raced to the front

WELCOME TO AUTHENTIC THAI CUISINE AT


DINE IN OR CARRY OUT
 All Fresh Meats & Vegetables
 No MSG - No Preservatives Used
 Mon - Fri - Lunch 11 am - 2 pm
 Dinner 4:30 pm - 9:00 pm
 Sat - Dinner only 4:30 pm - 9:00 pm
 Closed Sundays
 800 Wellman Avenue
 (In Historic Five Points)
 (256) 534-0122



Loose Ends by MJ LLC
Let me tie up your loose ends!

looseendsbymj.com
e-mail: mjailor@looseendsbymj.com

Do you need to settle an Estate?
 Downsizing to a smaller house?
 Organizing and running your Estate Sale?
 Let us clean out-pack up-sell off or donate your items!

Got loose ends to tie up? Let Loose Ends by MJ help tie them up tight!

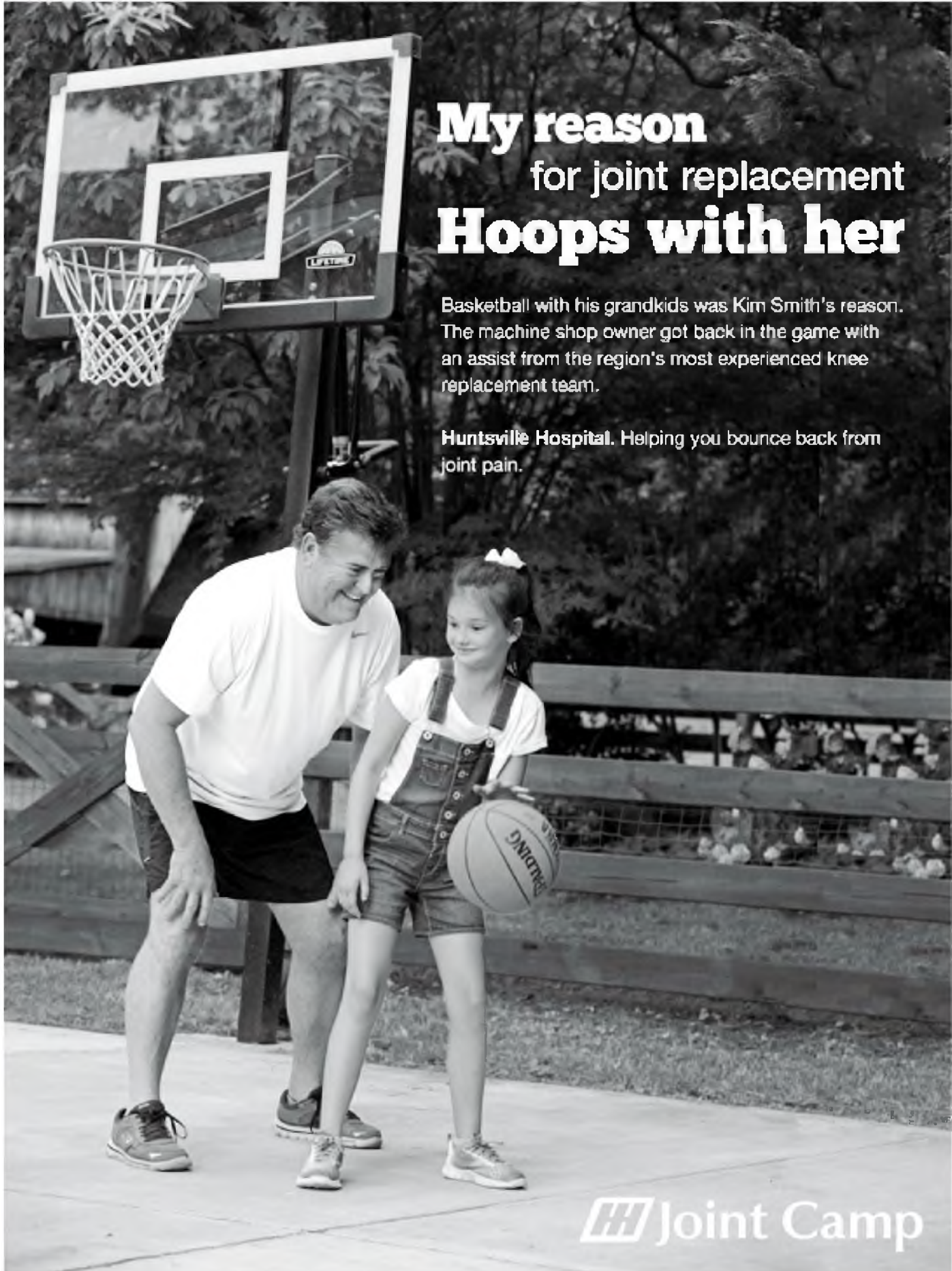
Mary Jim Ailor
256-658-2718.

Since 1884
H.C. BLAKE CO
INC.
PLUMBING * AIR CONDITIONING * HEATING * ELECTRICAL * ENERGY

SERVING THE HUNTSVILLE AREA SINCE 1884 FOR ALL YOUR RESIDENTIAL

**AIR CONDITIONING & HEATING UNITS
 PLUMBING
 ELECTRICAL
 ENERGY AUDITS**

256-534-0781



My reason for joint replacement Hoops with her

Basketball with his grandkids was Kim Smith's reason. The machine shop owner got back in the game with an assist from the region's most experienced knee replacement team.

Huntsville Hospital. Helping you bounce back from joint pain.

porch. It was true. A thick layer of ice covered everything in sight and more was coming down. Realizing it was impossible to return to Nashville, she suggested that maybe they could get a hotel room. Anywhere but here.

"I don't think so," said Al. "I tried to make a reservation before we left home. There's only one hotel in town and it is full."

Suddenly they were interrupted by sounds at the front of the house. When Teresa opened the door there was an old man standing there. "Can I help you?" she asked.

"Hello," the old man said as he quickly brushed by her to the stove to warm his hands. "My name is Bob and I live across the street. I just wanted to come over and make sure everything is all right." Looking at Teresa for a long moment he added, with a twinkle in his eye, "You really do look like your father."

Teresa stared at the old man not knowing what to say. He was dressed in overalls and an old Army fatigue coat. There was a stubble of beard on his face. "This can't be Uncle Bob," she thought. Although she had never met him she always had an image of Uncle Bob being well educated and probably rich.

Finally she posed the question. "Are you Uncle Bob?"

The old man paused, as if searching for the right words before replying. "Well, yes - no - sort of. It's a long story."

"A successful marriage isn't finding the right person - it's being the right person."

Ray Weinberg, Huntsville

Someone pulled up an extra chair and as Bob sat down he asked Teresa, "What exactly did your mother tell you about your father Luke?"

Seeing a blank look on her face, he said with a bitter tone in his voice, "That's what I thought - nothing!" Talking in a low voice, almost as to himself, he began telling Teresa about her father.

"Luke was a fine man. He was my best friend for almost all my life. He came from a rough family who were all in the whiskey business. His father got caught several times and spent time in the federal prison. His mother was trash. When Luke was about nine or ten years old, and his daddy in prison, she took off with another man. Just left Luke with an old couple and took off. No one ever heard from her again."

"When Luke's daddy got out

of prison he took the boy to live with him, but mostly Luke just raised himself. He was always doing odd jobs to make money. Luke was about sixteen years old when his daddy got killed. They said it was an argument about whiskey. He had sold a load to a bootlegger here in town and the man didn't want to pay. The bootlegger said it had been cut too much."

"A few years later Luke got his first car. It was an old beat-up Ford. If I remember right, he gave ten dollars for it. I had to help him push it home. You wouldn't believe what he did to that car. He spent months taking it apart, piece by piece, and putting it back together. When he finished there wasn't a car in Huntsville that could keep up with it."

"Luke was the damnedest driver I ever saw. There was this road outside of town that




ISP InterSouth
properties

"Leasing and Managing Huntsville's Premier Office Buildings"

<p>Phone (256) 830-9160 Fax (256) 430-0881</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Highland Office Park, Phases 1 & 2 * Park West Center * University Square Business Center * 8215 Madison Blvd.
--	---

Visit us at www.intersouth-properties.com



JCS

(Since 1969)

Guns & Tackle Shop, Inc

J.C. Vaughn
President

Huge gun selection

1650 Jordan Lane
Huntsville, Al 35816
(256) 830-0761

Guns - Buy - Sell - Trade - Consignment - Repair
Holsters - Knives - Ammo - Reloading Supplies

was full of sharp curves. Most people slowed down to thirty or thirty-five miles an hour. Not Luke! He would push that old Ford up to about eighty miles an hour and would just slide around the curves. I saw him take a curve one day and I swear two wheels actually left the ground!"

"A lot of the bootleggers in town knew Luke because of his daddy and when they saw how he could handle a car they started asking him to run government whiskey. Government whiskey was regular store-bought whiskey, but you couldn't buy it in Alabama. Most people went to Kentucky where they could buy it at a good price. It was about a three hundred mile round trip, mostly on narrow back roads. We would take the back seat out of the car so we could carry more cases. We always tried to time it so we would get to the warehouse in Kentucky late in the afternoon so it would be dark when we started back."

"After he had been running

whiskey for a few years he decided to go in business for himself. Before then, when he was driving for bootleggers, they would have to pay up front for the load but if something went wrong they lost the money. Luke decided to use his own money and take his own chances."

"It wasn't as bad as you think. Huntsville was a small town back then and everyone knew everybody. And everyone drank whiskey. It wasn't nothing for a bank president to stop us downtown and order a case of Canadian Club or a couple cases of Jack Daniels. Luke probably supplied half the big shots in Huntsville! Luke was a good looking, young, personable man and everyone liked him. If he had a weakness, it was a pretty woman."

"That's when he met your mother, Mary. She was young, maybe 17 or 18 years old. I don't remember exactly how they met but it wasn't long before Luke told me he was in love with her and was going



Beat High Energy Costs with Wood Heat!



Come see our full line of Wood Burning Stoves and Fireplaces

Firesets, Screens, Grates & Fireplace Accessories

Southern Home & Hearth

2611 University Dr., Huntsville

256-534-1715 or

256-534-8199

www.southernhomeandhearth.com

We do Layaways

ALPHA ESTATE SALES & AUCTIONS EST. 1983

Let us help you liquidate or appraise your personal property including antiques, collectibles, fine art, furniture, jewelry, china, porcelain and more

www.alphaestatesales.com

Visit our Website for Upcoming Sales



Bob Baker, HSCA, Owner
Gary Lee Knight, Owner/Manager

Experience, Professionalism and Excellence is our Motto.



1214 Meridian Street (256) 536-3117

to get married. When her parents heard about it they threw a fit. Said they weren't going to have their daughter married to a whiskey man. Not long after that she and her family disappeared. Some people said they moved to Chicago where they had relatives."

"It was about this time when Mary discovered she was pregnant. I found out later that she wanted to get in touch with Luke but her family talked her out of it, saying the baby didn't need a daddy that was going to end up dead or in jail."

"It was about two years later when a friend told me about Mary being pregnant and having a baby girl. When I told Luke, it almost drove him crazy knowing he had a daughter but not knowing anything about her. He tried everything in the world to get in touch with her. Her father wrote him a letter saying that Mary was happily married and to never contact her again. She did not want her little daughter to be known as a "bootlegger's daughter."

"Luke tried writing letters but they all came back unopened. He sent presents but they too were returned. He

told me he could live without seeing his daughter, or helping raise her, as long as he could know something about her."

"That's where Uncle Bob came in. I had been friendly with Mary so Luke got me to write a letter to her, not mentioning him, but just saying that I had been wondering about them and wanted to send an early Christmas present. Luke put a hundred dollar bill in the envelope. That was a lot of money back then."

"That letter did not come back."

"Luke waited for a couple months and then had me send them another note with another hundred dollar bill. That one did not come back either. Luke had me do the same thing every couple of months for about a year. I never actually wrote anything much - just said that I hoped they were doing well and signed it Bob. Of course, there was always the money."

"About a year had passed when Luke told me to write again, send more money, but this time I should ask for pictures of my 'niece'. Two weeks later the pictures arrived and Luke was the happiest man

"His group would follow him anywhere, but only out of morbid curiosity."

Seen on Athens employee evaluation

Marathon Painting

Services including:

- *Exterior & Interior painting
- *Woodworking
- *Deck Cleaning
- *Gutter Repair
- *Pressure Washing
- *Handyman Services
- *Roofing
- *Doors
- *Drywall
- *Siding
- *Window Cleaning

(256) 326-8053

JOHN M. BZDELL

Free Estimates * References upon Request * Licensed & Insured

Windsor House

Nursing Home / Rehab Facility

Our team approach to rehabilitation means working together to enhance the quality of life and by re-shaping abilities and teaching new skills. We rebuild hope, self-respect and a desire to achieve one's highest level of independence.

- *Complex Medical Care
- *Short Term Rehabilitation
- *Long Term Care

Our team includes Physicians, Nurses, Physical Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Speech Therapist, Activity Director and Registered Dietician

A place you can call home....

4411 McAllister Drive
Huntsville, Alabama 35805

(256) 837-8585



M S Masonry

Customer Recommended

- STONEMWORK
- STUCCO
- REPAIRS
- PAVERS
- CURBS
- WALKWAYS
- BLOCKS

"No Job is too Small"



MICHAEL SYLVESTER
(256) 694-2469

LICENSED - INSURED - REFERENCES

in the world. After that it was easy. Every time I sent money I would ask for more pictures or about how you were doing. Later on I even got her to send me copies of your report cards and programs for school plays that you were in."


Teresa interrupted Bob's story to ask, "Didn't my mother know who was really sending the money?"

"Of course she did. She knew I didn't have any money and that I was not really your uncle. But she liked the money and knew her husband would not object if it came from a supposedly wealthy uncle. All she had to do to keep the money coming was to send things about you. When she would slow down Luke would stop the money and it wouldn't be long before another package would come. You might say that Luke trained her!"

"Over the years Luke must have sent you tens and tens of thousands of dollars. When you got your first car it was Luke who paid for it. He paid for your prom dresses, your doctor bills and your education. The only thing he ever expected back was a photo or maybe a newspaper clipping mentioning your name."

"When you graduated from college Luke was excited for months ahead of time. He actually bought a new suit and was going to attend your graduation. He said he was going to stand in the back of the room and just watch without anyone knowing. At the last minute he backed out, saying you might find out and that it might embarrass you. He said you didn't need a bootlegger for a father."


"After you were grown Luke talked several times about trying to contact you



*Berryhill
Funeral Home*

*"The Service of Quiet Elegance
and Affordable Quality"*

Personal, Professional service
Serving all Cemeteries
Honoring all burial & cash policies
Honoring pre-need transfers
Crematory



(256) 536-9197

Don Broome Studios

What started as an artist making his own frames has become a complete frame shop in my home.

Let me help you select the right materials to compliment your work. By Appointment.

7446 Clubfield Cir.
Huntsville, Ala 35802

256-880-3497
256-656-1457

Come meet Judy



but I knew he never would. He was a proud man and deep in his heart I believe he was afraid that you would not have anything to do with him. I knew he would never risk that."

The tiny house grew silent as Bob finished his story. As he stood up to leave, Teresa asked, "If he had that much money, why did he live like this?"

"Because he gave all of his money to you," Bob replied simply. "Before I leave there is something I want to give you." Walking into the bedroom he pulled an old suitcase from under the bed. "Luke told me shortly before he died that this suitcase made him the richest person on earth. I hope you will understand why."

After Bob left, Teresa opened the suitcase. It was packed with hundreds of photos of her. There were copies of report cards, prom invitations and dental bills. There were newspaper clippings of her engagement and wedding. There were receipts for birthday presents and copies of her school's newsletters.

Teresa spent hours going through the suitcase. It was almost like a time capsule of her whole life pieced altogether over the years by a man whom she had never known.

Sometime in the early hours of the morning when the last photo had been replaced and the suitcase closed she was left alone with her thoughts. Her husband had gone to bed hours earlier and the only light in the room came from the flickering flames in the stove. Suddenly,

as she sat there wondering how many times her father had sat in front of that same stove, she began crying.

She cried for the father she had never known. She cried for all the gifts she had received without knowing they were from him. She cried because she had never tried to contact him. Suddenly she felt her husband's arms around her. "Don't be sad," he said.

"I'm not sad," she said, still crying. "I just feel so lucky to have had a father who cared about me so much."

Teresa and Al never had children of their own, but the following year they adopted a dark-haired baby boy, whom they named Luke.



Spry Funeral and Crematory Homes, Inc.

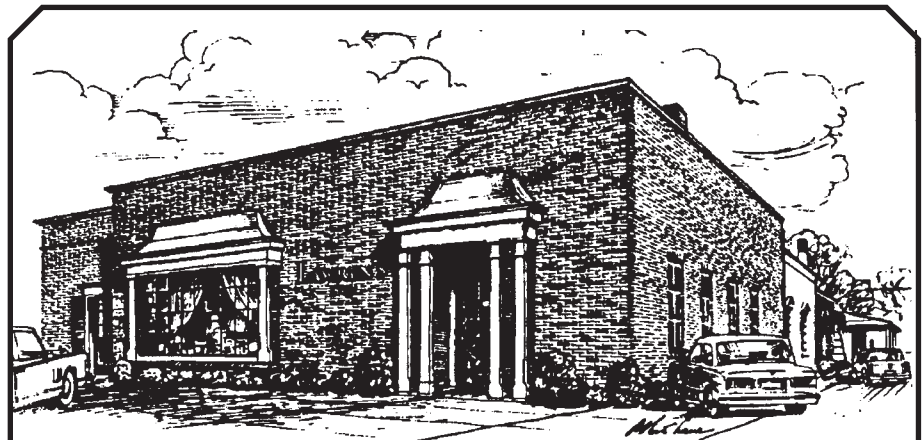
Family owned and operated since 1919

(256) 536-6654

Valley View Cemetery

open with 100 acres reserved for future development

(256) 534-8361



LAWREN'S*

809 MADISON STREET
HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA 35801

BRIDAL REGISTRY

China, Crystal, Silver, Pewter, Table Linen, Cookware.

Decorative Accessories, Invitations and Announcements, Lenox China & Crystal, Fine Linens & Cottons For Bed & Bath.

"Average weight of Americans drops to 240 pounds."

Headline in 2028

Area News in 1923

Falling Tree Accident

Joe Esslinger, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Esslinger near Gurley, sustained perhaps a fatal accident this morning when a falling tree struck him, crushing his skull. He is about 21 years of age. This accident is deeply deplored, and his recovery is very doubtful.

Insane Fear of Ku Klux is Cause of Shooting - Birmingham

Under a delusion, according to his wife, that he was being pursued by the Ku Klux Klan, Earl Brandell shot and possibly fatally wounded Frank Ray, hotel man, in a crowded restaurant last night. As he fired the shot Brandell yelled, "I got that Klux," police stated. When arrested, he told the police, "They're getting everybody but not me!"

Burglars Enter Lowe Mill Store

The general merchandise store of Chaney & Reed in the Lowe Mill Village was entered some time during last night by burglars who gained their entrance by removing a large glass out of the front of the building. The Sheriff's office was notified at 6 o'clock this morning and up to this writing no clue as to the guilty party or parties has been found. It is reported only a few articles were missing.

Woman Lying Near Railroad Tracks Causes Excitement

Considerable excitement was caused in West Huntsville early this morning when about eight o'clock Marvin Drake, 15, while on his way to school, discovered a white woman lying beside the Southern railroad tracks a short distance from West Huntsville. She was lying near a tree and was partly covered with bushes and grass. She appeared to have blood on her arm. Her hat was lying a few feet away and the disheveled condition of her clothes and gen-

eral appearance convinced the youth that she was dead. He hurried to nearby homes and informed the people that he had found a dead woman.

Another party passing also discovered the woman and came in with the same story, and that they had seen men running from the scene. A party was organized and started for the scene but when they arrived the woman was gone. A search was made along the railroad tracks but no sight of her was to be found. There is no explanation, and it still remains a mystery.

Open House at Kildare


Miss Virginia McCormick and Miss Grace Walker received a large number of friends at Kildare from 4-6 o'clock.

The spacious home presented a spring-like appearance with quantities of spring blossoms in a large variety of colors, arranged throughout the home.

In the dining apartment Miss Helen Wynn and Mrs. Philips Peeler sat at corresponding ends of the table pouring tea and coffee, chatting with the visitors.

Those who attended said it was the most beautiful of homes anywhere in the area.

SHAVER'S Books.



- Books New and Old •
- Out of Print Search • First Editions •
- Books Bought & Sold • Rare Books •
- Appraisals • Children's Books • Estate Evaluation

JOHN M. SHAVER 256-533-7364 E-mail: shaversbks@comcast.net	RAILROAD STATION ANTIQUES 315 JEFFERSON ST. N. Huntsville, Alabama 35801
---	---

Ayers Farmers Market

Fresh Fraser Fir Christmas Trees!

Hand-packed Fruit Baskets

Call today to place your order!

Handmade Wreaths

Merry Christmas from Ayers Farm

256-533-5667

Open Mon-Sat 8am - 6pm; Sunday 8am - 5pm

Located at the SE corner of Governors & Memorial Parkway



Genie's Leaving Me

by Bill Holman - 9/19/2016

Genie Holman taught the hearing impaired children in the Madison County school system for many years. When the City of Madison started its own school system, she transferred to Madison Elementary School where she remained until her retirement in 2005. Her husband Bill is currently an instructor (as well as student) at the Senior Center in Huntsville.

Bill wrote the following lament the morning of September 19 last. He read it to an unresponsive Genie that evening and told her it was OK to go, but that her sister Faye was coming to see her if she waited a little longer.

Faye and her husband Doug arrived from Savannah about 5 o'clock on the afternoon of September 20.

Genie lay unresponsive; her eyes already glassed over. But we do believe she heard and understood our good-byes were giving her permission to go.

She left us at 1:19 a.m. on September 21, just two months short of Bill and Genie's 43rd anniversary.

GENIE'S LEAVING ME

Genie's leaving me,
I am grieving her leaving.
It's OK for you to die,
It's OK for me to cry.
We two must say good-bye.
Genie is going away,
I am going to stay.
I must give you permission to go,

And give myself permission to go on.

I pray you stay a little longer.
I love you so,
I don't want you to go.
But it's OK.

"It isn't necessary to see a good tackle.
You can hear it." *Knute Rockne - Notre Dame*



LEE'S MAGIC TUNNEL CAR WASH
256.533.5620
2318 MEMORIAL PKWY. SW
www.leesmagictunnel.com

We want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas. With warm wishes for a blessed Holiday Season from our family to yours.



O'LE DAD'S BAR-B-Q



"It's Cooked In The Pit."

(256) 828-8777 or
(256) 828-8778

Health Rating: 96

Credit and Debit Cards Accepted



Rosemary Leatherwood, Owner

Hours: Tuesday - Friday 10am - 8pm Saturday 10am - 7pm
14163 Highway 231/431 North, Hazel Green, Next door to Family Dollar

Yes, Virginia, You'll Need a Can of Sauce

by John E. Carson



Believe in Santa Claus? Of course I do; but before you send me in for psychoanalysis, let me tell you why.

Of all the Christmases I can't remember, there is one that I do recall. You see, being one of ten children born to my warring, alcoholic parents and growing up in the ice and snow of Minnesota, there were not a lot of presents under our tree most years.

That was okay with me; I never really wanted much. Even then I would rather give than receive and Peace on Earth was often the only thing I wished for.

By the time I was fifteen we had moved about that many times; not because my father was in the military though and not around the country - no, that was just in one city! Paving jobs were hard to come by in the winter and my dad did whatever he could to keep a roof over our heads.

As a result, he was gone a

lot; often coming home on foot with two bags of groceries under his arms so we could eat before we went to bed. But don't judge my parents too harshly because under all that arguing and strife were two people who really did love each other. They just could not live together.

So you see, I did not have much of a childhood to remember and at the ripe old age of fifteen I had seen and heard too much of the adult world. But then I met a girl and fell in love. And maybe that is why the Christmas of 1966 stands out in my mind. That would be enough for most people but there was more to it than that.

I wanted to believe. Even though I knew I was too old for Santa Claus, I had witnessed the magic of Christmas several times; all the years when money was scarce and somehow on Christmas Eve my parents had been able to get a tree, decorate it and see there was something under it for everyone.

Calling a truce to the eternal war, they somehow managed to find enough Christmas Spirit to get the job done.

And this Christmas our entire family was to be together for the first time in many years. My older broth-

er who served in the Army in Korea was coming up from Lawton, Oklahoma with his new bride. All of my older sisters and their children and husbands were coming, my Grandmother and two of my mother's three sisters would be

Now there's another four-letter word associated with moving and storage.

Easy.

PODS is a whole new way to move and store that's a lot less stressful and a lot more convenient. With PODS, you can take your time moving or storing your belongings. We deliver a POD right to your door, you pack it at your own pace and we deliver it anywhere coast to coast or to our dry and secure warehouse. It's that simple.

Consider it moving and storage on your own terms, without the time-constraints, deadlines or cursing.



1-888-776-PODS
www.PODS.com

Center for Hearing, LLC

7531 S. Memorial Parkway Suite C Huntsville, Al 35802
Phone (256) 489-7700



Maurice Gant, BC-HIS
Board Certified Hearing
Instrument Specialist

- Free Hearing Tests and Consultations
- Zero down financing with low payments
- Competitive pricing
- Service and repair of all brands and makes of aids
- Hearing aid batteries
- Appointments - Monday thru Friday from (8:00 am until 5:00 pm) and Saturday upon request

00508041

"Why are you sitting there looking like an envelope with no address on it?"

Mark Twain

there as well. Much too large a crowd for our small house and table with four chairs.

And what to feed them all? There was no Christmas Goose, turkey or even ham for that matter, and I had watched my mother make mashed potatoes from scratch enough to believe she had the strongest arms in the state. Pickles, olives and dishes; all three were lacking.

Fortunately, I had been working and half of my \$2.25 per hour from the Mobil station job went to help buy groceries; but with four of us still in the house it did not go far. As was the tradition in our dysfunctional but loving family, everyone offered to bring something. Grandma would bake cookies - oatmeal raisin, like 'em or not; my sisters would bring pie, Jell-O and Cool Whip, pickles and condiments and so forth.

Mother would make her famous Goulash - hamburger, Creamettes and stewed tomatoes. My dad would see his uncle, Bobby the Baker, for bread, rolls and cake; and from some-

where came a rented table and chairs.

Christmas Eve was a blur of activity and finally the big day came. One by one the cars pulled up, tires crunching in the deep, new-fallen snow, with our family members hidden under heavy winter coats.

Everyone had something to put under the tree; a pair of socks wrapped in the funny papers from my Aunt, a comic book wrapped in plain, white sheets of the tissue wrapping paper, an odd collectible given up to one of the youngsters or a bag of home-made treats handed out at the end.

And as my brothers and I worked at not getting caught under the mistletoe by one of our aunts or nieces and the house was filled with warm, quiet conversation and the ghosts of Christmas Past, I knew that someone had heard my wish - and peace on Earth in our house was granted.

It was almost magical. As for the Goulash- yes, Virginia, we'll need a can of sauce...

West Station Antiques

*Come visit us in
Owens Cross Roads at the
Historic Hornbuckle Garage
on old Hwy 431.
Phone (256) 725-BOOK (2665)*

**Books - Paper Items
Postcards - Linens - Quilts
Pottery - China - Glassware
Sterling Silver - Jewelry
Furniture**

*Visit us at our website:
www.gibsonbooks.com*

**3037 Old Highway 431
Owens Cross Roads 35763**

256-725-BOOK (2665)

***New Hours: Thurs - Sat 10 - 5
Sun - 1 - 5***



Cliff Hill

Attorney At Law

- * Social Security Disability * Personal Injury
- * Workers Compensation

"Helping You Is Not A Job - It's Our Mission"

929 Merchants Walk
Huntsville, Al

(256) 534-4502 Office
(256) 534-4503 Fax
(256) 233-3328 (Athens)

No representation is made that the quality of legal services to be performed is greater than the quality of legal services performed by other lawyers.

Santa and the Real Christmas Spirit

by M. D. Smith IV

I believe I was in the third grade in the early 50s when some of my friends were saying as Christmas was approaching, that there was no real Santa, it was just your parents doing it. Being a bit disturbed by these comments, I went to my mother after school that day and told her what they said.

As I look back on that day, my mother gave me a very good answer, but would later backfire just a little bit. She said, "Son, the REAL Santa is a spirit, something like God. These men dressed in Santa suits are his helpers. That's how Santa knows if you've been bad or good and he knows what you are thinking."

That was a completely satisfactory answer for me and one I could relate to my friends if pressed about why I still believed in Santa. I also reasoned that the letters I had been so diligently writing to Santa since I was old enough to remember were not needed, because Santa "knew what you were thinking." In years past, my mother would help me compose my letter to Santa and even browse with me through a toy catalog to help me put things on my list. My list was short the previous year, because I wanted a Daisy BB Gun and everyone knew that, and sure enough, Santa brought me one.

So this year, all I had to do was just concentrate on what I wanted for Christmas and I did this on December nights that year, after I went to bed and said my prayers. It was a good feeling to know this short cut to Santa and that this was all I had to do. I believe I was even prompted by both my parents about writing a letter to Santa, but I procrastinated and didn't feel the need to spend a lot of time doing that.

Christmas morning finally arrives and my younger sister and I go downstairs to see what Santa has brought. She was about five years old and was squealing with delight at the dolls, doll clothes, toys and the things she got. I was quiet. I was standing back a bit from the "pile" of stuff on the rug by the fireplace, my usual spot for the Santa things. I didn't see a single thing that I had been sending "thought messages" about for the past number of weeks. I am sure my face showed my disappointment.

As my parents shifted their focus from my sister to me, my mother asked me was anything wrong. As she came over to me, I said out loud, "I DIDN'T GET ANYTHING I WANTED." Be-

"Anybody who doesn't know what soap tastes like never washed a cat."

Karen Maroon, Huntsville

Neals Pressure Washing

WE CLEAN IT ALL!

Painting
Home Repair
256-603-4731

Licensed & Insured

Proud Member of
the BBB



Southern Sealing & Services, Inc.

Parking Lots * Handicap Parking * Driveways

Michael Walker
Stephen Walker

Huntsville, Al (256) 881-8337
Cell (256) 316-2200

Email: southernsealing@comcast.net

sides the chatter of my little sister, things got very quiet. Then my mother began to point out some of the best and more expensive things. Some boxing sporting equipment including a bag on a spring steel rod on a platform you stood on while you punched the bag, a new Gilbert Chemistry set and frankly I don't remember the other things, but they were not what I silently had wished for and believed Santa would know what it was. My father was most quiet and didn't say much of anything after that, as I recall. But I went ahead and began exploring the nice presents anyhow, and later we opened wrapped presents under the tree from parents and I got even more nice things.

Later in the morning, after breakfast, my mother took me aside to a quiet spot in the den and told me how sad my father was because he had personally shopped for these things for his son and was sure he got some very neat stuff. I reminded her what she told me about Santa and why I didn't recite my list out loud that year. So now the truth was out about Santa, but I pretty much knew it anyhow from what the other kids were saying. NOW, I felt really, really bad. I realized over the years how my parents had done their best to satisfy my "Santa" list and then wrap other presents for me to open under the tree. I understood, it was ALL from them, and I had acted so ungrateful.

I felt terrible and made a point several times that day and the ones that followed to thank and tell both my parents how much I liked what they got me for Christmas, and I really did like the things. Enjoyed them many days after Christmas. I liked the years that followed just as much and sister never knew, because we both got gifts from Santa after that.

In the years to come, with the eight children to come and raise, Judy and I did it the same way. Santa brought the little kids presents and when they were 13 Santa stopped and everything was from parents under the tree. As some of my boys transitioned and would say they didn't believe and would tell the younger kids, I said, "IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE, YOU DON'T GET" from Santa. So even if they knew at a younger age than I did, they

knew to keep their mouths shut, or else. By 13, they were mature enough NOT to spill the beans to the little ones about Santa.

I always reminded my kids during the transition period when Santa became more of a "Spirit of Christmas" instead of the man in the red and white suit, to keep making a list because Santa could not read their minds.

Merry Christmas to all!

Helping home buyers and sellers in
Huntsville for the past 30 years!

MARY ELLEN *PETERS*
Company



Re/Max Alliance - (256) 797-0203
Homes@MaryEllenPeters.com
www.HuntsvilleNeighbors.com

HEART OF DIXIE[®] Popcorn & Supply Fun Food Equipment & Supplies

We also carry equipment & supplies for Sno Cones, Shaved Ice, Nachos, Chips & Cheese, Cotton Candy, Funnel Cakes, Lemonade, Candy Apples, Hot Dogs, Deep Fryers, and Much, Much More!

*Visit our showroom for the largest array of
equipment and supplies in the South.*

Perfect for Little League baseball - football games - basketball games - concerts - festivals - carnivals. Free delivery!!

Toll Free (877)828-3270 - Local (256) 828-3270 - Fax (256) 828-4393

191 Darwin Road - Huntsville 35811
www.heartofdixiepopcorn.com

Heard On the Street

by *Cathey Carney*



The first correct caller for the Photo of the Month for October was **Sharon Brakefield**. She identified that sweet little youngster as **Cecil Ashburn**, partner of Ashburn and Gray who built most of the roads in this area. Cecil was a dear friend who passed away several years ago, and is still remembered and missed. Sharon loves history and is writing a book about the Swinging Bridge of Bloucher's Ford near Tate Farms.

It's always hard to lose someone but when it's not expected that's even worse. **Lee Hockenberry** was a retired Command Sergeant Major in the Army and passed away of a heart attack on November 3. Lee was 84 but his spirit was so much younger than that. He was a proud and hard working past President of the

Golden K Kiwanis and a longtime member of Latham United Methodist Church. He leaves wife of 64 years, **Barbara**, as well as son **Jon Hockenberry (Aleda)** and daughter **Sharon Bonney (Bill)** as well as grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren. He loved his family above everything else, including their little cat. He was recipient of the Bronze Star, the Army Commendation Medal, Kiwanis Barnett Award and many other awards and accomplishments. He will be so missed.

Mrs. Sanders, age 90 of Huntsville, called to give us some good tips. All of us have had bad leg cramps at night and she did too. She said she found a remedy that works for her 100%. She takes a bottle of dill pickles, and maybe 2-3 times a week she'll drink a couple of teaspoons of the dill pickle juice - no cramps! Also for gout she has found that you can dissolve some regular salt in a gallon of warm water, add lots of Epsom salts and stir. Take a towel and soak in the warm water, then wrap it around your foot or ankle or whatever hurts. She said this is a very old remedy.

SO proud of our own downtown **Lewter's Hardware**, one of Huntsville's historic, longest-running businesses, because they were recently named as one of the Best Hardware Stores in AMERICA by Popular Mechanics. If you haven't been in this store you've got to go. On 222 Washington St. downtown since 1928. Once you go, you'll be hooked. They carry

all types of hardware, gardening supplies, (plants in the spring), kitchen supplies and cast iron pans, lighting supplies, they make keys and have sleds for snow in winter. If they don't have it you probably don't need it!

Gladys Elliott wrote to tell us that in 1960 her secretarial business used to be located on Clinton Avenue across from the Trailways Bus Station. She's been living in North Carolina for 50 years but says Huntsville is forever home.

Here's a tip that is passed along by our editor **Cheryl Tribble** and her daughter **Felicia Meschke**. Many of us 60 or 70-something folks have acquired lots of stuff over the years. If we live at home our stuff is put away or maybe in storage. But as older folks, why should we leave all the disposition of that to our kids or family? If you're not using it and don't need it, why not just get rid of it now and make for a lot less work and sadness later on when our kids are trying to decide what to do with it?

Over the years **Malcolm Miller** had written stories about his friend **Curly Putman, Jr.** who was a singer/songwriter and an Ala-

Photo of The Month

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

Call (256) 534-0502

This youngster could defend you one day and spends alot of time on North Side Square.



Free Attorney Consultation for Bankruptcy

The Law Firm of

MITCHELL HOWIE

Legal Services - Probate - Estate Planning - Wills

256-533-2400

No representation is made that the quality of legal services to be performed is greater than the quality of legal services performed by other lawyers.

bama native who lived just north of Huntsville. Curly passed away on Oct. 30 and was 85 years old. Everyone knows the song "Green, Green Grass of Home" and that's the song Curly wrote, as well as songs for Dolly Parton and Tanya Tucker and many others. He was inducted into the Songwriter's Hall of Fame in 1975. He leaves wife of 61 years **Bernice**, as well as son **Troy** and daughter-in-law **Beth**, grandsons **Ryan** and **Ian Putman** and granddaughter **Gina Putman**. A talented man for sure.

I have hidden a picture of a tiny **Christmas tree ornament** somewhere within the pages of the December issue. NO ONE will be able to find it due to my superior skills at hiding it, but in the off chance you do see it, DON'T call til December 10 for either the photo or the hidden ornament please. Everyone gets a chance that way! I expect no calls however, even though you would win an entire year of "Old Huntsville" magazine worth a cool \$25!

When I have a cup of coffee in the morning one of my favorite dry creamers is the chocolate one you can find in the grocery stores. However it is usually more expensive than the plain vanilla flavor so I made my own and it's delicious. Take a jar of the regular dry vanilla creamer, pour it into a bowl, and add 2-3 tablespoons of Hershey's cocoa (unsweetened). Mix well and pour it back into the container. You control how chocolate you want it, & it tastes great!

A lady who was one of Tom's favorite people to talk with was **Miriam Dendy**. They loved remembering the old days here and she kept every article **Tom** wrote about her brother **Frank Riddick**. She passed away on October 25 at age 90 and she is survived by her daughter **Gloria Ann Burke**; sons **Thomas, William, Richard** and **Michael Dendy**. She leaves sister **Minnie Nash** as well as 13 grandchildren, 14 great grandchildren and 2 great-great-grandchildren. I know she and Tom are up there swapping stories now.

Rosemary Leatherwood wants to wish her son **Billy** a Happy Birthday on December 18th. "Billy you are an awesome young man and without you I couldn't run Ole Dad's BBQ like it should be run...son I love you so much." And she wants to wish her grandson **Austin Pinkerton** a Happy 18th birthday on Dec. 28 - this is a big year for Austin as he is a senior at Hazel Green - to start a new chapter in his life - "Austin you have accomplished so much in your 18 years and I can't wait to see what God has planned for you!"

George Wells hosted a party at Blue Plate South recently with **Karen Newsum** - George and Karen co-wrote the children's book "PeeWee The Christmas Tree" and it's just something that little ones will love. Karen is also a wonderful singer and is working on a CD of her own songs.

It occurred to me that with this record dry weather we're having

that our homes and foundations may be affected. We're all built on dirt basically and when it dries out it shrinks, right? That might have an effect on slabs and/or foundations of homes and could be really expensive to fix. Some have reported problems with doors closing, etc. Hopefully we'll have had rain by the time you read this.

John Bzdell and his sweetheart **Margaret** finally got married after being together for many many years and the wedding/reception at Early Works was a real party. Over 200 people attended including special guests **Lee** and **Jan Ingram** (Margaret's brother & sis-in-law); her sister **Cathy Jackson**; nephew **Bobby Jackson** & wife **Christie**. Representing John's family were **Heather Luthy**, his daughter and her husband **Ben Luthy** (who also sang in the band); their kids **Annalie** and **Gavin**. John's sons **John Bzdell Jr.** and **Justin Bzdell** were celebrating too along with out of town guests **Don Hoffmann** and his wife **Katie** (from Denver) and **Jim Getzinger** from California!

It's getting cooler outside and if you have fires in your home be so careful of sparks! If you use candles be sure and extinguish them before you leave the house. It just takes a moment of inattention to cause a fire!

Have a warm, wonderful December with those you love. And remember to shop local at our small businesses - they're our neighbors!

UNITED

Fire, Smoke & Water Restoration *Quick Response Team*

24/7 EMERGENCY SERVICE

(256) 533-7163

LOUIE TIPPETT

www.united-specialist.com





RECIPES

Sweet Christmas Treats

Sugar Balls

- 1/4 c. honey
- 1 c. butter, softened
- 2 c. flour
- 1/2 t. salt
- 2 t. vanilla extract
- 1 c. pecans, chopped
- Powdered sugar

Cream the honey and butter til fluffy. Add flour, which has been sifted with the salt, slowly. Add vanilla and nuts.

Form into balls, place on a greased cookie sheet. Bake at 300 degrees til light brown, about 30 minutes. Do not over cook.

While still warm, roll in powdered sugar and let cool. Roll in sugar again and serve or store in airtight container. These are a favorite for Christmas parties!

Pecan Turtles

- 1 c. brown sugar
- 2 squares semi-sweet chocolate, melted
- 1 c. flour
- 1 stick butter, melted
- 1 egg
- 1/2 lb. pecan halves

Mix all ingredients except nuts. For each turtle, group 4 pecan halves on greased cookie sheet, drop 2 teaspoons of dough on top of them. Continue til you fill up the cookie sheet. Bake for 10-12 minutes at 350 degrees.

Taffy

- 3 c. granulated sugar
- 1/2 c. vinegar
- 1/2 c. water
- 1 T. butter

- 1 t. vanilla extract (or your choice)

Boil sugar, vinegar and water to soft ball stage (drop of the liquid forms a soft ball in cold water).

Quickly stir in the butter and boil til mixture becomes hard and brittle when you put a drop in cold water. Add extract just before removing from the heat and mix.

Pour onto buttered plate to cool, turning the edges in as fast as they cool. When cool enough to handle, pull the taffy until it is white and brittle.

Angel Food Pudding

- 2 eggs
- 1 c. powdered sugar
- 1 T. flour
- 1 t. baking powder

Gibson's BAR-B-QUE

A HUNTSVILLE TRADITION SINCE 1956

Welcome to Gibson's! Started in 1956, located in the center of beautiful Huntsville, Gibson's Barbecue serves up Huntsville's finest Bar-B-Q along with Huntsville's Best Breakfast.

At Gibson's Barbecue, every dish is created using only the freshest, finest ingredients.

Cold Weather is here - Come in for some Hot Brunswick Stew

1-lb. Pack (for 4 People)

- One Pound of BBQ Pork,
- Pint Potato Salad
- Half Pint Cole Slaw
- Hot or Mild Sauce.
- 8 buns.

\$19.00

2-lb. Pack (for 8 People)

- Two Pounds of BBQ Pork,
- Two Pints Potato Salad,
- One Pint Cole Slaw
- Hot or Mild Sauce.
- 16 buns.

\$36.00

3 lb. Pack (for 12 People)

- Three Pounds of BBQ Pork
- Two Quarts Potato Salad,
- One Quart Cole Slaw
- Hot or Mild Sauce.
- 24 buns.

\$52.00

3319 MEMORIAL PARKWAY S.W.

256-881-4851

8412 WHITESBURG DR. S.

256-882-0841

- 1 c. broken walnuts
- 1 c. chopped pitted dates

Beat together the eggs, sugar, flour and baking powder. Stir in the nuts and dates. Pour into buttered baking dish that is set in a pan of boiling water. Bake for 30 minutes at 325 degrees. Let chill and serve with whipped cream.

Maple Pralines

- 1 c. maple syrup
- 2 c. powdered sugar
- 1/2 c. heavy cream
- 1 T. butter
- 1 t. vanilla extract
- 2 c. chopped pecans

Boil syrup, sugar, cream and butter to soft ball stage. Remove from heat, add vanilla and nuts and beat til creamy. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto waxed paper to cool.

Chocolate Popcorn

- 1-1/2 c. sugar
- 1 T. butter
- 1 sq. unsweetened chocolate
- 3 T. water
- 3 quarts freshly popped popcorn

Boil sugar, butter, chocolate and water til mixture spins a long thread in cold water. Pour hot mixture over the popped corn and stir til all kernels are

coated. If using hands to form balls use caution, very hot.

Lemon Tease

- 3 oz. lemon jello
- 1 c. boiling water
- 3 T. fresh lemon juice
- 16 oz. whipping cream
- 9 oz. cream cheese
- 1 c. sugar
- 1 t. vanilla extract
- 2 pkg. Lady Fingers

In first bowl mix the jello with the water til dissolved, add the lemon juice. In a second bowl whip cream til stiff. In third bowl mix cream cheese, sugar and vanilla. Mix in the jello mixture, then fold into the whipped cream.

Arrange Lady Fingers around the sides of a spring-form pan and on the bottom. Pour in the jello/cream cheese mixture and refrigerate for 5-6 hours before serving.

Peanut Butter Pie

Mix 8 ounces cream cheese with 2 cups powdered sugar, 1 cup peanut butter and 1 container whipped cream.

Pour into two graham cracker pie shells and refrigerate until serving time.

Sprinkle top with chopped peanuts.



THE HISTORIC LOWRY HOUSE

CHRISTMAS PARTY SPECIAL

**\$75 FOR 3 HOURS
INCLUDES TABLES/CHAIRS.
MUST MENTION AD TO
RECEIVE THIS PRICE.**

(256) 489-9200

**1205 Kildare St. -
Huntsville, Al**





IN BLOOM

five points

Gifts - Cut Flowers
Plants & Accessories
Weddings - Parties

We deliver fresh
flowers locally

256-519-8898

Ron Cooper
Mark Kimbrough
601 McCullough Ave.
Huntsville Al. 35801



Rolo's

975-E Airport Road

(256) 883-7656

Country Cooking
Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Mon. - Sat. 6:30 am - 9:00 pm
Closed Sundays

The Christmas Puppy

by Derek Robertson



Christmas time is either a happy time or a sad time for people. Sometimes the holiday brings about humorous moments, too. I remember a Christmas from my childhood days that brought about all three emotions. It is a Christmas I will never forget. It has created a common bond between two brothers who are different in the way they are as people. My brother and I share at least one thing in common. We share in the memory of the Christmas puppy.

My father and I enjoyed rabbit hunting on the farms near our home in North Alabama during the days of my youth. We had two dogs, a twelve year old Beagle named Lucky and a German Shepherd/Collie mix named Rip. We used these dogs to facilitate increasing our rabbit bounty. Although we experienced success in most of our hunting expeditions, my father always wanted another beagle hound to add to our dog pack in hopes of making our hunts more plentiful. Unlike most hunters today, we did not hunt for stature or trophies. Our financial status was nothing to be ashamed about, but it was unhandy at times. A bag full of fresh killed rabbits meant food on the table and good family dinners. Adding a younger, faster, and smaller beagle to our hunt meant more food for our family.

Our family was comprised of my father, mother, brother and me. We lived in a modest home in rural Alabama. For the most part we were a close and traditional southern family. In spite of this, my brother and I were very different in terms of who we were as people. We never shared anything in common. Although he was envious about our hunting adventures, he never took part in our rabbit hunts. He did not like being out in the cold weather and did not like killing animals. However, he did enjoy the dinners and he understood hunting meant providing food for our family.

Notwithstanding my brother's unwillingness to hunt with my father and me, my mother felt he was being left out. However,

Luciano

a fine italian restaurant

*Owned & Operated since 1963 by
The Schrader Family, also owners
of Old Heidelberg and Cafe Berlin*

256-880-9920

**Lunch Pasta Madness: Includes Pasta Dish,
Salad and a drink - \$10
Available at Lunch Tues - Fri**

Serving a Rich Variety of
European Fare

Hours:
Tues, Wed, Thurs - 11am - 9pm
Friday - 11am - 10pm
Saturday - 5pm - 10 pm
Sunday Brunch 11am - 2pm



Music on Friday and Saturday nights

**Call ahead Reservations Recommended
964 Airport Rd. - Huntsville, Al**



Main Office
2200 Clinton Avenue
Huntsville, Alabama 35805
(256) 533-0541

Branch Office
200 West Side Sq., Suite 48
Huntsville, Alabama 35801
(256) 536-0091

Office Hours
Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday
8:00 a.m. - Noon

www.rocketcityfcu.org





A Treasure In Every Drawer



Odd Drawer



Find the Perfect Stocking Stuffers for Christmas!

- * *Vintage and Inspired Jewelry*
- * *Architectural Pieces*
- * *Chandeliers*
- * *Old & New Lamps*
- * *Antique Knobs & Pulls*
- * *Paintings & Wall Hangings*
- * *Fashion Accessories*

- * *Antique Furniture*
- * *Original Toys*
- * *Old Trunks*
- * *Huge Selection of LPs
for Music Lovers*
- * *Pinball Machines*
- And Much, Much More!*

Check our Website for a sampling of what you will find!

www.etsy.com/shop/OddDrawer

Hours: Tues-Sat 11am-5pm

(256) 924-8771

509 Pratt Ave. NE (in Historic 5 Points)
Huntsville, Al 35801



she recognized my brother was not left out on purpose. Several times my father and I asked him to go, and he always declined the offer. Nevertheless, my mother was troubled by this, and she wanted my brother to be included in some manner.

There came a day during Christmas time of 1979, when I was twelve years old, and my brother was nine, my mother discovered a way my brother could be included in our rabbit hunts. Her idea meant my brother would be included in this manner for many years to come.

She read in the classified ads of the "Huntsville Times" an advertisement for beagle puppies for sale. The puppies would be ready to buy on Christmas Eve, and she would take my brother to buy one of those beagle puppies for our dad. Her idea meant even though my brother would not go hunting with my father and me, it did mean his Christmas present for my dad would be responsible for increased rabbit bounty. This would allow my brother to take part in the pride and joy of seeing my father enjoying his new beagle puppy.

Because I felt I was an established hunter and I knew what to look for in a good rabbit dog, I offered my services to assist in the purchase of the beagle puppy. After all, I would go hunting with the new mutt; I thought I should have a say. My mother insisted this was my brother's present, and I was not invited in this undertaking. She wanted this experience to be solely his endeavor.

To make my brother feel like his purchase was earned, she gave him extra chores to do around our home to make money. My mother throughout the year saved her quarters in a mason jar and when she rolled the quarters it totaled thirty dollars. By chance, she had just enough to pay my brother twenty-five dollars for doing the extra chores. It was also the price of the beagle pup. My mother used the remaining five dollars to buy him a hamburger at the Dairy Delight on the day of their Christmas puppy shopping.

My mother is a loving and caring person. She lives in her heart. These qualities are great for rais-

"Women sometimes make fun of men, but most guys are the do-it-yourself type." Tricia Betts, Gurley



BILL POOLE REALTY

Commercial Brokerage



Bill Poole

100 Church Street,
Suite 525
Big Spring Summit
Huntsville, Al 35801

Office 256.533.0990
Home 256.880.2000
Cell 256.651.1349
Fax 256.534.1234

EMAIL BILL@BILLPOOLEREALTY.COM

Woody Anderson



**HUNTSVILLE, AL
(256) 539-9441**

LOCATIONS ALSO IN
MADISON AND FAYETTEVILLE

"HOME OF RED CARPET SERVICE"

WWW.WOODYANDERSONFORD.COM

FOR OVER 50 YEARS, OUR COURTEOUS, FRIENDLY SERVICE HAS NEVER GONE OUT OF STYLE

Offering Personal Concierge Services to help you through your busy days!

Including:

- Pick Up and Delivery*
- Complete Auto Detailing*
- Car wash and Wax*
- Oil change & other services*



1911



BPN

**BUSINESS PREFERRED NETWORK
EST. 1989**

ing a family, but useless when selecting a fine rabbit dog for hunting purposes.

I learned when my mother and brother went to look at the beagle pups that she coaxed my brother into selecting a scared and timid puppy hidden in the corner of the seller's barn. My brother wanted to choose the puppy that jumped into his lap, licking him all over his face. These were good qualities in a hunting dog. Being nine years old, and not yet having developed the necessary negotiating skills needed to change the mind of a mother, he relented and brought home on Christmas Eve the most timid and scared puppy I had ever seen.

Since it was Christmas time and I was full of the Christmas spirit, I did not criticize the selection of the puppy. My mother, although a loving and caring person, also had a hard hand when I got out of line, so I decided to let that motivate me in welcoming the new pup. She told us to make sure we kept it hidden and quiet until Christmas morning. That was an easy enough task since the wimpy dog scurried under the bed in our bedroom and would not come out.

Christmas day arrived. We never had many presents, but what we received as gifts we cherished. We were too young to know it then, but in our hearts this time of year was about family and the wonderful dinner my mom prepared. However, this Christmas was supposed to be a memorable Christmas for my brother.

After the last present was opened, my mom told my dad that there was one more present. My dad was surprised to hear my mother announce this because we did not have much money and he did not understand how there could be another gift. My mother instructed my brother to get his present he had for my dad. He ran to our bedroom, stretched out under our bed to get the shy beagle pup and ran back to hand the scared mutt over to our father.

The look on my father's face was priceless. It was a look of appreciation, wonderment and satisfaction. My brother's face was swollen with pride and a smile stretched from ear to ear. This was going to be the best Christmas ever for my brother. So we thought.

After the joy and excitement settled down, my dad told my brother how much the dog meant to him and how proud he was of my brother. He suggested he take the new pup outside to let it take care

of its personal business.

My brother put his coat on over his pajamas, picked up the new pup and walked outside, his chest stuck out with pride like a soldier who just received a medal. It was not long after he went outside, the door busted open wide, and in the doorway my brother stood crying. When my brother



NESTLED AMONG THE MOUNTAINS

Lovely home in Natures Cove. Full southern style front porch. 3 bedroom 2 bath home with fantastic open floor plan. Luxurious attention to details. Extensive crown molding, wide plank flooring, granite counters in kitchen and baths, spacious living with cozy fire place and wonderful built ins. Detached 2 car garage with stairs leading to floored storage above. Lush yard with patio and covered patio. A relaxing, luxurious home. 1946 sq. ft.

**2615 MOUNTAIN STREAM WAY
IN OWENS CROSS ROADS**

\$255,000



**CALL PEGGY
RICHARD**



(256) 603-4974

SINCE 1972

TEAMRICHARDREALTORS.COM

Don't Let Your Allergies Control your Life!



**Huntsville Welcomes Allergist
William J. Freeman, M.D.**

Board Certified Otolaryngology with
44 Years Experience

**Pollen - Dust - Mold
Immunization**

**Nose, Eyes, Sinus, Lungs & Skin Allergies
Psoriasis, Eczema, Hives, Angiodema - most respond**

(256) 924-8311

**All Insurance Accepted - 10 Minute Testing with NO Needles
2400 Bob Wallace Ave. SW, Suite 101, 35805**

had put the puppy on the cold ground, it had run away into the nearby woods. My mother and father were desperately trying to calm my brother down. Without delay, I took off to begin searching for that wimpy dog.

I remember that Christmas day was remarkably cold. I spent the better part of the day looking for that puppy to no avail, while my relatives spent time consoling my brother and encouraging him with positive thoughts. Christmas in my home continued as I spent frigid hours in the cold looking for my father's new hunting dog. The sky became purple and red as the day came to an end. I returned to the house and entered with bad news. I could not find that scared canine. What began to be a memorable Christmas became a really sad one. The pup was never found.

As the years went by, the memory of that Christmas faded. My brother and I grew up and moved far away from our Alabama home. Many Christmases would be spent apart from my mom and dad, and it would be years before my brother and I could ever be together at home with our parents. I remember the first time we were together again in many years, it brought great joy and happiness for our parents because we were all there for Christmas.

We began talking about our memories of our childhood and humorous stories. In due course, the memory of the Christmas puppy emerged. My mother told that story, and soon I felt the room becoming saddened by the events that occurred that day. I remember how terrible that day was for my brother. In an effort to lighten the mood, I made a joke, "I saw that beagle still running across the field near our house on my trip home." My entire family burst into laughter. My dad and brother laughed the hardest.

After the laughter died down, my brother spoke and told my family the best Christmas present he ever got was the one I gave him. He said the hours I spent that Christmas day looking for his dog meant very much to him and was the best present he ever received from me. He said he did not realize it when he was a child, but years later, as he grew wiser, he often reminisced about that Christmas and how much it meant to him that I spent my Christmas day looking for his puppy.

Notwithstanding our many differences, my brother and I realized how much we loved each other that Christmas. In some ways I resented my brother for not coming along on our hunts and sharing in our rabbit hunting adventures. I did not realize it when I was young, but inside my heart, I

too felt like he was being left out. In some ways, I think those rabbit hunts caused us to never be close as some brothers were.

If it were not for a shy and scared rabbit dog, my brother and I might have never known how much we cared for each other.

It will forever be the Christmas we loved, cried and laughed.



Shiloh United Methodist Church

At Ryland Pike & Dug Hill Road

(256) 852-0587

Welcomes you to Worship with us.

Sunday School 9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Sunday Worship Service 10:45 a.m.

*** Nursery Provided for All Services ***

***11:30 a.m. Lunch
at SUMC Fellowship Hall
as well as tours of the cemeteries.
Please call 256.852.2544 if you plan to join us,
so we'll have plenty of food for everyone.***

####

***Come worship and fellowship with us as we
continue to study God's Word***

Make a Christmas Gift to Give to Your Friends!



Cran-Almond Bark

1 cup chopped almonds, pecans or walnuts

1 pound chocolate, finely chopped

1 cup dried cranberries, cherries, raisins or blueberries

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spread nuts evenly on a baking sheet and toast in oven for 10 minutes. Watch for burning. Coarsely chop nuts and set aside.

Line same baking sheet with parchment or waxed paper. Place half of chocolate in a medium saucepan and heat over medium heat, stirring constantly until melted. Remove from heat, add remaining chocolate and stir occasionally until smooth.

Stir nuts and fruit into chocolate and then pour mixture onto paper on baking sheet lined with parchment paper, spreading 1/4 to 1/2 inch thick. Let cool at room temperature until set, about 2 hours. Drizzle with some melted white chocolate if desired.

Break bark into large, jagged pieces and wrap in cellophane or pack in boxes.

**"I'm so miserable without you, it's like you're still here."
Good title for a country song**



RAY PFEIFFER Investment Executive



ACU Investment Services offers you comprehensive financial products and services to meet your needs.

Ray Pfeiffer is committed to offering you the one-on-one attention you deserve.

Schedule an appointment today!

**Alabama Credit Union's
South Huntsville Office:
4769 Whitesburg Drive; Suite 102
Huntsville, Alabama 35802**

256.382.6192 | RPFEIFFER@ALABAMACU.COM

Securities and insurance products are offered through Cetera Investment Services LLC (doing insurance business in CA as CFGIS Insurance Agency), member FINRA/SIPC. Advisory services are offered through Cetera Investment Advisers LLC. Neither firm is affiliated with the financial institution where investment services are offered. Investments are: • Not FDIC/NCUSIF insured • May lose value • Not financial institution guaranteed • Not a deposit • Not insured by any federal government agency.

Cetera Investment Services registered office: 4769 Whitesburg Drive; Suite 102, Huntsville, Alabama, 35802
© 2014 Cetera Investment Services LLC 13-0903 01/14

Southern Comfort HVAC Services

Residential & Commercial

"Take Control of Your Comfort"

David Smart

Phone: (256) 858-0120

Fax: (256) 858-2012

Email: schvac@hiwaay.net

www.southerncomforthvac.net



turn to the experts

All it Cost was a Dollar

by Don Broome



In the year and a half before my Dad died, my Mother was busy working at Huntsville Hospital as an RN and floor supervisor, taking care of him. My Dad, who was a big man at 265 pounds, dwindled to 94 pounds before he died in April of 1964. Christmas 1964 I was a senior at Huntsville High School, left pretty much to myself, I had enormous freedom and came and went when I pleased.

I was working almost full time at the Wynn Dixie located at Haysland Square. I was the first hourly employee hired at that store. With no one at home in the evening, I often would go for long drives out in the country. The only radio station that had good reception was WEUP and I would listen to their talk programs and music and just kind of get away from the hell at home.

This one night, the subject was the plight of the Harris Home. Mrs. Chessie Harris, an old woman at the time, had a heart that couldn't say no. She had, I think, around 13 children that nobody wanted, giving them love and care.

The program went on to say that Oakwood College had given her an old house to use but the college was too poor to offer anything else. There was to be no Christmas at the Harris Household, and no Christmas Dinner.

I guess this story could have ended there or have been forgotten altogether if. You see, working at grocery stores at Christmas was gravy time because bag boys got really big tips for carrying out the groceries. Half dollars, or even an occasional silver dollar were common. We all had our pockets stuffed with all they could hold by the end of the day.

It just so happened that this was a very cold Christmas and out front was this angel ringing her bell with the Sal-

**"Where there's a will, I want to be in it."
Winston Churchill**

FOR FASHIONS FINISHING TOUCH...

The little things really do count. Earrings, a belt, bag, hat or pin are the little things that complete the big picture of fashions.

**UNIQUE AND AMAZING GIFT
ITEMS FOR THOSE ON YOUR
LIST!**

Rebecca's
Fashions & Custom
Accessories
710 Pratt Avenue
539-3876



Your next move should be to Oxford Townhomes



Choose from large 2 and 3 BR townhomes or 1 BR garden style apartments in a great central location. Lots of living space with private fenced patios, storage rooms, and access to an on-site Business/Learning Center. Best of all, we're a NO SMOKING community.

**2516 12th St. SW, just off Bob Wallace Avenue
Call/e-mail today—256-536-1209 * Alabama Relay 711
oxfordtownhomes@comcast.net**



vation Army kettle. All of the bag boys wanted to see what she would look like without that great big bulky coat on. I suggested that if we all would empty one pocket into her kettle, she would come in to wait for a pick up and would take her coat off.

The first part of our plan worked perfectly. We filled up her kettle and she came in to wait for a pick up, but she never took her coat off. What made me think about Harris Home was the frozen tear on that lovely angel. What we had done with one pocket apiece affected all of us that way.

Mr. Whitt, our store manager, was surprised when I asked him what he would sell me a flat of the day-old bread for. Asked me what I wanted with it. I told him about the program and he told me a dollar. He was going to have to say that a lot in the next few days. I asked about that old candy leftover from Easter, Halloween, etc. A DOLLAR. Hey, how much for a cart of bent cans. A DOLLAR. After five or six carts he stopped us. The Christmas tree in the lobby; all decorated yep A DOLLAR. Two Turkeys TWO DOLLARS. There were five or six cars that left the store Christmas Eve, including a van with a Christmas Tree all were loaded with people and goods.

The house was out in the country back then and as we pulled in, it seemed like we were encircling the house. I looked in through the glass in the door and there was an old gentleman rocking by the cast iron stove. We knocked softly until he heard us, not wanted to wake the children. When he came to the door, there was fear in his eyes, not knowing what a bunch of white teenagers were doing out in the country on Christmas Eve. He asked me who we were and I told him "Santa Claus".

As we brought in load after load of groceries, he sat back in his rocker with tears running down his cheeks as I heard him saying over and over "Lauds a mercy. Lauds a mercy."

That Christmas, the one that was going to be so sad, turned into one of my most cherished memories. And to think it only cost each of us a dollar.

A thought I've had many times since that night is that we gave and put out effort one time and have relived that wonderful moment of sharing over and over.

"I've reached the age where my train of thought often leaves the station without me."

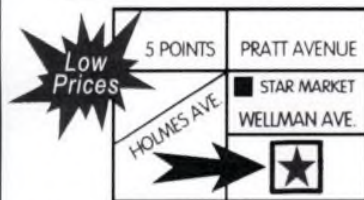
Vivian Kruse, Huntsville

Op' Heidelberg

Serving hearty German fare
in Huntsville Since 1972.



6125 UNIVERSITY DR.
256-922-0556



**RYO Tobacco - 4 Aces
Bacco - OHM - Largo
Smokin' G - Tube Cut**

**\$1.90 Grizzly
\$1.95 Copenhagen
LC Straight & Wintergreen
\$3.85 Pall Mall
\$3.94 L & M
\$4.22 Winston**

804 Wellman Avenue
Next Door to Thai Garden 256-520-6481

www.LittleTobaccoStore.com

Dealing with Mental Illness

by Scott Nixon



After reading the October story "A Family in Crisis", I decided to share my struggle with mental illness. I would like to start out by saying that I have been married 22 years and I have two boys ages 21 and 20. I am so proud to say that, because my family is my life. Jesus is my Saviour as well.

I have dealt with depression since I was in elementary school. The term for that in those days was "cry-baby". I had to deal with a lot then, a lot of hurt. I am 46 years old and I am on mental disability. Do I want to be? No. Do I have to be? Yes.

I put in 20 years of work, mostly labor jobs. Many different jobs. I tried so hard but it never worked out and I still feel ashamed.

My teenage years were horrible. All teenagers have a hard time. I understand that completely. I was different - thoughts of suicide, missing an average of 30-40 days of school a year and being bullied and made fun of. I took it but yet I'm still here. I am embarrassed by this illness still to this day. There was no official diagnosis in those days, like there is now. I felt like a loser. I just wanted to be happy, that's all.

I was married at 24 to the most beautiful woman, inside and out, that most men would dream of. I am so blessed. She saw my struggles. I would cry and be afraid, but I didn't know why. It was a nightmare. When I was 28, she said "Maybe you should see a doctor." She stood by me through the hard-

Ever stop to think and forget to start again?

GLASS

For Any Purpose

PATTERNS FOR—

Table Tops
Dressers
Radio Tables
Desks
Mantles
Counters
Etc!

All edges ground and polished.

Call 364 and let us make you an estimate.

Huntsville Glass & Paint Co.

(Original ad from Jan. 30, 1940)

Offering

Historical Quality
Restoration Glass

Serving our good customers
for 70 years

256-534-2621
2201 Holmes Ave. NW

Tenders!



Where the chicken is kickin'!

Dine-in or Carry-out!

Yes! We Cater!!!



533-7599

800 Holmes Ave.
Five Points

464-7811
Madison

On Hwy. 20 - Across from Walmart

Some of the best tastin' chicken anywhere!

est times in my life. My illness was getting worse all the time. Why was I so sad? I had a perfect wife and 2 amazing boys. They were my world. Why was this happening to me?

Some days I was hyper and on top of the world. Soon after, I would hit rock bottom. I would sit on the side of the bed and just cry. I could not leave my home and go to work. I didn't know why. I would get back in bed and pull the covers over me, just to have darkness. I felt hopeless. When I was feeling better I would write song lyrics and play guitar; music was my escape.

In 2002 I was diagnosed with severe depression and Bipolar Disorder. There was finally a name for my illness. I had left a trail of hate in my life. Co-workers and family members, all except for my wife and kids, all disowned me. It still hurts because I never meant for that to happen. I lost good friends constantly because of this illness.

The stigma of mental illness hurts and is very cruel. You know what though? I am still here and I am still fighting this as best as I can. I refuse to give up. I take my medication every day. I still have my bad days of depression and medication is not always a cure. It's like a band-aid but it's so much worse without it and I am blessed to have it.

I have read "Old Huntsville" since 1993. Years later I thought, maybe I should write an article and see if it could be published in the magazine. I had stories I wanted to tell and it was for a great cause, so I sent one in.

Cathey Carney accepted my story for publication in the magazine and I so much appreciated it. I have now been in several issues and that is a true blessing for me. I have always wanted to help others if I could. I was helped when I did not know what was wrong with me.

There are so many who suffer from depression and anxiety and mental illness. They can't help it. I know this because I have it. If this helps anyone, that makes me feel great. Get help, talk to people about this. It can get better. I owe so much to my wife and kids, always remember I love you so much. I will never give up.



There are worse things than getting a call for a wrong number at 3 a.m. - it could be the right number.

Frazier Home Inspections, Inc.



Inspections performed according to ASHI Standards

Johnny Frazier, Inspector
AL License # HI-1047

Cell (256) 603-8430
Home (256) 534-0277

Before you buy a home, have it inspected by a professional.



"Neat and Affordable"

- Interior and Exterior Painting**
- Wallpaper Removal & Sheetrock Repairs**
- Home Repairs and Remodeling**
- All Pressure Washing Services**

We wish you Happy Holidays and a Prosperous New Year

256-683-0326

Call for a Free Estimate



Email us at whitesockpainting@yahoo.com

Proud Member of BBB

3313 Highway 53 - Huntsville, AL 35806

A GOOD CHRISTMAS EVE

by Malcolm W. Miller

Christmas was quite special during my early years of being married to my first wife, Mary Frances. We had three small children; Marie, Tommy and Doug. Every year Mary Frances made Christmas a very special season which always included family. We wanted to give the children as many Santa Claus presents as possible. I hate to say it, but some years we were still paying for Christmas when the next Christmas rolled around.

Mary Frances always had a Christmas Eve meal with all the trimmings and it was enjoyed by all the family. She had her own special recipes for cookies and all types of Christmas goodies.

Many families have problems and as time rolled on after the two older ones were away from home and only Doug was home I felt as if I should leave home. As I have thought back many times this is a time in my life that I wish I had done differently. I suppose a few of us seniors can think back to some of those times.

The Christmases after that were quite lonely for me as I was not included in the family gatherings. I missed a lot of these special holidays. Also I did not feel welcome at the Christmas events at my brother's homes although several of them would invite me. I remember some Thanksgivings and Christmases that I ate a can of beanie wieners by myself in lieu of going to the family gatherings.

Later, my granddaughter Jennifer would help Mary Frances with the family Christmases and after some time they would celebrate Christmas with the family and then have a separate family gathering that would include me. That made me very happy as I could see my grandchildren and great-grandchildren during the Christmas season. Jennifer carried on the family tradition of ham and cheese sandwiches baked in the oven, chips and dip, and the Christmas cookies made according to the old tried and true family recipe. Marie always contributed her specialty, a fruit cake.

The Christmas before Mary Frances passed away, Jennifer included Mary Frances and me in the same Christmas Eve celebration. That Christmas Eve made me feel better and made me think perhaps a bit of the hard feelings towards me had been forgotten. I feel that Christmas Eve was one of the best Christmases I have had.

Tears still come to my eyes when I think about the forgiveness that is sometimes shown by your family and friends.

Hampton Cove Funeral Home, Crematory And Cemetery

Helping families honor the lives of those they love

Affordable Funeral and Cremation packages done with dignity

Simple Cremation starting At \$995.00

Call for details on Preplanning

256-518-9168

Hampton Cove Funeral Home
6262 Highway 431 South
Hampton Cove, AL 35763

COMPUTER PROBLEMS?

Thorough Diagnosis and repair of computer Problems. Spyware & Virus Removal. Tutoring Available. In-home Consultation and Flexible Schedules.

MARK MAGNANT

• UAH DEGREE

256-539-1084

Senior Discounts Available

CALL MARK FOR HELP - MENTION THIS AD FOR A 10% DISCOUNT!





An Inclusive, Discovering Fellowship



Sing-a-Long Messiah

Tuesday, Dec. 6, 2016 at 7:30 pm

No Cost

Bring your own Music or Purchase at the Door

Professional Orchestra and Soloists

Handy Avery, Minister of Music

Register to Conduct the "Hallelujah Chorus"

www.weatherly.org



50TH ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LOVEFEAST IN THE MORAVIAN TRADITION

PRESENTED BY THE CHANCEL CHOIR, WEATHERLY FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA OF
WEATHERLY HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2016

PRELUDE BEGINS AT 6:30 PM, PROCESSION AT 7:00 PM

1306 CANNSTATT DR., HUNTSVILLE, AL 35803

THE CHRISTMAS OF 1954

by Austin Miller



The year 1954 was a lean year for our family. It was one of the hottest and driest summers on record. When it did rain it was at the wrong time or too late for the cotton crop. With two mules and a two-horse wagon, we were farming and trying to make a living on twenty acres of cotton. About twelve acres was our own and we rented another eight from Mr. Will Thomas. Mr. Will's property bordered what is now Norfolk Southern Railroad and Dug Hill Road.

That year, due to the drought, we made only six bales of cotton. This did not bring near enough money to pay what we owed the bank, not to mention what we needed to live on for the next year. The cotton was so knotty and opened so slowly that it took Daddy, my brother Berns and me all fall to get it picked.

To his great credit, Berns, who was only eight, worked like a grown person without complaining. Even though he was five years younger, he could pick more cotton and beat me at the scales every time. This brought me much grief from Daddy and considerable gloating from Berns.

Around Thanksgiving, the last shriveled lock was gathered and we were done picking. That's when Mama announced, "There isn't going to

be much Christmas this year." Considering the crop failure, Mama's conclusions about a bleak Christmas were obvious but hearing her say it destroyed all doubts and brought the stark reality of it home.

Christmas was my favorite time of the year and I usually looked forward to it for weeks in advance. The late fall and early

Mary's Rugs

New Rugs Arriving Daily

Huge Selection of Rugs

Round Rugs, Hexagon,
all shapes for any
room in your house.
Great Quality at
reasonable prices



Kenny & Mary Harbin, Owners

Rugs as small as 21" x 34" (washable)
up to 11 ft. x 14 ft. - a rug for everyone!

Rectangle Rugs and runners in all sizes

*Open Sat & Sun 9-5 -
We are Located in the East Wing*

*Located at Limestone Flea Market,
between Huntsville and Athens on
Highway 72*

**Express Wash
Includes a
Free Vacuum**

256.532.2107



Lee's Express Wash

1220 Memorial Parkway NW

www.leesmagictunnel.com

"My pessimism has never failed me, but I'm positive one day it will."

Taylor Hendricks, Decatur

winter of 1954 was different. I just wanted Christmas to come and go.

In the last part of 1954 and most of 1955 we qualified for commodities. This was surplus food given to needy families by the government. Each eligible family came to a designated location and received a monthly ration of cheese, beans, rice and canned meat. Some said the meat was horse meat but that was not the case.

We enjoyed and needed the food, but having to get welfare hurt our pride and was a bitter pill to swallow. What made it so bad was the distribution of commodities was made at Central School. The kids and teachers saw who received commodities and they all knew I was poor. My feelings may not have been true or justified but I felt everybody was looking down on my family and I took it as a personal insult.

When Christmas came, it was not as bad as I expected. Using money Mama had saved from selling butter and eggs; she went to the store on Christmas Eve and bought loaf bread, sandwich spread, apples, oranges and a little candy. Seeing the food brightened all our spirits considerably.

On Christmas day Mama killed a big, fat rooster and made chicken sandwiches for lunch. We loved the food and ate until we were stuffed. Even now, I consider it one of the most delicious and memorable meals. But the best part came when we finished eating.

Daddy announced that he was selling the mules and buying a tractor. To me, getting rid of those cantankerous, old mules was reason enough to celebrate.

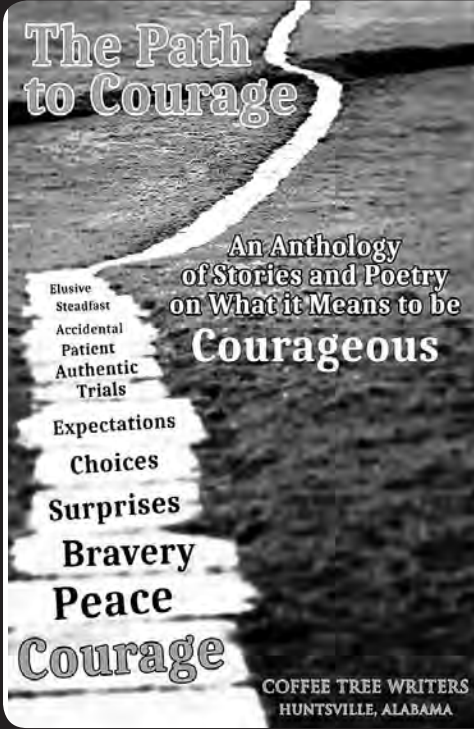
The news of the tractor was a great Christmas gift. Daddy told us he had rented more land and received a loan from the FHA. He said the loan would cover our debt at the bank and would give us enough to live on until we raised a new crop.

The Christmas of 1954 that once seemed so bleak had taken a most pleasant turn. Things started getting better right away and when the 1955 crop came in, we no longer needed commodities.




**Wishing you Love and Happiness
this Holiday Season!**

**Oscar & Maria Llerena,
especially to the Huntsville High
Class of 1966**



The Path to Courage

An Anthology of Stories and Poetry on What it Means to be **Courageous**

Elusive
Steadfast
Accidental
Patient
Authentic
Trials

Expectations
Choices
Surprises
Bravery
Peace
Courage

COFFEE TREE WRITERS
HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA

Courage - a wonderful and inspiring word, yet often misunderstood. Elusive as the wind, it is a label given through legend and story, but is sometimes remembered only by those who witnessed its defining effect.

The many facets of **Courage** as told by the Coffee Tree Writers of Huntsville, Alabama.



NEIGHBORHOOD KID



by Bill Wright

For a long time I never knew his real name. Everyone called him "Hickey", so that is what I always called him. Hickey and his family moved into the neighborhood from Birmingham and they lived in an apartment down the street from my family. Once Hickey arrived he immediately became the meanest and toughest kid in the neighborhood, and that beat out a lot of good competition. Hickey attended the neighborhood elementary school and most kids at school were scared of Hickey. Hickey would fight anyone regardless of age or size. I don't believe Hickey ever knew anyone's name - he just had one (unmentionable) name he called everyone. If there were several kids in a group no one knew who Hickey was referring to.

Because I was a year older than Hickey I could hold my own against him and for this he took a liking to me. However,

my Mother limited my involvement with him. If my brothers and I were playing in the front yard and she saw Hickey walking down the street she would make us come into the house until he passed by.

Hickey would attend the local movie theater and if he saw me there he would come sit next to me, or close by. Once Hickey had seen the movie he would crawl under the seats and stick people with a pin. Soon the Theater Manager would evict him and refund his money. Hickey saw a lot of free movies.

Eventually, Hickey and his family moved back to Birmingham and the neighborhood became a safer place. Hickey graduated from high school in Birmingham and accepted a football scholarship to play at Auburn University. He would also play baseball at Auburn. Years later, on a fine autumn day, several friends and I went to Auburn University to watch a football game. We arrived several hours before game time, so with extra time we went to the football players dormitory. I located Hickey and he was so glad to see me. He had changed so much. Hickey was so polite and respectful and his social graces were now better than mine. He was not the same Hickey I had known in the old neighborhood.

I left Auburn that day with a good feeling about Hickey. For

the first time, I realized Hickey was really not bad. Perhaps it was because I was older, more mature, or because I had just returned from a violent war in Korea; but I saw him in a different light. I now realized Hickey (as a kid) had moved to a new town, a new neighborhood, new school, and it was his way of getting attention and making new friends.

Hickey went on to become an "All-American" football player at Auburn and after college he played professional baseball for the Baltimore Orioles. After his professional baseball days were over, Hickey became an Assistant Football Coach for 16 years under legendary Head Football Coach Vince Dooley at the University of Georgia. In the year 2000, Hickey was inducted in the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame.

Hickey died in 2011. I am not sure any of the kids in the old neighborhood ever knew Hickey's real name. Everyone always called him "Hickey".

His real name was Jimmy Pyburn.

A two-time All-Southeastern Conference selection in football in the 1953 and 1954 seasons, Pyburn once held the Auburn record for yards by a receiver in a season. The late Coach Ralph Jordan said, "We have a passing attack ... just throw the ball in Pyburn's direction."

Star Market and Pharmacy

Old Fashioned Service & Courtesy

**Your Friendly Neighborhood
Pharmacy & Grocery Store**

Located in Historic Five Points
702 Pratt Ave. - 256-534-4509



City News in 1885

* About 7 o'clock last night, a horse attached to the Butcher wagon of Mr. J. Price, became frightened at something and rattled down Randolph Street at a lively gait. When opposite the residence of Rev. F. J. Tyler, the beast concluded to take in the sidewalk, but the wagon objected to this and it became tightly jammed between the shade trees and the fence.

The driver tried valiantly to regain control of the wagon and horse but was scattered over the road and we believe, badly hurt.

* A rope walking artist visited our town this week, but retired with paralysis on being required to take out city and county licenses before getting a chance to risk his neck.

* Deputy Sheriff Fulgham, yesterday, took Kitty Eldridge, a demented young woman, to the State Asylum for the Insane in Tuscaloosa.

* John Rosemeyer, well-known farmer in the Scottsboro area, while bordering on delirium yesterday, piled his bedding on the floor in his room and set fire to it, then mounting a chair on the table in the middle of the room and arming himself with a gun, bade defiance to his imaginary tormentors, when some neighbors heard the noise and rescued him.

His eyes were burned and he was otherwise so badly burned that he cannot live. The house and its contents, worth \$3000, were destroyed.

* The jail situation in Huntsville is pitiful. It's a horrible reminder of

"The things that come to those who wait will be the leftovers from those who got there first."

Freddie James, Huntsville

the dreadful dungeons of the Dark Ages and needs to be remedied immediately. The Courthouse has a Grand Jury room that is germ-laden.



Mary's

Glass Beads, Turquoise,
Stained Glass, Gemstones,
Costume Jewelry, Gifts

**Come See Mary and Discover
her New Unique Items!**

505 Pratt Ave. Across from Waffle House
Larry Cantrell cell (256) 658-4972

62+ AND LOOKING TO PURCHASE A HOME?

Whether you are looking to move to an active adult community, be near your grandkids or be in a warmer climate, the **HECM (Home Equity Conversion Mortgage)** may be right for you.

HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HECM:

- FHA (Federal Housing Authority) insured.
- Allows you to keep more money in your pocket.
- Great for seniors putting substantial down payment on the new home.*

Contact me today to see if a HECM for Purchase Loan may be right for you.

imortgage®



JOHN H. TATE, Loan Consultant | NMLS ID 206781
256.203.7056 | 256.652.5340 | john.tate@imortgage.com

* Program not currently available in all states. NOTE: A reverse mortgage is a loan and may result in negative equity. Minimum age is 62. Borrower must continue to pay property taxes and homeowner's insurance. HOA Fees, if applicable. Must maintain and occupy home as principal residence. imortgage 507 Drake Ave., Suite B, Huntsville, Alabama 35801. Rates, terms, and availability of programs are subject to change without notice. loanDepot.com, LLC dba imortgage NMLS ID 174457. Licensed by the Alabama Consumer Credit License 21189. 08312016 7190





SGT B napping in a helicopter in Iraq

Cat Wanders into a War Zone and Befriends Everyone

Used by permission of The Pet Gazette, publication of the Greater Huntsville Humane Society, written by Danielle Eliser, GHHS Public Relations Manager

We receive so many wonderful stories in our Pet Photo Contest, but one really stood out this year. We are honored to present SGT B's story & amazing photo. "SGT B is from Tal Afar, Iraq. He was the Mascot for

a National Guard Air Cav Squadron. He was a valued member of our squadron, bringing hours of stress relief, humor, and a sense of reality in a combat zone..."

"He was everyone's cat. You would see little bowls of water and food in every office, connex and milvan on the base. He lived off MREs and cans of tuna soldiers could acquire until he received his own care packages from fans in the US. We even cut little cat doors in our offices so he could come in and visit. He was such a valued mascot, when our unit was preparing to leave, we planned to raise funds to bring him home."

"Unfortunately the base where we lived decided to banish all unauthorized pets to include SGT B... SPCA-I came to the rescue and brought in a team of professionals who picked him up and convoyed him to Baghdad, flew him to Washington DC where he quarantined, and then on to Nashville, TN where a trusted good friend of our unit took care of him until we returned."

"SGT B was our combat buddy and NO buddy was left behind. He now lives a very happy, fat, comfortable, spoiled life in Huntsville, AL."

 **B&W AUCTION**

ANTIQUES~FURNITURE~COLLECTIBLES~GLASSWARE
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10th, 2016 @ 4:00 P.M.

NO BUYER'S PREMIUM! MAJOR CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED!	B & W AUCTION 356 Capshaw Road Madison, AL 35757 256-837-1559	CLIMATE-CONTROLLED SMOKE-FREE FACILITY BUILDING WILL BE FULL!
---	--	--

TONY FROM OHIO WILL BE HAULING HIS LAST LOAD OF THE YEAR, PLUS OTHER "SELECT" CONSIGNMENT LOTS! OUR BUILDING WILL BE FULL, SO DON'T MISS THIS SALE!!

ANTIQUES, FURNITURE, COLLECTIBLES, & GLASSWARE - ABSOLUTE/NO RESERVES!!
 Oak/Mahogany/Maple/Walnut Dining Room & Bedroom Pieces, China Cabinets/Breakfronts, Sideboards, Several Chests & Tables, Chairs, Dressers & Chests, Beds & BR Suites, Sofas, Dining Room Suites, Bookcases, Occasional Tables & Stands, Glassware, Advertisement Items, Old Tools, Toys, Radios & Radio Equipment, Pottery, Crocks & Jugs, Picture Frames & Mirrors, Tray Deals, Lamps, Lots of Smalls, and other Miscellaneous & Unique Items. *Check out our pictures & listings at the website below - you won't want to miss this sale!!!*

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

Wilson Hilliard, ASL #97Bill Ornburn, ASL #683

PET TIPS FROM ANGEL

Pets during the Holidays



Be Careful with Seasonal Plants and Decorations

- **Your Tree:** Securely anchor your Christmas tree so it doesn't tip and fall, causing possible injury to your pet. This will also prevent the tree water—which may contain fertilizers that can cause stomach upset—from spilling. Stagnant tree water is a breeding ground for bacteria, and your pet could end up with nausea or diarrhea should he imbibe.

- **Avoid Mistletoe & Holly:** Holly, when ingested, can cause pets to suffer nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Mistletoe can cause gastrointestinal upset and cardiovascular problems. Many varieties of lilies can cause kidney failure in cats if ingested. Choose a pet-safe bouquet.

- **Tinsel:** Kitties love this sparkly, light-catching "toy" that's easy to bat around and carry in their mouths. But a nibble can lead to a swallow, which can lead to an obstructed digestive tract, severe vomiting, dehydration and possible surgery. It's best to brighten your boughs with something other than tinsel.

- **That Holiday Glow:** Don't leave lighted candles unattended. Pets may burn themselves or cause a fire if they knock candles over. Be sure to use appropriate candle holders, placed on a stable surface. And if you leave the room, put the candle out!

- **Wired Up:** Keep wires, batteries and glass or plastic ornaments out of paws' reach. A wire can deliver a potentially lethal electrical shock and a punctured battery can cause burns to the mouth and esophagus, while shards of breakable ornaments can damage your pet's mouth and digestive tract.

Avoid Holiday Food Dangers

- **Skip the Sweets:** By now you know not to feed your pets chocolate and anything sweetened with xylitol, but do you know the lengths to which an enterprising pet will go to chomp on something yummy? Make sure to keep your pets away from the table and unattended plates of food, and be sure to secure the lids on garbage cans.

- **Leave the Leftovers:** Fatty, spicy and no-no human foods, as well as bones, should not be fed to your furry friends. Pets can join

the festivities in other fun ways that won't lead to costly medical bills.

- **Careful with Cocktails:** If your celebration includes adult holiday beverages, be sure to place your unattended alcoholic drinks where pets cannot get to them. If ingested, your pet could become weak, ill and may even go into a coma, possibly resulting in death from respiratory failure.

- **Selecting Special Treats:** Looking to stuff your pet's stockings? Stick with chew toys that are basically indestructible, Kongs that can be stuffed with healthy foods or chew treats that are designed to be safely digestible. Long, stringy things are a feline's dream, but

the most risky toys for cats involve ribbon, yarn and loose little parts that can get stuck in the intestines, often necessitating surgery. Surprise kitty with a new ball that's too big to swallow, a stuffed catnip toy or the interactive cat dancer.

Plan a Pet-Safe Holiday Gathering

- **House Rules:** If your animal-loving guests would like to give your pets a little extra attention and exercise while you're busy tending to the party, ask them to feel free to start a nice play or petting session.

- **Put the Meds Away:** Make sure all of your medications are locked behind secure doors, and be sure to tell your guests to keep their meds zipped up and packed away, too.

- **A Room of Their Own:** Give your pet his own quiet space to retreat to—complete with fresh water and a place to snuggle. Shy pups and cats might want to hide out under a piece of furniture, in their carrying case or in a separate room away from the hubbub.

- **New Year's Noise:** As you count down to the new year, please keep in mind that strings of thrown confetti can get lodged in a cat's intestines, if ingested, perhaps necessitating surgery. Noisy poppers can terrify pets and cause possible damage to sensitive ears. Remember that many pets are also scared of fireworks, so be sure to secure them in a safe, escape-proof area as midnight approaches.

Renfroe Animal Hospital and Bird Clinic



When He Really Needs You... We Offer Quality, Professional Care for the Pets You Love

Phone 256-533-4411

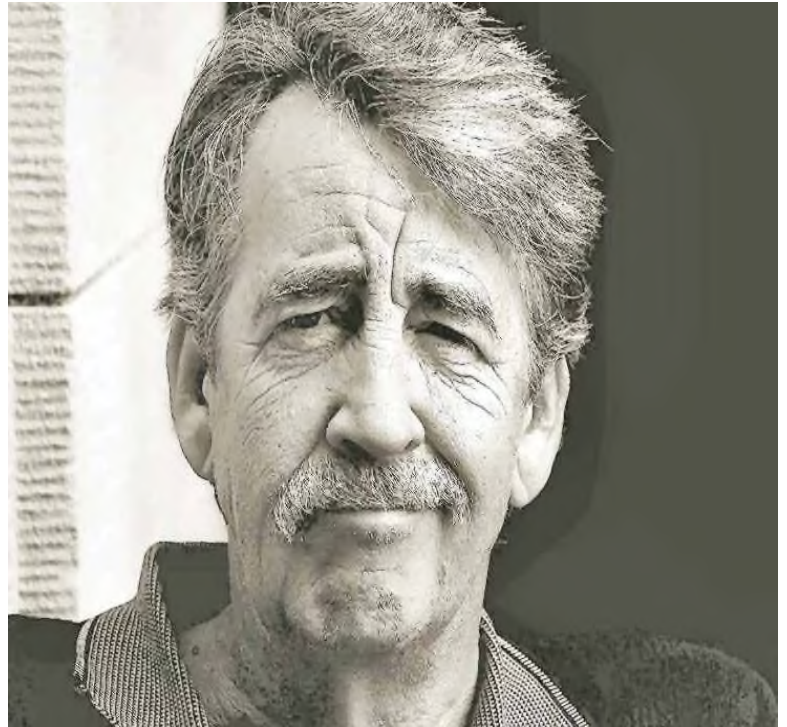
Hours by Appointment

1012 Mem. Pkwy. NW

Across from Books A Million

From the Desk of Tom Carney

The Great Indian Battle at the Huntsville Courthouse



The first word of Indians approaching Huntsville came from a thirsty traveler who had stopped to water his horse. The citizens gathered around as he told of savage warriors he had seen on his journey. The stranger spoke of being chased to the very edge of town by the red men.

You could have heard a pin drop on the old Courthouse Square that day back in 1813 as the townspeople clung to his every word.

Gradually the crowd dispersed, with worried men pondering the best ways to protect their families. When a few men put their women and children in carriages for the journey north and out of harm's way, the panic began. Farmers left their tools lying in the fields, women left their food still hot on the stoves, everyone was trying to flee Huntsville as fast as they could.

Masters and slaves alike competed for any kind of transportation they could find. With the exodus north, plantations were abandoned and families separated as the cry became "Every man for himself!"

"To be without some of the things you want is an indispensable part of happiness."

Bertrand Russell

In a few short hours, Huntsville had become a ghost town.

Meanwhile the famous Indian fighter, Andrew Jackson, who was camped 25 miles away at Fayetteville, Tenn., had received word of the impending massacre. Rallying his troops, he ordered a non-stop march all the way to Huntsville, without rest or food. He reminded the soldiers of all the helpless families that would surely be killed if the Army did not reach Huntsville in time.

As the soldiers marched south to save Huntsville, the frightened populace continued its scramble north. Gloom settled over the town as it became abandoned, with no one left to defend it. No one, that is, except for five brave men who barricaded themselves in the new brick courthouse, determined to defend to the death the town they had helped to carve out of the wilderness.



Steve Cappaert
Broker - Associate
651-7517 Mobile


AVERBUCH
Realty Co., Inc.



7500 Memorial Parkway South #122
Huntsville, Alabama 35802-2297
Business 256/883-6600
Fax 256/883-6650
stevecappaert@knology.net

Capt. Wyatt was no stranger to fighting Indians. He assumed command of the brave little group in the courthouse that day, knowing the odds were against him. But if he could delay the Indians, perhaps Andrew Jackson would arrive with his troops in time to save the day. Rumor had it that even Davy Crockett was headed towards Huntsville with his long rifle, determined to whip the red rascals once and for all!

It was a long, dark night as they paced to and fro in the Courthouse, peering often out the windows. Capt. Wyatt, in an attempt to bolster his men's sagging morale, passed around a jug of whiskey, and then another ... and another.

Finally, with nerves at the breaking point, a shadow was seen darting behind the bushes in the Courthouse yard. A shout rang out: "Indians, the Indians are here!" Men rushed to their posts and began firing.

The Battle of Huntsville was on.

Gunshots rang out through the night as the stalwart defenders fired, reloaded and fired again, pausing only long enough to wipe the powder stains from their tired faces and to take another drink.

As the sun rose over Huntsville that next morning, it revealed a scene of utter devastation. All around the

Courthouse Square, windows lay shattered, doors were shot off their hinges and the acrid smell of gunpowder hung heavily in the air.

Gen. Andrew Jackson and Davy Crockett marched slowly into town at the head of the brave Tennessee volunteers. With guns primed and loaded, the soldiers slowly fanned out across the Square. Veterans of a hundred Indian battles, they were amazed and at the same time terrified at the devastation the night's battle had wrought.

The great battle fought in Huntsville that night might have gone down in our history books except for one small detail.

There were no Indians!

The brave courageous defenders of our fair city had been firing at shadows. The

stranger who had first spread the story of the Indians had long disappeared and the only hostile Indians within a hundred miles were those visions that emerged from the whiskey jugs.

Today, where Holmes Avenue intersects with Lincoln Street, one will see a historical marker that tells how Gen. Jackson and Davy Crockett camped there after a long, hard march from Tennessee. The marker does not tell why they came here.

Now you know.

(Tom's story was sent to Paul Harvey by an out-of-town reader. His office called us and set up a date for featuring it on the radio - it was aired on national radio back in the mid-nineties!)

Big Ed's Pizza

Pizza like you remember it!

**Try our Hand-Breaded
Mozzarella Cheese
Sticks and Homemade
Cannoli with Chocolate
Chip Morsels!**



Hours: Monday Closed
Tues - 4pm - 10pm
Wed - 11am - 10pm
Thurs - 11am - 10pm
Fri - 11am - 11pm
Sat - 11am - 11pm
Sunday - open at 11am

Join us for your SEC and NFL Games!

Kitchen Closes 30 minutes
before closing time

(256) 489-3374

Proudly Serving You for 55 Years

visit us at www.bigedspizza.com

903 Memorial Pkwy. NW, Huntsville Al 35801

"Coming home from a party the other night, I drove into the wrong house and collided with a tree I don't have."

Seen on recent accident report

AN UNFORGETTABLE CHRISTMAS EVE

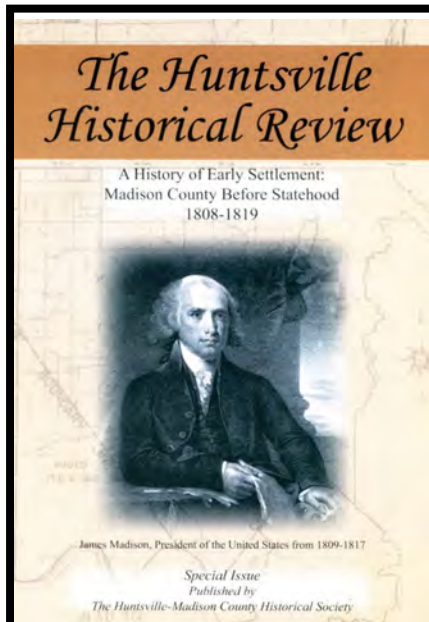
by Bill Wright

The year was 1951. The location was a U.S. Army Advanced Infantry Training Camp, located at the north end of Honshu Island, Japan. The troops waited in formation for the Company Commander to arrive and make an announcement. It was a cold Christmas Eve day with a light falling snow. In the distance, the mountains were covered with snow. It was a scene that would have made an ideal picture for a Christmas card. The mood was jovial because it was Christmas Eve and they expected the Company Commander to wish everyone a Merry Christmas, then dismiss them for the remainder of the day.

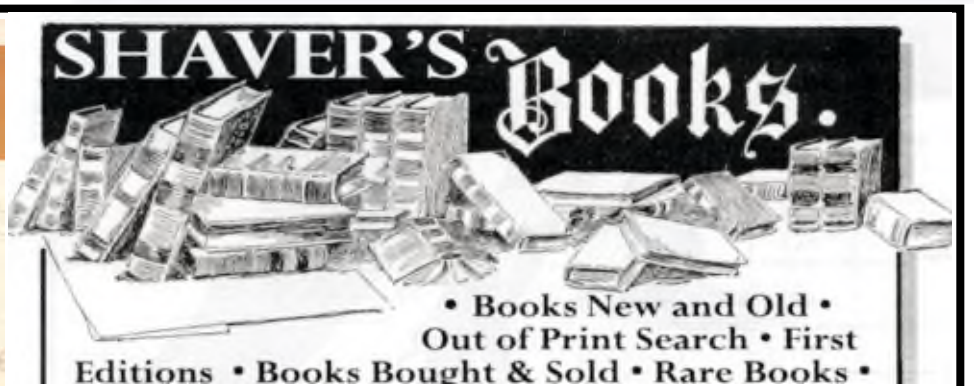
As the Company Commander approached he did not appear jovial, even though it was Christmas Eve. He told the troops their training had been long and difficult. He reminded them of their Basic Infantry Training a year earlier on the sandy soil near the Pacific Ocean in California. The Company Commander refreshed their memory about the beginning of Advanced Infantry Training at the base of scenic Mount Fujiyama in Japan during the spring months. He also reminded them of their amphibious landing training during the summer months on Chigasaki Beach, located near Yokohama, Japan. And finally, he mentioned their current training at the north end of Honshu, Japan in the snow and ice. The Company Commander told the troops their training was now



- * Grub Control
 - * Fire Ant Control
 - * Disease Control
 - * Tree & Shrub Programs
 - * Flea & Tick Control
 - * Fertilization
- www.GreenLand-Turf.com
- Thank you for Your Business!



History of Early Settlement: Madison County Before Statehood - 1808-1819
Makes a perfect gift - \$19.95



The Huntsville Historical Review

Special Issue Published by The Huntsville-Madison County Historical Society

Call John Shaver at 256.533.7364 or email at shaversbks@comcast.net

Available at Railroad Station Antiques

over and preparations would begin the day after Christmas for movement of the entire Regiment to Korea. He told them they would soon experience combat in Korea.

Obviously, they were stunned by the announcement, but not surprised. A year earlier when they were recruits beginning their Basic Infantry Training in California, the Commanding General welcomed them to the Division and warned them, "You will be training to fight on a Field of Battle". Most were in the age range of late teens to early twenties and had come from various small towns and large cities all across America.

By Christmas Eve of 1951 they had completed four months of Basic Infantry Training and nine months of

Advanced Infantry Training. They were now members of a well-trained U.S. Army Infantry Division. For most, this would be their first Christmas away from home. The movement to Korea was successfully made and they would serve the next many months with distinction in combat; helping liberate South Korea from the invading Communist forces of North Korea and China. Some would be recognized for exceptional valor in combat. Most would survive the war in Korea and eventually return to their home towns and families. They had been gone one and a half years.

Many Christmas Eves have come and gone since 1951, but with each Christmas Eve their thoughts have gone

back in time to Christmas Eve of 1951 in faraway Japan, when as young men and soldiers they stood in formation during a light falling snow and listened as the Company Commander told them, "Your training has been long and difficult but it is now over. You will soon face an experienced and tough enemy in combat."

A truly Unforgettable Christmas Eve.



"When I was a little kid my parents moved around alot, but I was always able to find them again."

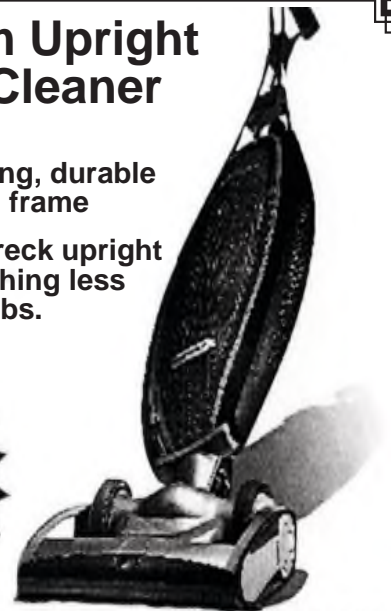
Rodney Dangerfield

ORECK
Clean Made Easy™

Lightweight uprights and convenient hand-held vacuums... or a power-team combo for clean made easy.

Magnesium Upright Vacuum Cleaner

- * Extremely Strong, durable magnesium frame
- * The lightest Oreck upright vacuum weighing less than 8 lbs.



We carry a wide range of cleaning products, Spot Removers; Lambs Wool Dust Mops, and Dusters; Bona® Professional Series Cleaning Products and more!

ORECK clean home center

1010 Airport Road (Across from TJ Maxx)
In Business in Huntsville for 19 Years



Another Friend

by Don Broome



Many of you may know me because of my framing or my photos. If you have come to my home you were met by Sugar, my old Blended-Calico cat. She was found in a barn and my mother had her for 2 years until her death. That was when she came to live with me. My frame shop is in my home and several times a week, I would have customers come and she would always come to greet them. After all, you came to see her, not me. Sadly, after 15 years of her gentle company she got down and on Christmas Eve Day last year I had to tell her goodbye.

It took me a long time to rid my house of her presence; after 15 years she was everywhere and in my heart too strong to have another. Living alone can be hard when you are used to that companion beside you.

About 2 months ago the pound had a free day and even included free spay so I called my daughter and we went down there to look. I had been there before but couldn't take one; it wasn't time yet. I wanted an adult, thinking I could tell from the visit what she would be like.

As we passed by the cages, I noticed a little grey and white face looking at me from in the back of her cage. She looked like she didn't want to be seen much less be picked up. She was so small and really pretty that I reached in and pulled her out. I curled her onto my shoulder and heard her purr. She stole my heart right there. A worker came by and I told her "She's mine" and they said they would get her fixed and all and I could pick her up around Wednesday, this being Saturday. I said I would make the arrangements myself with my vet. They gave me a card for the free spay and I took her home. I went back out and bought proper food and cat box and litter and went home to visit with my new little girl.

She was shy and sweet but she wouldn't eat much of anything and didn't want to play.

I took her to my vet and he couldn't find anything wrong but gave her a strong antibiotic in case. He gave me some baby food and applicators to feed her by hand. She only weighed 2.2 lbs. and after a week of hand feeding every 2 hours she was down to 2 lbs. The vet gave her shots of B12 and Steroids and as I held her before putting her in her carrier, the Vet's assistant said that if love will save her, she'll be ok.

I hand fed her all evening. The next day, I pushed her nose into some cheap canned food and she ate half the can and hasn't stopped since. She weighs 8 lbs. at 5 months old and plays all day. A lot of the time she's too busy playing to let me hold her and I can't tell you what she does at night but she is the sweetest thing without a mean bone in her.

The worst part of having a kitten is at the crack of dawn I have her wanting to play with a string across my face or dragging one of my socks across my bed but maybe I'll live through it.

If you thought Sugar was friendly with my guests, Judy will make you want to take her home.

Lumpkin
Stained Glass
Custom Stained or Beveled Glass
Residential, Commercial
& Church
Serving the Huntsville
area since 1971
Repairs & Restoration
Supplies for the Hobbyist
Also featuring a glass gallery
by local artists
116 Oakwood Avenue
(256) 539-0532

Things Remembered

by David Dickson

The Christmas holiday season is here again. They came a lot slower when I was on the gift receiving end. Now with children and grandchildren it seems to be here every other month.

It does not help that you cannot find the Halloween candy at the store because you are digging past Christmas items. I predict that in the near future we will have Christmas displays year round.

Does anyone remember back when the Christmas Parade was at night? That was always a great thing to see as it came down the street. We were usually on Washington Street near the theaters. I remember the lamp posts being brightly shining. Santa Claus was at the end of the parade and appeared larger than life.

You could smell the popcorn and roasted peanuts coming out of the Kress' store and W.T. Grants was another good store for Christmas sights and sounds. Grants had their toys in the basement and had a good selection.

I loved to search through the Sears catalog and pick out things for Santa to bring. He must have used another catalog because he usually got my order wrong. He must have had a Top Dollar Store catalog.

Downtown Huntsville was exciting during the holidays. There was music coming out of the stores. Old friends were seeing each other for the first time since last year. How many times could you hear, "Ya'll come see us, ya hear?"

I wonder what childhood memories that my grandchildren could be writing about when they reach my age. I hope they remember that their grand dad loved them very much and they know the real reason for the holidays.

"Therapy is very expensive. Popping bubble wrap is cheap. You choose."

Betty James, Woodville





256.534.4452
Toll Free:
877.534.4452
Fax:
534.4456

Social • Commercial • Promotional Items
We can fulfill your printing needs
Serving Huntsville Since 1985



www.lindasprinting.com
linprint@lindasprinting.com



William M. Yates, CLU

Life, Health, Disability
Long-Term Care, Annuities and Group



Ph. (256) 533-9448
Fax (256) 533-9449

In Business since 1974

Email us at mackyatesagy@bellsouth.net

Mack Yates Agency, Inc.
411-B Holmes Ave. NE Huntsville, Al 35801

Alabama Coin & Silver

BUYING - SELLING - TRADING
ESTATE APPRAISALS
Charles Cataldo, Jr. Owner
Phone 256-536-0262

Just East of Whole Foods

900 Bob Wallace Ave., Suite 122
in the Central Park Shopping Center Next to Quizno's

We Buy and Sell Rare Coins and Collectibles

CHRISTMAS LONG AGO

by Hugh Michaels

Christmas, in my family, was always a special time. I always looked forward to seeing what my mother was planning. She always cooked four or five cakes and they were delicious. Mom was a great cook. I always managed to sneak into the kitchen and grab a slice of my favorite coconut cake. Mom would never like that.

I remember how a group of people would gather in town our town of Langston, walk to the foot of Sand Mountain and cut their Christmas tree.

My sisters had the job of decorating the tree, it reached to the ceiling. They would take a needle and pin popcorn to the thread and stretch the string around the tree. Children in the neighborhood would always make "coal oil balls" and throw them into the air. It would create quite a sight to see with all of the balls flying in the air. The balls were bags of rags covered by wire. They were soaked in kerosene overnight. The wire would get hot and could burn your hand if you were not careful.

Popcorn was a favorite item during Christmas. I remember how my sisters, Ida and Flora Mae, would make Sorghum candy. They made it from the juice of sugarcane.

The Sears Roebuck and Montgomery Ward catalogs were my source of wishing. I will always remember how proud I was where I found a toy truck under the Christmas tree. I only got to play with it one day since a friend ran over it with his car.

I learned about Santa at an early age. I refused to admit it. I really never could believe that he could come down that chimney.

Food was always plentiful at Christmas time. We always had plenty of nuts, fruit, and candy.

An uncle, Uncle Sam, and Grandma Myers lived with us and were part of our family. When we had guests and dinner was served, the children had to wait until the older folks were through eating. The children got the "scraps".

If guests spent the night it would create a problem as to where people would sleep. We had two beds in every room, except the kitchen. I was always assigned to the "foot" of a bed or to a pallet on the floor. That was not good sleeping.

Old Time Memories-

We always remembered that the celebration was about the birth of Jesus Christ. A great time in the history of mankind.

Eczema and Psoriasis

Homeopathic Cure

Very Effective

Testimonials Available

M.D., Board-Certified Physician

(256) 924-8311



FIGHT CRIME!

Join Your Community Watch
256-722-7100
www.hsvcommunitywatch.com



Free Access



Without the Big Spring there would not have been a Huntsville, a fact our early citizens realized all too well. Though the owner of record was LeRoy Pope, it was always treated as community property, especially since it provided Huntsville with its water supply.

So important was the spring that in 1843 it was transferred to the city for the sum of \$1 by William W. Pope, son of the original owner.

Perhaps fearing that future city governments would restrict access to the spring, or charge for use of the grounds, the deed specified that

"... the mayor and aldermen, and their successors shall furnish free access at all times through the lands herein conveyed to said spring, and hold the same or the promenades and pleasure grounds of all such peaceful persons as may choose to visit same."

The spring and the park remained unrestricted except for a brief time in December 1941, when the city government, overcome by war hysteria, posted barbed wire and armed guards around the spring and the entire park to prevent poisoning by Japanese agents.

A public outcry quickly forced the city to remove the fence (the guard remained for a time) and the park has since remained free to all people at all times.

Senior Caretaker Care for Seniors

Doctors Appts.
Beauty Salon
Grocery Shopping

Light Meal Preparation
Medication Reminder
4 Hour Minimum

Excellent References

Rai Harris

256-776-3923

500 Holmes Avenue



1899 cottage beautifully restored in 2009, with addition of master bedroom and side porch. 2009 roof, HVAC, all new electrical wiring, appliances. Granite counter tops in kitchen with vintage stained glass transoms to dining room & living room. Gas range. Wood floors in all areas except for tile in kitchen & baths. Walk-in closet in master. Yard art/statuary not included but is negotiable. Sit on the porch and visit with your neighbors in the Old Town Historic District, which began to develop around 1880 due to location near the Train Depot. Close to restaurants, grocery stores & shops. MLS#1046908. Price \$464,900

For More Information Contact:



Sarah W. Hereford &
Sarah Lauren V. Kattos

(256) 651-6488 (Sarah)
(256) 348-2311 (Sarah Lauren)
256) 539-0505 (Office)



Van Valkenburgh & Wilkinson
www.VVWRealtor.com
204 Gates Avenue
Huntsville, AL 35801





A Dog Named Christmas

by Elizabeth McKinney

Many years ago, we went to my parents' house for Christmas Day. Dad told us he'd been to the lake just above their home and found that someone had abandoned a small puppy there. He was very timid and acted like he had been mistreated or hurt in the past.

Dad had taken the dog some food, but he worried that the puppy would die in the cold weather and drizzly snow. He couldn't bring it home to his place; he was afraid it would grow into a big dog and chase the neighbors' cattle.

When we left that day, our daughter wanted to go see the puppy, so we drove to the lake. That pup was a sorry

sight, so cold and alone. But my husband told our daughter we couldn't have a dog. When we left, our daughter couldn't stop crying. My husband finally relented and told her we'd go back to get the dog, but it would be her responsibility.

She named the puppy

Christmas, or Chris for short. He grew into a large dog, as Dad had predicted, but he grew into a loving creature and the whole family adored him.

When we went to church near our home, Chris always followed us. He'd lie on the church porch during services, then go home with us.

When my father became ill, we couldn't always get to church. But our minister told us Chris never missed a service. He would lie on the porch, just as he always did; then Rev. Pope would come out and tell him church was over, and Chris would come home. The minister began calling him the church dog. The name stuck, and most of the people in our small community called him that.

Chris has been gone for many years now, and our daughter is grown, with a daughter of her own. But she still keeps a picture of our beloved church dog on her dresser. We'll never forget him.

"Work history - Bum. Abandoned belongings and led a nomadic lifestyle to find myself."

Seen on local job resume

Laughlin Service

Funeral Home and Crematory, Inc.

Serving Families since 1868

Locally owned and operated
Now in our 3rd generation
Professionally staffed 24 hours a day
Crematory on-site
We honor all insurance policies

Pre-planning your funeral is a good way to let your family know your final wishes and take the burden off of them.
Call us for a free, no obligation planning guide.

2320 Bob Wallace Avenue
(256) 534-2471
www.laughlinservice.com

John Purdy
Loretta Spencer
Sarah Chappell

Esslinger Thanksgivings

by Sherrill (Buddy) Esslinger

Thanksgiving is a time for families to get together to celebrate and give thanks for the things we are grateful for. A time to visit and reminisce the past and present. A time to remember family members that are no longer with us. The Esslinger Thanksgiving gathering started in the late 70s and has continued to the upcoming gathering. The first gathering was hosted by Bill & Margaret Esslinger in the Red Cross building on Andrew Jackson Way, Huntsville, Alabama. We continued meeting there for several years.

We gathered in the Senior Center in Guntersville, Alabama in 1990 where Velpo & Sue Mabry were hosts. Then Mary Jim and Charlie Botcher were gracious to host us in their restaurant for the next two years in Oneonta, Alabama.

Then in 1993, Buddy & Sandra Esslinger hosted the Thanksgiving gathering at the old home place of Marvin Esslinger where my older brothers (Bobby/Sam & Neel) and I were born. It was the home of Benjamin Franklin Esslinger built in the late 1800s. Our Family Life Center at Chestnut Grove United Methodist Church was built in 1994 and our Thanksgiving gatherings have met there ever since. Everyone brings their favorite dish and/or dishes. Buddy and Sandra have furnished the turkeys cooked on none other

than "The Big Green Egg" cooker. We are grateful to Chestnut Grove United Methodist Church for letting our families use the nice facilities for our Thanksgiving gathering. Our families come from Vail, Colorado; Atlanta, Georgia; Beaumont, Texas; Birmingham, Guntersville, Gurley, Huntsville, Scottsboro and Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Order Your Copy Today!

Available at





**A BOOK OF
SHORT STORIES
WRITTEN BY
LOCAL MADISON
COUNTY
AUTHORS**

**\$12.99 AVAILABLE
AT AMAZON**

**A PERFECT GIFT FOR THAT
SPECIAL PERSON**

CARSON BROWN ASSO., PUBLISHERS

MADISON STATION ANTIQUES

Southern Antique Furniture, 
Early Pottery & Unique Collectibles!

✧ MADISONSTATIONANTIQUES.COM ✧

110 MAIN STREET, MADISON, AL

PHONE: 256.772.4444

Open Tuesday thru Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

THE OLD CARRIAGE

by Floyd Frazier

It was a cold damp Monday morning in December as Albert and C.W. headed for the horse barn. The sun would not be up for another 45 minutes but the hurricane lamp gave enough light to get through the gate to the hall of the barn. The Myricks had been up since 4:30 and had one of Ma's big breakfasts before going to the milk barn. Twenty-five cows took the family of 6 boys and one girl only an hour and half to milk. Papa had already pasteurized the milk and headed toward his daily delivery route in town in the milk wagon.

The boys led the two big Percheron horses Maud and Henry out of the stall to stand by the gear room for hooking up the harness. They would be headed nine miles out Pulaske Pike to the big pine grove they had contracted to clear, an added income in 1910. They were clearing the land of the trees for fire wood. The big tall loblolly pines were being sold to the local fledgling telephone and utility company to be used as power poles. The wagon bed had been removed so the rear axle could be moved further back to haul the 75-foot long poles.

C.W. was born on a farm not far from downtown Huntsville. Albert was born in Texas in 1896. They had come back to Huntsville when Little Pap had found this dairy farm on Oakwood Road to buy in 1898.

Little Pap was Papa's father and was a Civil War veteran who still proudly wore his sharpshooter's medal to all the local Confederate gatherings. He owned forty acres between Maysville and New Market in Hurricane Valley and lived in a two-room log cabin.

When the boys arrived at the grove, the sun was already mid-sky and the temperature had become quite warm for this time of the year. After unhitching Maud and Henry from the wagon, the logs were pulled to a ramp used to hoist them

onto the front wheel axle and then to the rear. As you can imagine, the three logs were very heavy and extremely long, making turns quite wide and cumbersome.

At noon they hitched the horses back to the wagon and began the slow trip back to the dairy farm. Two miles down the road they came to the dog leg causing the boys to make wide swinging turns to maneuver the long apparatus along the road. Down the road towards them came the McCormick sisters in their fancy Queen Victoria styled carriage.

The sisters were well known in the area as daughters of Cyrus McCormick who wintered in Huntsville at their home named Kildare. The carriage was driven by a young boy and instead of stopping well back from the turn, he continued driving into the wedge being created by Albert and C. W.'s wide turn. As the horses became aware of the squeeze they became nervous, rearing and trying to back up. The two ladies jumped from the carriage and ran down the road away from the mayhem. The

neighborhood
card & gift

in Five Points

Archipelago Botanicals

Lampe Berger

Patience Brewster

Alabama & Auburn Gifts

Kitras Art Glass

Carruth Studio - Stone

Home & Garden Accents

Jim Shore

European Soaps

Come See Our New
Christmas Selections

(256) 534-5854

716 Pratt Avenue
in Five Points

SCOTTY FIX IT

LET ME HELP YOU WITH ANY TYPE OF
HOUSEHOLD REPAIR JOBS!

- * PAINTING, 1 ROOM AT A TIME OR WHOLE HOUSE
- * PLUMBING INSTALL & REPAIRS
- * WATER DAMAGE TO ANY PART OF YOUR HOME
- * ELECTRICAL REPAIRS OF ALL KINDS

(256) 503-2922 OR
(256) 539-7348

15 YEARS EXPERIENCE
LICENSED & INSURED

EMAIL SBSMITH@HIWAAY.NET
VISIT WWW.SCOTTYFIX.COM



men watched in amazement at the sight of the two ladies with their long dresses pulled up to keep them from tripping as they ran. This sight was hilarious and told about for many years afterwards around family get-togethers.

Now, many years later, a young man named Charles McBrayer from North Carolina moved to Huntsville to manage the downtown JC Penney store. After a few months of searching he found the perfect farm for raising his family. Located out Highway 72 east on Steger road (now Wall Rd.) he began accumulating ponies, horses, goats, chickens and other livestock for his new hobby. Soon after attending an estate auction, he came home with some interesting odd items. One was a small wicker pony wagon and another was a fancy worn out carriage. The carriage seats were torn, the wheels had rubber tires that were held on by baling wire.

Through the years at the McBrayer farm, this carriage was hitched many Sunday afternoons and driven by the twin brothers, Charles and Larry, up and down the road. There were always neighborhood buddies who were ready to ride in the carriage.

As time passed one of the neighborhood boys became part of the family when he married the McBrayer's only daughter. Shortly thereafter JC Penney transferred the family back to North Carolina, taking with them the old carriage and leaving that daughter in Huntsville.

With the interest of all of his grandchildren, Big Daddy McBrayer decided to have the carriage refitted. He found an Amish carriage maker in the Shenandoah Valley to do the repairs. On a one-week vacation visiting the family, the son-in-law and father-in-law made the trip to Virginia with the carriage for repair.

A month later the carriage was picked up, complete with new overstuffed seats, new convertible top, and yes, new rubber tires. Another interesting thing was that the hoops over the wheels now had patent leather fenders.

In the 1980s the carriage became idle again and was placed in a dark corner of the basement. As the boys often discussed what we would do with the carriage, Big Daddy decided he wanted no ill feeling in the family and decided to

take an offer to sell to an acquaintance who was starting carriage rides in Charlotte, NC.

Albert, one of the young brothers, was my stepfather and Big Daddy became my father-in-law in 1962. That carriage my stepfather saw in 1910 is the same as the one my father-in-law bought in the mid 1950s and kept until the 1980s. One of the oldest granddaughters has just recently moved to Charlotte and hopefully we'll get to see and ride in the old carriage again.



Sylvester and Stallone

Hello, we are two stray kittens. The Ark named us Sylvester and Stallone. Our coats are black and we have white whiskers. We are called tuxedo cats because of our coloring. **We are living at the Ark until we find a new home.** It is fun here because we are never put in cages. All the cats and kittens at the Ark are housed in free roaming rooms. We were really surprised to see how many animals are living here. We are 4 months old and very healthy. The kitty doctor said for stray kitties we were in great shape. There are lots of kittens and cats at the Ark. We are not the only ones looking for a forever home. Would you consider adopting both of us? We would love to stay together. Always remember everything needs one of its own kind as a companion. If you come to the Ark, ask to see Sylvester, that's me. The guy next to me is Stallone.

139 Bo Cole Rd.
Huntsville, Al 35806

The Ark
A No-Kill Animal Shelter
256.851.4088

Hours Tues. - Sat. 11 am - 4 pm

CLARK ELECTRIC CO.

SERVING HUNTSVILLE AND NORTH ALABAMA SINCE 1939

For All your Electrical Needs

Keep your Family Safe - We Install Video Security Systems

(256) 534-6132

Visit us at www.clarkelectrichuntsville.com

"I finally figured out what I want to be when I get older Younger!"

Maxine

When life was simple...



Huntsville celebrated its 150th birthday in 1955. Most of the men grew beards but for the unlucky few who didn't there were kangaroo courts that would often sentence people to be placed in the stocks on the courthouse square for all to see.

That same year the Parkway opened, the Dwarf Restaurant began business and the Arsenal had 6,500 civilian employees.

Those Days are long ago, but the folks at Woody Anderson Ford still believe in offering the same dedicated, personal service that makes our city such a special place in which to live.



HUNTSVILLE, AL
(256) 539-9441

LOCATIONS ALSO IN
MADISON AND FAYETTEVILLE

2500 Jordan Lane NW
(256) 539-9441
(256) 533-7410

For over 50 years, our courteous, friendly service has never gone out of style.