



No. 294
August 2017



Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

MY FIRST 90 YEARS

Malcolm Miller
Remembers Days
Long Gone

THINKING ABOUT AUGUST, IT WAS VERY HOT IN THE SUMMER WHEN I WAS GROWING UP. WE DID NOT HAVE AIR CONDITIONING OR ELECTRIC FANS. IT WOULD NOT HAVE DONE MUCH GOOD TO HAVE ELECTRIC FANS AS THOSE OLD FARM HOUSES WHERE WE LIVED HAD NO ELECTRICITY. THE FANS I KNEW ANYTHING ABOUT BACK THEN WERE THE CARDBOARD KIND THAT HAD FUNERAL HOME ADVERTISING ON THEM AND WERE USED BY THE LADIES IN CHURCH.



Also in this issue: Remembering Mock Electronics

Lewter's Hardware Store



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**A Hardware Store....
The Way You Remember Them**

Domie Lewter
Mac Lewter

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My First 90 Years

by Malcolm W. Miller

This month, on August 10, I will be ninety years old. I have been trying to remember my other 89 birthdays, however when I was growing up my family were share croppers and we were very poor. I imagine we were working and did not have time to celebrate birthdays. Since it was August we were no doubt working in the fields.

One birthday I remember is the birthday when I was in boot camp and I turned 18 years old. I hate to admit it, but I was very homesick and I ended up in my bunk crying and hoping others didn't notice. Of course, this wasn't the only time I and other young men cried in boot camp. I had never been out of Madison County, I was hundreds of miles from home in a strange state with people I didn't know and boot camp was hard for all of these young men. This was during the time of World War II and we were being prepared for deployment to countries I had barely heard of. Few of us knew what was really going on.

I remember the day I heard of the attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941. I was 14 years old and I didn't even know what or where Pearl Harbor was. From that date on I felt I should join the service and help our country, so at age 17 I had my parents sign so I could join the Navy.

After I returned home and married and had children my wife would bake a cake and we shared the birthdays of our family with the children. I am certain I spent the majority of my birthdays working as most people do. Birthdays are generally not declared holidays and if people have jobs they are expected to be there, birthday or not.

On my eightieth birthday we had a big party at Monrovia Community Center on Allen Drake Drive in Harvest. We had around 120 family and friends present and everyone enjoyed barbecue, chips, cake and drinks. We had music by several people, since I have loved music all my life. On August 12, 2017, we are going to have a repeat of that party. We have invited people to play and sing and people to come eat barbecue with us once again. It's going to be at the Monrovia Community Center, 254 Allen Drake Dr., Huntsville, Al 35806. We would love everyone to come join us!

I want no gifts since I am now living at "Tut" Fan Veteran's Home and I am not in need

How many of us have looked around our family reunion and thought, "Well, aren't we just two clowns short of a circus?"



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of one thing nor do I have room for things here.

Now that I have covered the birthdays, I remember I have been thinking about my ninety years here on earth. I have lived through more changes than most of you can ever imagine. It would be hard for most of you to actually know the way I grew up and the changes I have gone through.

In our home where I grew up as a child we did not have a phone. There was not even one close to where we lived in sharecropper's houses. Now my friends and family carry phones that have cameras, GPS, e-mail, calendar, alarms, maps, weather reports, stock reports, face time and the list goes on and on. Actually these phones do most everything. I would have never expected or even dreamed of that when I was a child or a young man. I did not have a way to contact my parents when I was away at boot camp. The only way we would communicate with those at home was through letters and at that time I was not much of a writer.

Speaking of letters, they are not as popular now as they were when I was in boot camp. Letters at that time took quite a while to arrive at their destination. Now if you want someone to know something you send a text message or an e-mail and it's received the instant you push send. You can't go anywhere in this day and time without seeing adults and children looking at their phones. Even invitations to parties are done on Facebook.


Thinking about August, it was very hot in the summer when I was growing up. We did not have air conditioning or electric fans. It would not have done much good to have electric fans as those old farm houses where we lived had no electricity. The fans I knew anything about back then were the cardboard kind that had funeral home advertising on them and were used by the ladies in church. I remember we loved to sit next to one of those fanning ladies in church during the big summer time revival meetings, when there was a long winded preacher expounding on the

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 Joint Camp

perils of an eternity of fire and brimstone. The breeze from her fan would keep me from being so hot that I felt I had already arrived at the destination the preacher was warning us about.

Without a doubt transportation has changed since I was a young boy. In order to go to town our family had to hitch up the two-horse wagon and look forward to a long bumpy ride, or perhaps we would walk out to the main road and hitch a ride in one of the few cars passing which was rare. Now everyone has their own car and no one would hitch a ride with a stranger.

The old two-horse wagon and many more like it played an extremely important role in many lives as I was growing up. Transportation was truly an important part of the wagon's usefulness but not the only part it played in our everyday lives. By taking the bed off it was immediately converted into a log wagon so essential for hauling in the wood supply to be used in Mama's cook stove and to go in the fireplace to keep the family warm through the long winter months.

It was used for gathering corn, spreading manure, hauling cotton to the gin, hauling hay and taking the family to church. When I was young there were many horses, mules and wagons around the church building. Now fancy cars are parked in manicured parking lots at the churches.

I have been a music lover all my life. I learned to play the guitar upside down as I was left handed and we only had one guitar in the family.

My brother Frank had ordered the guitar from Sears and I believe he paid about \$13 for it and it lasted many years. I was just a young boy at the time and I would sit under a shade tree and play the guitar every chance I had. The guitar had to be shared with my other brothers and the work in the field had to be done so I didn't get to play much, however when I did, it became some of my favorite times.

I also played the harmonica. Later we listened to the Grand Ole Opry on a battery operated radio. I loved that music. Since that time I have played and sang on the radio and made records. After records, there were eight track tapes, then cassettes, then DVDs and now music streams on your phone, on your radios and over the TV's special music stations. Music is streaming ev-

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erywhere you are and everyone is listening to it. There is not a home or a car now without a radio. Country music is the music I love, but is not quite like it was when I was playing guitar and singing. It has changed considerably during the last decade.

I didn't see many airplanes in the sky when I was small. Now flying is an ordinary occurrence for many.

Schools were much different when I was growing up. If the children were needed at home to help with the crops, no one interfered. When I was in high school, students drove the school buses. I don't see that happening in today's world. To be quite truthful I really did not see much need for school except for basketball.

When I returned from the war, I did finish high school at Huntsville High by going in the evenings.

When I was young most families kept their elderly at home and cared for them even when I was a young man. After I married, our family cared for my mother-in-law for several years. There was a home

in Huntsville called the "Poor House" where some elderly were sent if they did not have family. Now there are many facilities for the elderly, like the one where I am now staying. Most of the workers in these facilities try hard to take good care of the residents and as we become older it is the best place for many to be.

Our family, although we were poor, was a loving family. I had a Grandmother, Mama Kate and a good Mother and Father and six great brothers who grew into fine family men. They were all very hard working, but on Sunday we would all take the day off; no work, ball or fishing was ever allowed.

Actually when I was growing up it was a slower, more peaceful way of life and that type of life now seems to be gone forever.

"Most beds sleep up to 6 cats. 10 cats without the owner."

Stephen Baker





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We're Not in Kansas Anymore - Observations about Living in Huntsville

by Elizabeth Wharry



My husband had landed a job with a local engineering firm in Huntsville in 2009.

We had to find a house and yard that could accommodate our needs. Our realtor was a wonderful asset and found us a home with little fuss.

Coming from Kansas to here was quite a culture shock. The biggest puzzle was seeing so many people wearing clothing and caps with a bright red A on them.

I said to my husband, "You told me this is the buckle of the Bible belt...look at all those people wearing a scarlet A!"

Our realtor overheard my comment and smiled. I asked her what was so funny...she kindly explained that it wasn't scarlet, it was crimson. I was still clueless...it was obvious that I had never heard about the wild enthusiasm of Alabama fans.

She went on to explain about the rivalry between Alabama and Auburn University.

She said that I definitely would have to pick a side...that the three religions here were Baptist, Methodist and Football. I gave her a blank look, and said "I don't really follow football."

Uh huh...I soon discovered that I wasn't in Kansas any more!

Golf can be defined as an endless series of tragedies, with an occasional miracle, followed by several bottles of ice cold beer.



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The Carroll Grocery Store

by Ruby Crabbe

The graveled road on 5th Street, now better known as Andrew Jackson Way, had felt many a bare foot going across it to Carroll's Grocery Store. J. D. and Flossie Carroll were two of the nicest people you would ever want to meet.

I remember this one day in particular, Mama had sent me to the store and as usual I was barefoot. The weather had gotten cold but a lot of the kids back in those days didn't have shoes to wear no matter how cold the weather got.

So there I stood in Carroll's grocery store with my feet as bare as the day I was born. Mr. Carroll called his wife over to where I stood and told her to "put shoes and socks on this child's feet and legs."

And what beautiful shoes and socks they were! The knee-high socks were fit for a queen to wear. And those shoes ... I didn't even want to pull them off when Mama put me to bed that night. Mr. Carroll told me to send my Sis, Eva, over to his store so he could fit her with shoes and socks also.

Next day in school my Sis and I thought we were in "High Cotton" with those new shoes and socks. Late that evening I saw Mama going across the road to Carroll's grocery store. I didn't have to ask her why she was going - I already knew. She was going to thank those people for their kindness and generosity in making two little barefoot girls very happy.

Years later Bill and Christine Thigpen took over the Carroll grocery store. Christine was the daughter of J. D. and Flossie Carroll. I would be at a loss for words in trying to describe what kind of people the Thigpens were. Just by their everyday living and the love they shared with their fellow man spoke more than words ever could. They never hid their love of God. And like the Carrolls, made everyone feel special and loved.

Now when I ride down Andrew Jackson Way and see the place where the Carroll Grocery Store used to be, my mind goes in reverse and again, I feel rewarded and blessed by the kindness the Carrolls and Thigpens showed that little barefoot girl.

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A Tale of Two Friends

by Tom Carney, published in 1995 "Old Huntsville" Magazine

Earl Frazier and J.B. Webb had a strange relationship. They were good friends and spent much time in one another's company. They shared the same friends and had even once talked about opening up a garage together.

Unfortunately, J.B. Webb was a bootlegger and Earl Frazier was a deputy sheriff whose job was to put bootleggers out of business.

Huntsville in the 1950s and 60s was a much different place than today. It was still a small rural community, where everyone knew everyone and a man's word was his bond.

J.B. Webb's bootlegging enterprise operated out of an old frame house off Monroe Street. It was reported that he began the first "curb service" in Huntsville. A customer could pull into an alley next to his house, blow their horn and someone would take their order. He stocked a wide variety of beers, whiskeys and an occasional jar of moonshine, all of which found a ready market among Huntsville's citizens.

Webb and Frazier had been friends for years when Webb heard the new sheriff was looking for another deputy. Immediately he sent word to the sheriff, recommending Frazier for the position.

Earl Frazier was well qualified for the job. He was honest, a native of Huntsville and above all, a man whose physical size demanded instant respect from any would-be law breakers.

The same day, after being sworn in as Madison County's newest deputy, Earl stopped by to express his thanks to J.B. After exchanging greetings, the two men sat down at the kitchen table to enjoy a drink and talk of old times, much in the same manner they had done for years.

Their conversation was interrupted, however, by the loud blowing of a car horn in the alley next door. Webb disappeared outside, took the order and then came back in the house to get the merchandise.

"I wish you hadn't done that," drawled the deputy as he watched Webb retrieve two bottles of whiskey from the cupboard. "Why?" replied Webb, not really paying attention.



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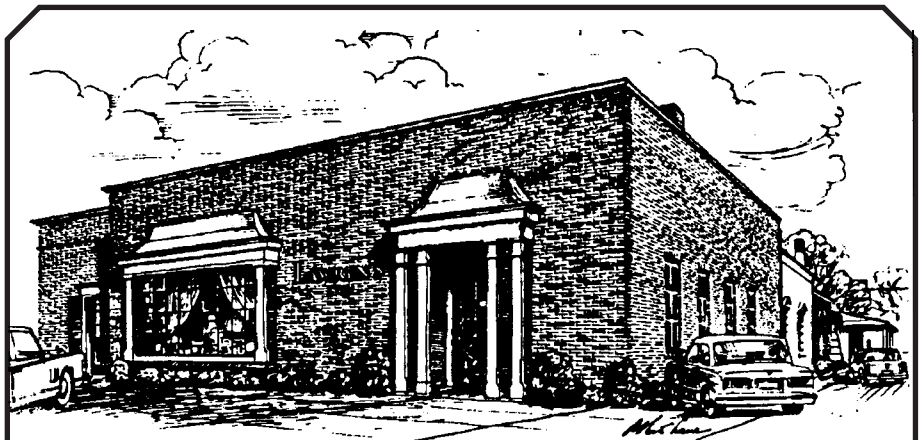
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"Cause now I got to arrest you for selling!"

Strange as it may seem to people today, Earl had sworn to uphold the law regardless of his personal friendships. Even stranger was the fact that Webb respected him for it.

Arriving at the jail and preparing to make bond, Webb realized he had no money with him. Of course, the deputy immediately loaned him the money to get out of jail.

Several weeks later, Earl again arrested Webb for selling liquor. And once again he made bond for his good friend.

Arresting his friend became almost a regular occurrence. Finally, totally exasperated, Earl told Webb, "We gotta do something! I can't afford to post bond for you no more."

Webb understood Earl's predicament. Every time he was arrested it cost his friend \$ 100.00; money that could not be returned until after the court date.

Finally, Webb went to the bank, borrowed \$500.00 and gave it to Earl. "This way," he said, "I figure I'm good for another five arrests."

Periodically, just before elections or holidays, Huntsville's finest would stage raids on the community's bootleggers. Though it was a nuisance, J.B. Webb accepted it as the cost of doing business.

One time, however, he received a tip about an impending raid that worried him. He had just received three cases of an expensive Scotch, part of his Christmas stock, and could not afford to have it confiscated.

Hurriedly placing the liquor in the back of his pink convertible, he drove to Earl's house where he hid it inside a shed behind the house. If the neighbors saw him they paid no attention as Earl and J.B. were continuously borrowing lawnmowers and tools from each other.

Just like clockwork, the police arrived the next day and raided the premises. After they left, Webb sat down at the table to have a drink when Earl walked in carrying a package.

"J.B.," he said. "I just wanted to come by early and give you your Christmas present."

The old bootlegger, after expressing his thanks, opened the package to reveal a bottle of expensive aged Scotch.

Touched by his friend's generosity, Webb asked, "Where did you ever find such good


Scotch?"

"Oh, it's nothing," the deputy replied, "I was cleaning out my woodshed the other day and I found a few cases I must have forgot about, so I figured I'd give them to my friends for Christmas presents."

"Some people should use a glue stick instead of lip stick."

Angela Sisk, Gurley

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From the Kindness of His Heart

by Melba M. Hunt

My story begins in 1935 during the Depression and seven years before my birth. Coy William Michael, my dad, worked at the Margaret Yarn Mill in the shipping department.

The Huntsville mill shut down for a while and with no income and a new baby, William Howard Michael, the family finally ran out of food.

In desperation, Coy went to the A & P grocery store (a chain store that was not supposed to extend credit) and told Mr. James "Tokey" Walker of his dilemma and asked if he could get a few groceries for his wife and new baby. Mr. Walker told him to get a buggy and fill it up.

Two weeks later the Mill reopened and when Coy got his first paycheck, he went back to pay for the groceries he had charged at the A & P store.

Mr. Walker accepted only half of the money and told him to use the rest of it for whatever the mother and new baby would need.

As this story was related to me by my mother, she also said Mr. Walker took the money out of his pocket to pay for those groceries in advance.

When Mom read Mr. Walker's obituary she asked me to write this story about a kind friend for whom we will forever be grateful.

"I tried to be normal once, and it was the worst 2 minutes of my life."

Don Broome

"When you want to stay home from school you have to stay in the bathroom for a long, long time."

Matthew, age 9

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If They Will Have Me

by Bill Wright

My grandson Kyle was about 4 or 5 years old when he started bringing his baseball glove and plastic bat with him when he came to visit us. His routine was the same with each visit in that as soon as he walked in the front door he wanted to play baseball. We would go outside to the backyard and I would pitch a plastic baseball to him as he batted. Even at that age he could hit them over the fence into neighbor's yards. After about 15 minutes I would tell him I needed to rest some.

As we sat in lawn chairs I explained to him that grandfathers did not have energy like young boys. He would patiently wait until I told him I was ready to play more baseball. Sometimes he wanted me to bat so he could pitch. He would pretend he had runners on base and would pitch from the "stretch".

As the years went by and he got older we still played baseball in the backyard. It was the same backyard his father had learned to pitch baseball. Because I had coached several Little League sports years earlier, I felt qualified to evaluate athletic talent and I saw some unusual talent in him.

Kyle started playing all of the Little League sports, such as football, basketball, soccer and excelled in all of them, but baseball was his favorite sport. He always remained the same, whether he had played good or bad. Once a game was over he was ready to move on and not dwell on past performance. Once I had complimented him on playing very well after a game was over—his only comment was, "can we go play putt-putt golf?"

Once I ask him if he would someday like to play for the New York Yankees. He answered "no" and said he wanted to play for the Atlanta Braves, but quickly added, "if they will have me."

After age 12 he decided to focus on playing just baseball, although coaches in other sports encouraged him to also play their sport. He continued to excel in baseball as he moved through the various levels in Travel Baseball, Middle School

baseball, and High School baseball. As a proud grandfather I delighted in taking him to many of the Travel Baseball games and practices.

During his high school years he would earn All-State honors as a Sophomore, Most Valuable Player as a Junior in the North/South Alabama All-Star Game, and All-State again as a Senior. His performances would not go unnoticed by college baseball coaches, as the baseball scholarships offers came on a frequent basis. In his junior year in high school he selected Vanderbilt University as the college he would continue playing baseball. Vanderbilt was ranked as one of the top college baseball programs in the country, plus its high academic reputation.

He continued to excel in baseball playing for Vanderbilt University. His Freshman year he had the honor of pitching in four College World Series Games in Omaha, Nebraska. At the end of his Freshman year he would be selected as a Freshman All-American in baseball. After his Sophomore year he was selected to play for Team USA, Collegiate All-Stars and would pitch in China, Japan and Cuba. At the conclusion of his college Junior year he would be selected to the Southeastern All-Conference Team.

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es and family members would gather around the TV waiting for the baseball draft selections. As a proud grandfather I was hoping if he was not drafted 1st he would not be drafted until the 5th selection, which would be the Atlanta Braves.

The first four selections were made and his name was not called; however, on the 5th selection the Atlanta Braves announced they had selected Kyle Wright from Huntsville, Alabama, a former Buckhorn High School baseball player, and current Baseball Pitcher for Vanderbilt University as their number one draft selection.

A childhood dream had happened. With the early draft selection will come a hefty signing bonus.

Initially, Kyle will be assigned to an Atlanta Braves minor league team, but hopefully in two years he will be a member of the Atlanta Braves major League team. In off-season he will attend Vanderbilt University to receive his college degree.

Yes Kyle, the Atlanta Braves will have you.

Also he would be selected to an "All-America Team".

His performance in baseball attracted the attention of many professional baseball scouts as evidenced by the many Scouts that attended the Vanderbilt games when he pitched.

The 2017 Major League Baseball Draft would be held June 12, 2017, starting at 6:00 P.M. Vanderbilt team-mates, coach-

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MOCK ELECTRONICS, WE REMEMBER YOU

by M.D. Smith, WA4DXP



The Smith family was in the Radio & TV business in Huntsville starting in 1958. Mock Electronics was a mainstay for electronic tubes and parts for over 70 years. Mr. Jim Mock (ham call W4OGV) built his first store in Decatur in 1946, just after the war, and opened a store in Huntsville in 1955 on Pratt Avenue. He then moved to the store we all remember on South Parkway at Mock Road in 1961.

Mrs. Mock took over running the new store after she and her husband divorced in 1961. Under that divorce agreement, Mrs. Mock got a large sum for her interest in the store, and Mr. Mock agreed to pay her \$90 a week to continue to run the Huntsville location. She continued to drive over from her home in Decatur every single day until she turned over the management of the store to her daughter, Barbara Compton, around 1996.

Barbara told me when Electronic Wholesalers (EW) opened a new store nearby on Bob Wallace in 1962, they tried to hire Mrs. Mock to run the store for them. Mr. Mock then decided to raise Mrs. Mock's salary to \$150 a week and a small commission on sales which were hitting \$200K gross a month. She never got another raise.

Mrs. Mock's health continued to decline and she died in May 2000. Mr. Mock died in February of 2012. Barbara Mock Compton closed the store after no buyer could be found, on January 31, 2014.

When I talked to Barbara in 2012, she said, "The store looks, operates and customers say it smells the same as it did 40 years ago. For small

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electronic parts, wires, resistors, capacitors, volume controls and more, this is still the best place to come for those electronic needs."

Barbara told me in August of 2015 that she has a very large 24 x 24 foot, two story garage filled with "good stuff" she just couldn't dispose of, like all the electrolytic and tubular capacitors she dumped when they left. She said she almost had tears doing that.

A dealer bought all her tubes and resistors. BUT, she saved ALL the fuses of every size. From the tiny ones that look like a resistor, to the ones in the small square metal tin boxes, to ones larger than a big cigar used in breaker boxes, and yes, the old screw in fuses that go in house panels that have not yet been converted to breaker boxes. She has all the relays and sockets some fit in as well as all the literature on Mock and a complete set of every SAMS manual on about every tube radio & TV ever made.

She DID finally part with the huge old black transmitter that weighed a TON, literally. The man who finally showed up to get it, broke his dolly, then it would not fit in the door of his motor home, so he strapped it on the rear bumper doing some damage to the body as he did it. But he DID carry it away. He had no idea of all the steel inside the refrigerator-size box that he thought would be an "easy tote".

Barbara wrote this on her Mock Facebook page in February of 2014: "Thanks to all our loyal customers who have supported us for almost 70 years. My Mom and Dad started their dream in 1946 with not much money but a lot of hard work and sacrifice. It was very hard to turn the key in the lock for the last time."



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Heard On the Street

by **Cathey Carney**



Ray Garner was our first caller to identify the Photo of last month as that of **Ret. Judge Danny Banks**. Ray wanted to donate his year's subscription to **Tut Fann Veterans Home** which I will do, they will certainly appreciate that! Thank you Ray.

Nicole Jones is a lady many in this area know. She is running for Alabama State Senate, District 7, which will be held in June next year. She had her kickoff at Tate Farms in Meridianville with plenty of good food and music. She told us of her vision and plans.

Gladys Pack had a big birthday on July 18 - she turned 101. She is so loved by her kids and grandkids and they all took part in the planning of her party, which turned out to be so much fun. Happy Birthday to you Gladys!

Elizabeth Wharry called with a great idea. For butterflies, she puts some hummingbird food (sugar and water, 1:4) in small shallow containers. Caps from milk jugs

work well. The butterflies love this and in this hot weather it's hard for them to find food. My question last month is what do the little butterflies do when it rains so hard, where do they go? Elizabeth said they will shelter on the undersides of leaves. She's seen them on leaves of hydrangea, crepe myrtles, magnolias and Rose of Sharon. Once their wings are wet, they can't fly. She said that sadly their life spans are short lived, especially the small ones.

John E. Carson and his sweet wife **Marlene** will be celebrating their 44th wedding anniversary on Aug. 4th. Happy anniversary to the lovebirds!

It's good to have **Father Phil O'Kennedy** back in Huntsville. He was pastor at Holy Spirit Catholic Church on Airport Road for many years, then went to Madison. He's now pastor at Good Shepherd in south Huntsville at 13550 Chaney Thompson Rd. Welcome Fr. Phil!

Malcolm Miller, who has written for probably 20 years for Old Huntsville magazine, has a big birthday this month. He turns 90 on Aug. 10! And to celebrate his family is throwing him a huge party on Aug. 12 at the Monrovia Com. Center. Everyone is invited!

A well-known and much loved plastic surgeon passed away on June 30. **Dr. Deason Dunagan** was only 71 when he died. He held an Airline Transport Pilot certificate, which is the highest FAA certificate that can be earned. He was a loving husband, father and grandfather and gave of his time and talents to kids in need with the Gordon Robinson Foun-

ation. Dr. Dunagan leaves wife **Lynn**, daughters **Rachel Wiles (Philip)** and **Sarah Labosier (Andrew)**; stepsons **Chris Thrash (Kathy)** and **Brandon Thrash** as well as his beloved grandchildren. He will be missed by so many.

Happy Aug. 5th Birthday to **Missy Leatherwood** from her mom-in-law **Rosemary Leatherwood**. Rosemary wants Missy to know how very much she's loved.

It's amazing to think that the **Kaffeeklatsch coffee shop** on Jefferson Street downtown has been in business in that location now for 41 years (in May). If you've driven downtown during the week you've smelled that delicious roasting coffee during the middle of the week.

Grant and Kathy Heath are the owners and they're not retiring any time soon! They love the coffees they sell and Kathy works on their Facebook page. They have a new crop of Milk Oolong Tea that's known for it's "Peaches and Cream" flavor - that sounds so good. They sell a coffee that has a slight vanilla tinge reminiscent of dulce de leche. Stop by and and visit - you'll be glad you did!

I discovered the other day (as a 69 year-old user of a "smarter-than-me phone") that **Suri** will

Photo of The Month

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

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This toddler is the website designer for a very popular local nostalgia magazine and knows his way around a radio station.



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tell me everything he can do if you just ask him (my Suri is a guy with an Australian accent). I can just pick up the phone, say "Hey Suri", then tell him to call someone, text someone, etc. Suri will tell me how many calories are in food I'm eating. Also I can say "Set an alarm for 40 minutes" and he does, then my phone alarm will sound in 40 minutes. Really helps with cooking when you don't always hear your kitchen timer. Amazing technology these days.

Happy Birthday to my amazing grandson **Hayden Troup** - he'll be 17 on Aug. 25 and I'm so proud of him. Also happy birthday to that guy who loves Hot Yoga - who's going to be 54 on Aug. 15, **John Troup** of Nashville!

The **Kiwanis Club of Huntsville** sponsored a meeting recently at the Eagles Club where the guest speaker was **Mayor Tommy Battle**. Tommy was there with his wife **Eula** and he told us many interesting things. But then the crowd wanted Eula to tell us about **Free2Teach** that she started for teachers. She started it in her garage, with the idea that she would provide school supplies for teachers for free, and got a few donations from a few companies. It continued to grow and now she's in a 10,000 square foot warehouse on Leeman Ferry.

It's open to all school teachers 3 days a week and they just pick out what they want, for free. Many of the carts are provided by Publix. As a teacher you just enter the building and treasure hunt. So many of our teachers are very cre-

ative with projects for their kids and can find so many supplies all in one place, along with pencils, notebooks, etc. that they need, all at no charge. Even furniture.

I didn't realize that so many teachers would spend their own money to buy school room supplies for their students, because there was no money available for them. Eula works there everyday and would love to see this spread throughout the state - she's a genius!! A simple idea that helps so many. Hundreds of teachers are taking advantage of this gift. So proud of you, Eula.

So in honor of Free2Teach, and to see how many read all the way through my column, I will hide a **tiny apple** somewhere in the pages of this issue. I will award one free subscription to a local caller and one to the first out-of-state caller. But it will be such a small apple, no one will call me. Get out your glasses!

The North-Central Alabama Girl Scout Council held their **Women of Distinction Awards** dinner at The Jackson Center at HudsonAlpha recently, and I was honored to be invited by **Nancy Washington Vaughn**. Nancy is an attorney and was one of the Award recipients. She is currently President of the board of directors for the Junior League of Huntsville, and was also awarded the Huntsville Engineering and Support Center Commander's Award for Civilian Service by the U.S. Department of Army Corps of Engineers. Nancy lives in Madison with husband **W. Hunter Vaughn**

and their beautiful little daughter **Mary**.

John D. Brown passed away almost a year ago, on July 25, and he is missed every day. John worked at Thiokol Chemical Corp. for 35 years and then went to work with his son **Dr. Michael Brown**. His wife **Joyce** told us that he loved reading Old Huntsville magazine each month and the history of this area was so interesting to him. Just wanted to tell Joyce we're thinking about you and sending love.

If you're new to Huntsville - WELCOME! There are so many fun things to do here and the people are the best. People help each other here, which you don't often find in other cities. One place that's on the way to Decatur for you to visit is **1818 Farms**. They sell items that come from their working sustainable farm and welcome all visitors. More info at 1818farms.com.

Remember too for those of you new to our area, you've got to go to **Lowe Mill Arts and Entertainment Center** on Seminole Dr. Over 200 artists will show you their work. It's fascinating to just walk around in Lowe Mill and see the eclectic and beautifully different types of art. There are new studios in there opening up all the time.

As I'm writing this it feels like 105 degrees outside with 90% humidity - drink lots of water if you have to be out and remember that pets can have heat stroke too. The pads of their feet can really feel the heat from the asphalt so be careful they don't get burned.

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Huntsville Favorites - 1925

Taken from the Missionary Society Holmes Street M.E. Church. Thanks to Mr. Newman Ward, who sent us his mother's 1925 cookbook and these delicious recipes.

Mom's Best Apple Pie

- 5 cooking apples
- 2 T. butter, in pieces
- 2/3 c. brown sugar
- 1/2 t. nutmeg

Slice apples and pour into a buttered baking dish with no bottom crust. Sprinkle 2/3 cup brown sugar over all and dot with the butter. Sprinkle with nutmeg and add 4 tablespoons of water.

Pastry:

- 1/2 c. brown sugar
- 1 c. plain flour
- 1/2 c. butter

Mix all with a pastry blender til mixture is in crumbs. Pour this over the apples and bake at 350 degrees and top is browned.

Bess Ward

Date Pudding

- 1 c. chopped dates
- 1 c. chpd. English walnuts
- 1 c. brown sugar
- 1 T. flour
- 1 t. baking powder
- 3 eggs beaten separately, fold whites in last

Mix all ingredients as listed. Pour into greased 8x8" pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes. Cut in squares and serve with real whipped cream.

Mrs. W. E. Voelker

Salmon Croquettes

One can salmon, mashed fine. Salt and pepper to taste. Two eggs and half as much bread crumbs as salmon. Make into rolls, dip in beaten eggs,

roll in cracker crumbs and fry.
India Lowman

Family Brunswick Stew

- 1 whole chicken
- 1 qt. corn
- 1 qt. tomatoes
- 1 pint okra
- 1 pint butterbeans
- 2 onions chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste

Boil chicken until it will leave the bones and be very tender. Pull meat from bones and cut into large cubes, return to the water in which it was cooked.

Add vegetables and cook down until a thick mixture. Cook slowly and stir often to prevent scorching.

Jen Baker

Gibson's

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Scalloped Eggplant

- 2 medium eggplants
- 2 c. cracker crumbs
- 1/2 c. milk
- 1 T. butter
- 1/2 c. ground cooked ham
- 1 egg
- 1/2 t. sugar

Salt and pepper to taste

Boil eggplants until tender. Peel, cut in small cubes. Add salt, pepper, sugar, butter and ham. Put a layer of the eggplant mix in buttered baking dish, then layer of cracker crumbs. Repeat until all is used.

Beat egg, add milk and pour over eggplants. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes and serve warm.

Mrs. Emmitt Barnes

Oatmeal Bread

- 1 c. milk
- 1 t. salt
- 1 c. rolled oats
- 2-1/2 c. plain flour
- 1-3 yeast cakes

Scald liquid, add salt and pour over oats. Cool for half an hour. Add yeast mixed with 1/4 cup lukewarm water and flour and bake at 350 degrees til a toothpick comes out clean, about 40 minutes. A favorite in our family.

Mrs. T. E. Banks

Yellow Nut Cake

- 3 c. plain flour
- 1/2 c. sugar
- 1 c. pecans, chopped
- 1/4 c. butter
- 1-1/2 c. milk
- 3 egg yolks
- 4 t. baking powder

Mix all dry ingredients. Beat eggs light, add milk, melted butter, then pour liquid into flour. Mix well and pour into greased bread pan. Let stand 20 minutes and bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes.

Birdie Lucille Shelby

English Walnut Candy

- 2 c. brown sugar
- 1 T. butter
- 1 C. English walnuts
- 1 c. milk

Boil sugar and milk until a little dropped in cold water forms a soft ball. Add butter, remove from fire and beat until it begins to thicken, add nuts and pour into buttered pan. Cut in squares when cool.

Lucille Blair

Maple Mousse

One cup maple syrup, one pint full cream. Whip both until stiff. Mix well and pack in salt and ice until frozen. Serve with good whipped cream.

Mrs. Ben Johnson



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Eddie

by
Jack Dyer's
Son

On my first day of the fourth grade, in a brand spanking new school, I found myself seated at a pod of four desks located right next to the exit and that suited me just fine. I was the only new kid in a class of twenty-four and a disconcerting bucket full of butterflies were thumping around in my belly. Just the previous day, my family had relocated to our new home in some deep woods, situated a few miles outside the metropolis of Northport, Alabama.

Entering that classroom, it wasn't clear what alligators lay ahead, so a clear path to the doorway seemed a prudent option. I sat with my back to the windows and Eddie (this is a true story, so only first names) was seated to my left. Grady and Orbit (I couldn't make that up), who appeared to be previous acquaintances, sat facing the two of us.

Before even five minutes had passed, I found myself booked for a playground scrap with Grady. I had never been in a fight in my entire nine years of life and wasn't sure what the protocol was, but I reckoned it would make itself clear soon enough. After all, I had seen both the Lone Ranger and Batman in action and figured I would simply follow suit.

During opening minutes, while our teacher organized the class, the four of us had taken the opportunity to get to know one another. I was, as yet, the undetermined quantity and so I mostly listened as the other three, who had obviously attended school together for the previous three years, reminisced about mutual experiences. It wasn't long until Grady revealed his true nature as a bit of a bully, having a penchant for picking on kids who didn't fight back. This quality was manifest as he began making fun of Eddie, drawing a reluctant Orbit into the abuse as well. Grady was an experienced tormenter and as I watched Eddie growing increasingly miserable, it became obvious that he was genuinely afraid of him.

Eddie's bully was good looking, well-dressed, obviously came from money, and therefore, was certainly one of the more popular kids. He attempted to drag me into his cruelty and I was unexpectedly faced with a choice I had never had to consider before. Would it

be wiser to secure my social standing by throwing in my lot with Grady or do I stand up for the mistreated? I don't remember my reasoning, but I decided right then and there that bullies should not be allowed to continue unchecked, if I had any say in the matter. I suppose I picked that moment to choose whether I wanted to be the kind of person who joined in to belittle the weak or the kind of person who defended those who can't defend themselves. Surprisingly and completely unknown to me at the time, I actually picked an unrecognized third choice, but we'll talk about that in a bit.

Eddie was an easy target because he looked and acted a little different from the other kids, although he struck me as a really decent fellow. This was the year 1967 and buzz cuts ruled the day. Eddie wore his jet black hair quite long, keeping it heavily oiled and combed straight back from his face - and this different look was his first strike. Additionally, I soon discovered that athletics was the coin of the realm in rural Tuscaloosa County and Eddie was anything but a player - being a non-athlete was

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strike two. I am not sure if this qualified as a third strike against him or not, but most peculiarly, he always wrote with a blue pen. The two of us ended up sharing classrooms and classes over the next eight years and I never once saw him use a pencil. In retrospect, I can see that he was socially awkward, although not lacking in intelligence in the least. He simply needed a friend - or at least less jerks in his life and sadly, there tended to be a plethora of jerks and very few grade school friends for the likes of Eddie.

After making my choice, the next thing I knew, I found myself telling Eddie not to worry because I would protect him from Grady. I then made it clear to both Grady and Orbit that they had better leave Eddie alone or I would make them wish they had.

Orbit seemed to not want any trouble at all, but Grady was another story. Generally bullies tend to gravitate to the cowardly side, but I was what we used to call a bean pole and probably only weighed sixty pounds soaking wet.

I did not project an imposing figure and as Grady sized me up, and once he realized that I was seriously opposing him (probably a first), he stopped making fun of Eddie, and turned to focus his full attention on me. He attempted to take some random potshots, but being an unknown, his ammunition was limited and I

gave as good as I got - maybe even a little better.

As you can imagine, being on the receiving end of abuse made him furious and he promised he'd teach me a lesson when we went out for recess. I sat there and marveled at what had come to pass in just a few short minutes of my first day in a new school.

An hour or so later, when we ran out onto the playground, I was invited to play football for the first time in my life. We chose teams and

Grady and I ended up on opposite sides. Our team got the ball first and in my very first play, I became forever hooked on the game. In the huddle, our captain and quarterback, assuming since I was the new kid I must be of professional caliber, told me that he would pretend to give me the ball and I was to hunch over, playacting that I had the ball while running in a certain direction.

We executed the play to perfection and much to my whole team's joy, the other team had zeroed in on me and our quarterback

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had galloped in the opposite direction for a long gain.

In our next huddle, I was told we would run the same play, but this time I would receive the ball and the quarterback would be the decoy. He said, "Try to hide the ball and run toward the goal line." I wasn't sure what the goal line was, so he pointed west and said, "Run as far as you can that way."

We lined up in the formation just as we had previously and this time, assuming it was the same trick play, all but one of the opposing players ignored me and I started sprinting west for all I was worth. I bet you can guess who the "all but one" was and he was coming straight at me.

We were playing touch football, which meant when anyone touched the ball carrier with

two hands below the waist, the play ended. Apparently Grady saw this as his chance to single me out and teach me the promised lesson. He slammed into me, trying desperately to drag me down, but I was moving with a full head of steam and managed to stay upright. He redoubled his efforts and decided to jump on my back, hooking one arm around my neck while simultaneously pounding me with his free fist.

I was probably pumping pure adrenalin at that moment and something deep and stubborn welled up within me and I simply refused to go down under his onslaught. I ended up carrying him piggyback-style well past the goal line while he continued to flail away on my back.

By the cheering and cries for me to stop (ala Forest Gump), I

was certain I had crossed into the end zone and unceremoniously dumped poor Grady onto the ground. As far as I can remember he never said another unkind word to me and he never picked on Eddie again, in my presence. I sincerely wish this was the ending of this tale, but that there is a bit more to go.

For over fifty years I patted myself on the back about the role I had played that day with Eddie and even felt that I had been a good influence on Grady and Orbit, but remember that unseen third choice I mentioned before?

One day while strolling down Memory Lane, a new perspective emerged and a surprising insight materialized. I recognized I had tragically missed an important truth regarding my actions: Fighting a bully is not the same thing



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as defending the bullied. At first glance, the two thoughts in this sentence might appear to describe identical behaviors, but they are really two sides of the same coin. Their disparity becomes clear when examining the level of commitment, the underlying motivation, and most importantly, the long-term outcome between the two.

Remember, I was new and I knew no one in the class. Eddie was not my friend and unfortunately, I had accurately and immediately judged him as a "social liability." I wanted to protect him, but never intended for him to be more than an acquaintance (level of commitment) and to serve only as a stepping stone in establishing my own reputation (underlying motivation) as a superhero-type.

When I chose to stand up for Eddie, what I was actually doing was standing against Grady - and therein lies the tragedy. Eddie needed a friend far more than he needed a defender and my actions, quite unintentionally, gave him the false hope that I was his friend. When I offered to take on his bully, he had every right to assume I was doing so because I wanted to be his friend, but I never had any intention of such a commitment to him. I just wanted swoop in and out of his life like a superhero - vanquishing the bad guy and moving on in search of my next villain.

I can now see that my actions were far more damaging to Eddie than anything Grady could have thrown at him.

As evidence of this conclusion, I clearly remember just a day or two later, Eddie spoke privately with me, saying he thought the two of us were going to be friends. In his con-

versation, he noted that I was not treating him like a friend should treat a friend. Even fifty years later, I can remember the disappointment and hope in his voice and on his face.

I can't remember what my response was, but I am certain I didn't want to hurt his feelings. I probably said some shallow thing, but didn't go out of my way to befriend him to any greater degree. He was, after all, not one of the popular ones in my class and as the new kid in town, I had my own social status to consider.

After this insight, I researched and discovered that Eddie had died in a hospital at age fifty-two, alone, and with no mention of friends or family.

I wonder what might have happened differently in his life if I had chosen to be a friend instead of a superhero. I know I would be a better man had I done so.

It would be helpful if poor people got just half the money that is spent in studying them.

Woody Anderson



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Man's Best Friend



by Hugh Michaels

I never dreamed of having a dog in my home. I never dreamed of carrying a dog to the vet. I never dreamed of giving a dog a bath in a bathtub. I never dreamed of loving a dog sleeping on my bed. All of the above has happened to me and Oh how time has changed.

Years ago people never let dogs in their homes, they were fed leftover food from the family meals. They were forced to sleep on anything that was available. Winter times were cold for dogs. Fleas were a dog's worst enemy, and most people didn't think about helping the dogs get rid of the fleas. Times sure have changed.

Today people care for their dogs, and most are treated like family. Life changed for me after I visited a place in Huntsville called The Ark. When I first entered I was lost for words. I never had seen so many dogs, most of them were barking. I spotted a small puppy in his cage and he was wagging his tail. The person in charge said, "He wants to go home with you."

Well - I never thought of having a dog let alone a little puppy like this one. He was very calm but kept wagging his tail and looking at me. I just couldn't resist. I paid the Ark \$100 and took him home with me. And I am so happy I did, he has made my life so much better.

His name is Buddy. He is 6 years old now and weighs about 20 pounds. He is fortunate that I saw him that day - he had been hit by a car and had a broken leg, he was almost killed. No one wanted him, but I did.

It's amazing these days how dogs are

being used in service - they are therapy dogs, dogs for Veterans who have PTSD, dogs who go visit children in the hospital, the ones who visit old people in nursing homes. They are police dogs, drug sniffing dogs at the airport and for law enforcement.

Dogs are truly "Man's best Friend." (Woman's too). I have come to understand that. Buddy is smart. He will sit when asked, he will give you his paw. He knows when you aren't feeling well and stays closer. I love this dog Buddy, and he loves me too.

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THE MOURNER'S BENCH

by *Lena Nelson McGhee*

Summer months in Alabama are usually very hot and muggy. During my childhood, summer was also a time for special religious activities such as Vacation Bible School and religious revivals.

I lived in a log cabin covered with brick-like asphalt covering. Our log cabin, like numerous homes of those days, had what we called a breezeway. As you entered our front door, there was a short hallway that was "T" shaped. To the left of the hallway was my aunt and uncle's bedroom. To the right of the hallway was the living room. At the top of the "T" shaped hallway was the dining room. To the left of the dining room was my bedroom and to the right of the dining room was the kitchen.

During thunderstorms our family gathered in the breezeway as this was the center of the house. There was a couch swing in the breezeway because cool air always seemed to flow through there. So, often we sat in the breezeway on hot days also.

My uncle - the Rev. Surrey Mitchell - was the Pastor of the St. Elizabeth Cumberland Presbyterian Church in our small town of Madison, Alabama. Each year in August, St. Elizabeth Presbyterian Church held a great revival. The unsaved or sinners as they were called in those days came from miles around Madison and surrounding counties to sit on the Mourners Bench to confess their sins and have the saints pray for them.

The Mourners Bench was simply a pew that was put in front of the altar. Sinners sat on the Mourners Bench to pray for their salvation. The ritual was for the mourners to ask God for a sign for them to be saved. Once they received their sign and became converted, they confessed of their sins and went around the community to let everyone know "they got religion!"

The St. Elizabeth Cumberland Presbyterian Church Mourners Bench Revival was very popular in our community. I remember that many times more than 40 people were converted

each year. At the end of the revival, the converts were taken to the local creek and baptized. Then they were returned to the church to be given the right hand of fellow-

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ship by the pastor, elders and deacons of the church they chose to become a member of.

Each year in August, I joined a number of kids in the community who flocked to the Mourner's Bench. To us it was a fun thing to do but it was also expected by our parents or family elders. Each year one or two of our friends would "get religion!"

Often during the day, we would play church and decide what sign we would ask for and decide how we would perform after we "got religion!" We decided we would ask for a sign and when a certain elder prayed we would jump up and confess our sins and become a convert. One person said she would get religion if Elder Toney prayed. Another said she would get religion if Deacon Hyter prayed. We all knew that these two great men would pray during the services. They prayed every night!

During the numerous times I had sat on the Mourner's Bench, I had waited and waited for something to touch me or to feel something that would knock me off that Mourners Bench. Nothing ever happened. So I decided to ask for a sign to test God to see if he would fulfill the sign I would ask for.

As usual, it was a very hot and very muggy August day. The sky was clear and a beautiful blue. There was not a cloud in sight. Being a little imp, I decided to ask God to send a storm before Mourners Bench time. I asked that the storm produce lightning that would click twice at the

corner of the house by the living room. I was not worried about this sign coming to fruition because it was a hot, sunny, clear day. However, much to my surprise the sun disappeared in the afternoon. A storm cloud rose. The family gathered in the breezeway. I sat on the sofa swing quietly in disbelief.

Suddenly the thunder rolled and a flash of lightning hit so hard a ball of lightning rolled through the breezeway. I froze. I was as afraid as a mouse staring at a lion. I never said a word. I was in total shock! How could a storm come up on a hot sunny day?

That night as I sat on the Mourners Bench, I was afraid. Should I say something? Was I supposed to confess my sins since my sign had been revealed to me? I asked myself over and over what I should do. Was something supposed to touch me and knock me off the bench? I was thoroughly perplexed. I did not know what to do. I just sat there in my fear.

As expected, Elder Toney and Deacon Hyter prayed and

converts fell out on the floor and began to confess he or she "got religion"!

During the ceremony, we were asked to get on our knees. As the deacons and elders walked around and prayed for us as we were on our knees, I became more terrified. Finally service was over; I still remained quiet as a mouse. I told no one of my experience until I was well over 30 years old. I was twelve at the time of this remarkable experience.

I did not return to the Mourners Bench the next few years after that. I never received my salvation from the Mourners Bench. After age 16, I decided the Mourners Bench was not my way to salvation and I did not sit on the Mourners Bench again. One thing is for certain, I never questioned the power of the Almighty or tried to request a test again!

Now I know that I am saved by Grace!

Ephesians 2:8 "For By grace ye are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."





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Tips from Liz



- Emptied fruit, such as oranges or cantaloupes, refilled with vanilla ice cream with raspberries or strawberries make dainty little bowls. Cover with pink whipped cream and garnish with red cherries and serve at your summer afternoon tea.

- When you rub lotion on your face, be sure and get your neck area too as it needs moisturizing as much as your face.

- Having trouble sleeping? Oftentimes, just an extra pillow will help.

- A sheet of Bounce fabric softener will repel ants and mice.

- Dip asparagus into egg batter, roll in fresh bread crumbs or cracker meal and fry to a golden brown in butter. A very select vegetable with a juicy steak.

- Want dumplings? Two cups of flour, two teaspoons of baking powder, a pinch of salt, cold water to make a stiff batter. Drop by teaspoonfuls in meat broth for drop dumplings that never fail.

- Give your colicky infant mild ginger tea. It's wonderful for digestion and gas.

- For fever, eat grapes throughout the day. Also dilute pure grape juice and sip.

- For sinus headaches, sniff a little horseradish juice - the stronger the better. Remember to do it slowly.

- To ease the discomfort of a bad hangover, rub 1/2 lemon under each armpit. This may ease the feeling somewhat.

- For Asthma, eat 3-6 apricots a day. They help heal lung/ bronchial conditions.

- For regularity, drink the juice of one lemon mixed in one cup of warm water, when you wake up every morning. A bit of honey may be added to sweeten. You'll be amazed at the results.

- A lady who had ringing in her ears tried dropping 2 drops of onion juice into her ears 3 times a week and it stopped.

- Garlic is wonderful for your heart - take 2 capsules a day to protect and strengthen the heart and help thin your blood. Also, use garlic in cooking and raw in salads - the cloves get really mild and sweet when baked or roasted.

- For indigestion, scrub an orange and eat some of the peel 5 minutes after a meal. Also, cayenne pepper sprinkled on food or soup will help with indigestion.

- 1 quart of celery juice per day is said to provide a noticeable improvement in shingles.

- WD 40 will keep pigeons from perching on balconies and fence tops (they hate the smell).

- You can get two good cups of tea from most tea bags - try it!

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Could I Plead Temporary Insanity?

by Ted Roberts

Hospitals are big cubic buildings in which we store, file and archive poor souls who are either sick, soon to be sick, or soon to be beyond our therapeutic reach. We stock the disabled there even though we know a well-run hospital, with its germly wards is no place to stack sickees. I ought to know - I just escaped from one of the better ones in the area. "Hospitals are no place for sick folks" is one of the oldest platitudes of our medical society."

And to protect the residents they're full of rules - 89% of which I, a law-abiding citizen, was accused of breaking. Consider that my last civic violation was that of jaywalking in the 50's.

It was the anesthesia they claimed. It turned a sober jaywalking citizen into a werewolf. I don't remember any of this. Example: the area around your recovery bed was alarmed. No bed bailing without a nurse. Naturally - they didn't want you to fall on your face and mess up a clean floor. But what if you wanted to look out the window or whisper good morning to that blond a few steps away. That didn't sound like a capital sin to me. It did to them. And the nurse and attendants were built to enforce these regulations. No lightweights here. Also I admitted they were congregated by the door - the heavyweights that is - in case we made a sudden mass dash to freedom.

But that didn't seem to be my sin, I was told later. According to ward gossip I had set foot outside the bed without pulling the cord that called the nurse. In other words, unattended, I wandered the ward. And there was more - so they said. Once back in my room, again unchained, alone - I had barred the door with some kind of medical chest. Why would I do that? I don't even misbehave at home when I crave solitude. I call it mass hysteria. The onlookers - both patients and hospital employees - called it the anesthesia effect. (He's the culprit, not me). Well, they ought to know. They were sober, I wasn't. I wonder of I could plead temporary insanity?

Then the big day comes, VH day - Victory in Hospital - home again, home again. You think it's over - well think again. Our modern health institutions have gluey tentacles like a hungry octopus. "Tuesday, Mr. Roberts - the home health will be there."

"Nope" bad day, I'll be trying out for the NFL and don't send the oxygen and physical

therapist technicians that afternoon, I'll be at the ballpark or chopping firewood in the back yard.

The greatest transmutation that takes place above is the transfusion of duty to love. Their rules have purpose - they really care. Even an anesthesia-crazed fool sees that.

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Huntsville Headlines - 1923

Mrs. Greaves only Victim Remaining

Mrs. C. T. Greaves, of Dallas, Tx., one of the most seriously injured in the wreck of the Southern passenger train near Scottsboro last week, is still at the Huntsville infirmary. She was taken there immediately following the accident. Mrs. Greaves is, however, reported to be doing well. She is the only one of the several brought here who have not returned to their homes.

They Saw the World

Two boys, Lonnie Jones, 16 and Warren Sanders, 14 will be held in Huntsville for the arrival of their parents this week. They said they lived near Scottsboro and were taken in charge by Chief Hackworth. Their parents had telephoned the chief to notify him that the boys had traveled to Huntsville, after telling them that they "wanted to see the world." They were without money and seemed quite ready to return home after seeing enough of the world and its hardness.

Important Meeting of the Grace Club

Announcement is made of an important called meeting of the Grace Club, to be held at the Twickenham Pharmacy at 5 o'clock Tuesday afternoon. All members are urged to be there.

Machine Boy Injured

While riding his bicycle on Walker Street Sunday, Howard Larkin, a small machine boy at the Mill, was run into and knocked from his wheel by an automobile driven by Henry Thomas. Young Larkin was jolted badly and bleeding from injuries to his head and legs. However his mother tells us that he is expected to fully recover.

Huntsville Invention

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

The gentlemen have tried out their light with complete success.

"If you think nobody cares whether you're alive or not, try missing a couple of car payments."

Johnny Dexter, Scottsboro



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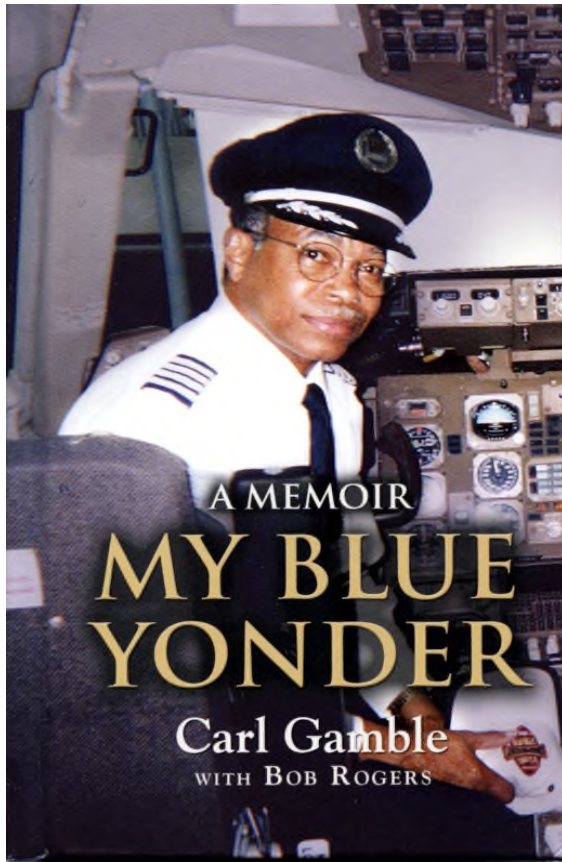
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"MY BLUE YONDER", BY USAF CPT. CARL GAMBLE



CARL GAMBLE, a premier airline pilot, has penned a remarkable memoir, a powerful story about his journey from the cotton fields of Madison County, Alabama, to the captain's seat flying jumbo jets between North America and Europe.

While in grade school, Gamble was inspired by Air Force jet fighters flying over Madison and his dream to become a pilot was born. Gamble's hard and focused work overcame an inauspicious start studying aviation at Tennessee State University, a stepping stone toward a flying career for African Americans of small means in the 1960s.

Gamble was awarded the Air Force's coveted Distinguished Flying Cross. His quick thinking and superior flying skills enabled him to land his C-47, severely disabled by enemy anti-aircraft fire, and save the lives of his crew in Vietnam.

Cpt. Gamble is a former aviator, an author and a motivational speaker for youth. He is a former US Air Force captain and veteran of the Vietnam War. His Alma Mater is Tennessee State University.

Carl's planes include one destroyed by enemy fire and a hijacked airliner. There are pilots who landed burning airplanes and there are pilots who were hijacked. But Carl may be the first pilot to face both challenges.



Available in August at Amazon.com Booklocker.com and from the website
www.captaingamble.biz

Huntsville in 2008

by Lee Cox



I moved to Huntsville in 2008. In an effort to get some exercise I regularly hiked the Land Trust trails. Most of the time alone, occasionally talking friends into going with me on what some referred to as my deceptively long and arduous hikes.

I preferred to take Railroad Bed trail. Roughly a mile or so from start to finish, it follows the path of a long defunct railway that took visitors up the mountain to the Hotel Monte Sano in the late 1800s.

The latter decades of the 1800s saw the rise of quite a few nasty diseases, mostly due to unsanitary conditions. Diphtheria and Yellow Fever, also called "Yellow Jack" or "Bronze John", were rampant. Huntsville locals found that after spending a few days on Monte Sano their health improved a bit and in some cases dramatically. This was generally attributed to the natural mineral springs atop and around the mountain, but it was also likely due to the cooler air and more sanitary lifestyle.

The Hotel Monte Sano was built in 1886 by the North Alabama Improvement Company. It consisted of 233 rooms with mineral spring baths and beautiful views of the Tennessee Valley. Eleven dollars per day bought a visitor

a room, the spa and three meals. The hotel registry held the names of Tennessee Valley's richest. Even some of the wealthiest citizens in the country visited the hotel looking for relaxation and regeneration. But at the time Huntsville was made up mostly of poor mill workers and cotton field hands.



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Brandon, age 11

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Most of her citizenry could barely afford food, let alone a night there.

Because the well-to-do were not keen on walking, a railway was built from the Huntsville Depot to the hotel. Pulled by a Baldwin steam engine, the cars were smaller than usual due to the smaller gauge of the rails and the tight turns in the line as it tacked up the slope. The train made three runs per day for twenty five cents a trip. At the top, passengers were ferried in a fine Taliaferro buggy to the hotel.

Due to a derailment would-be passengers were frightened away from taking the coach and after some financial mismanagement the rail went into bankruptcy. There was some talk of salvaging the line, but in a spring thaw an enormous boulder fell onto the tracks permanently ending its run.

As science progressed and sanitation became common practice, yellow fever, cholera and many other diseases were diminished if not eradicated. Vaccines more or less took away the hotels perceived raison d'etre. The Hotel Monte Sano shut its doors in 1900.

All that's left of the hotel is a stone chimney in a front yard and the occasional auction of antique hotel furnishings. All that's left of the rail are stone trestle supports and stone embankments.

On my frequent hikes I liked to stand atop the embankments and look out over the creek beds. My mind often wandered to the men who built the rail, hauling those stones via mule wagons and stacking them for the trestles. Maybe they sat on this or that rock and ate lunch with strong but weathered, scarred, filthy hands. I could imagine them breaking their backs, working in the southern heat, the valley winter, so wealthy financiers and blue bloods could find solace in pools of mineral water.

And it was all for naught, because, as I stood there, all that was left were stones the mountain would eventually reclaim into herself.

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Lou Holtz, Arkansas Football coach

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Twins of Shiloh

by Tom Baker

George and Hugh Childress were born on the twenty-second of November in the year 1833. Twin boys, the twelfth and thirteenth children in the family of Robert and Temperance Childress, that would eventually number seventeen children. Twelve girls and five boys.

All of Robert and Temperance's children were raised on a farm in the Little Cove area of Madison County, Alabama. With nineteen in the family, needless to say, you were never late for a meal.

With this many children to rule over, their father must have been a strict disciplinarian. It is said that he had a "fetish" about teeth. He would not let his children chew the sweet gum which oozed from the trees, "like all the other kids in the neighborhood." He had all of his natural teeth when he died at the age of 87.

When the Civil War began, George and Hugh enlisted on the Confederate side. They saw action at Shiloh, distinguishing themselves in that battle. Hugh later rose to the rank of 1st Lt., and George to the rank of 2nd Sergeant.

But tragedy was soon to strike the Childress family. In

1862, the twins had become separated. Hugh was with a unit in Louisiana fighting in the Battle of Baton Rouge, where he fell mortally wounded on Aug. 5th and died a few hours later.

Tragedy struck again 2 months later when his brother George was killed early in the action before Corinth, Mississippi on Oct. 3, 1862.

When Margaret Mitchell was doing research for her famous novel "Gone With The Wind", she visited towns and hamlets throughout the South, talking to old Civil War vets and their families. One of these places she was reported to have visited was Mooresville, Alabama. Mooresville is an old historic town located a few miles west of Huntsville, Ala. Margaret caused tongues to wag

when she went horseback riding in pants throughout the village.

Living there at the time of her visit were relatives of the two twin brothers. Whether Margaret Mitchell talked to these relatives and was told the tragic story of the twins, is not known. But, in the first chapter of her famous novel she wrote later, "There are two twin brothers, the Tarleton twins, who enlist for the South, and are both killed in battle."

If this part of the novel was based on Hugh and George Childress, the truth of it may never be known. All of Mitchell's notes on her book were destroyed after the book was published. The twins being a part of this writer's family tree, I like to believe she did use the story in her novel.

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City News - 1896

- Joe. L. Rountree & Co. of Hartselle, dealers in pure drugs, medicines and chemicals, have just put in a line of school-books, slates, tablets and pencils. Give them a call.

- Wanted - several trustworthy gentlemen or ladies to travel in Alabama for established reliable houses. Salary \$780 and expenses. Steady position. Enclose reference and self addressed stamped envelope. The Dominion Co., Chicago, ILL

- Dr. Charles D. Smith, Dentist, will make you a full upper and lower set of teeth for \$16. A better set for a little more money. Crowns and Bridges in elegant style very cheap. Teeth filled with gold amagam or the zinc preparations. In the most reliable and artistic manner, at very low rates.

- J. B. & L. F. Boyd are in negotiation with the Chamber of Commerce for the erection of a 100-barrel flour mill in Huntsville.

- Wanted - a reliable lady or gentleman to make house-to-house canvasses for our Vegetable Toilet Soaps and Pure Flavoring Extracts, \$40 to \$75 a month easily made.

- The wife of Robert Orr, of Randolph Street, was cleaning up an old brass bed she had purchased at a very reasonable price when she discovered a treasure - packed inside the posts of the bed were 1,200 one dollar bills, some in a very bad state, but most can be used.

- A general cleaning up on the public square has been the order of the week. The shade trees have been white-washed, and the town generally has a beautiful appearance.

- Two men have been arrested on suspicion of starting the fire at Trinity, noted last week, and have been lodged in jail to await trail this week.

- A prank on the part of a number of students in the school led to their expulsion from school. The students purchased cayenne pepper, ground in a powder, and placed it in the fan that sends air through the ventilators in the schoolrooms.


It not only set the whole schoolroom sneezing and coughing, but nearly destroyed the eyesight of the engineer, who was looking for the cause of the trouble.

An Associate Minister of a local church unveiled the new tithing campaign for the summer this past Sunday:

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Dullsville

by Tom Carney



When famed writer and storyteller Billy Joe Cooley moved here in 1971 it took a while for him to adjust to a small city. He had worked as a reporter for major newspapers covering presidents, crooked politicians, scandal-

ous murder cases and all the other things one would expect in a big city. Needless to say, life was a lot different in Huntsville.

About six months after moving here Billy Joe received a call from an old colleague who worked on the editorial desk for Webster's Dictionary in New York City. After exchanging the appropriate pleasantries the friend asked how the local news was going here in Huntsville.

"Dullsville!" replied Billy. "The most exciting news we had last week was the school board meeting. Absolutely nothing else happened. No fights or anything."

His friend, a stickler for proper verbiage, replied. "Billy, there ain't no such word as 'dullsville'".

"There is if you try to cover hard news in Huntsville, Alabama." came Billy Joe's reply.

In about eight months a package came in the mail from his friend at the publishing company. It contained a new edition of "Webster's Ninth Collegiate Dictionary," with a note attached instructing Billy to look on page 388 for "dullsville":

Here's what he found. "Dullsville, dull + svllle (as in Huntsville) slang: something or some place that is dull or boring; also: extreme boredom."

Editor's Note: You don't believe this one? Get a copy of Webster's Ninth Collegiate Dictionary, and look it up yourself.



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Thor

A Tennessee dog who was recently rescued from being a orphan has been doing some rescuing of his own.

When one of his neighbors fell, Thor the pooch sprang into action to let his owners know something was wrong - possibly saving the elderly woman's life. Barbara Simmons, 78, fell on the side of the road while checking her mail on a hot day earlier this month.

She said she yelled for help but no one came to her rescue for at least a half hour. Thor, a dog with a heroic name, noticed Simmons and went to check it out.

"He was just so gentle and like, 'Are you okay, are you okay?'" explained Simmons.

Thor's owners said he was acting strangely that day, ignoring their commands. "He ran to this point and he stopped and looked back at my husband and barked at him a couple of times like, 'I'm not going to listen to you,' and he took off right around the corner," said owner Anne Lewis.

Thor led his owners to Simmons nearly a block away. They called for help and the EMT told Lewis that Thor saved her life.

Despite being part Pitbull and part Rottweiler, Thor has never attacked anyone or harmed anything. "He's totally destroyed the stereotype you have of those breeds," said Thor's owner. "He loves people."

Thor's owners say dogs like him, rescued from bad situations, make great pets and their previous living situations don't really have an impact on the dog's behavior. "He has on occasion saved our chickens from a fox, survived being bitten by a copperhead, wrestled another fox, chased a coyote and learned dozens of words and commands," Anne Lewis said.

Winnie the Cat

Most hours of the day the cat Winnie, 11, can be found curled up on a windowsill in the Keesling master bedroom, fast asleep. One March night, her favorite tradition

proved to be a saving grace.

Earlier that day, the family had borrowed a gas-powered water pump for the basement of their ranch home to suction out water after a flood. By nightfall, outside temperatures were below freezing, so every window in the house was closed except for Winnie's.

Cathy Keesling turned off the gas pump, and by the time she went to bed around midnight, her husband, Eric, was already asleep. The couple's 14 year-old son Michael was in his bedroom down the hall. None of them could know that carbon monoxide

from the pump had built up in their basement—and that when the home's hot-air heating system switched on, it would begin pushing the toxic gas throughout the house.

The family slept on. "But Winnie jumped from her window perch right onto me, meowing like crazy and scratching at my hair and face," says Cathy. "She'd never acted like this. I thought, there is something wrong with this cat. I tried to get out of bed, but the moment I sat up, I felt like I'd been hit with a two-by-four. Then I got so terribly dizzy." After Cathy fell back onto the bed, the cat "started carrying on again. She would not leave me alone."

Fighting grogginess, Cathy unsuccessfully tried to rouse Eric. Weak and nauseated, she grabbed the bedroom phone and staggered into the hallway, where she found her son sprawled on the floor, face down.

"I don't know how, but I dialed 911," she says. "It seemed like just seconds later that people were pounding on the door." Emergency workers carried her out onto the front porch and went back in for the others, not a moment too soon.

All three were hospitalized overnight for severe carbon monoxide poisoning. "One of our rescuers, a deputy sheriff, said that we could have been dead in five more minutes," Cathy says.

Winnie was an abandoned farm kitten, only a few days old, when Cathy found her. "We fed her with an eyedropper. Now she's our wonder cat."

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*From the Desk of
Tom Carney*

HUNTSVILLE'S UNDERGROUND DANCEHALL

by Tom Carney

Just a few miles up Pulaski Pike, well within the city limits, is a cave that was once heralded as the most popular nightclub in this area.

The early history of Shelta Cave is lost in the shroud of history, but some of the earliest stories tell of Confederate soldiers hiding in the cave to escape searching Union soldiers.

One rumor that persists to this day concerns a bloody hand-to-hand battle supposedly fought in the depths of the cavern on the shores of a vast underground lake.

Like any other large cave, it has legends woven around it concerning buried treasure, ghosts and eerie noises. These remained just legends with no basis in fact until 1888 when a Mr. Bolen James sold the land to a Mr. Henry Fuller.

Not much is known about the early life of Mr. Fuller, but judging from his actions he must have been a born entrepreneur.

Immediately after taking possession of the cave he hired a team of carpenters to install steps down into the main chamber. Next he assembled a crew of craftsmen to install a dance floor in one of the great rooms

with large stand-up bars at each end. He made no secret of the fact that he intended to open the grandest, fanciest and most unusual dance hall in Alabama.

Huntsville had seen its share of weird, wacky ideas, but a dance hall in a cave? Even for Huntsville's standards that was too much. Townspeople began to call the yet uncompleted dance hall "Fuller's Folly."

As is true in many a new business, Fuller soon found himself facing a slight problem - too many ideas and not enough money. Reluctantly he let himself be talked into forming a corporation called, appropriately enough, Shelta Cave Corporation.

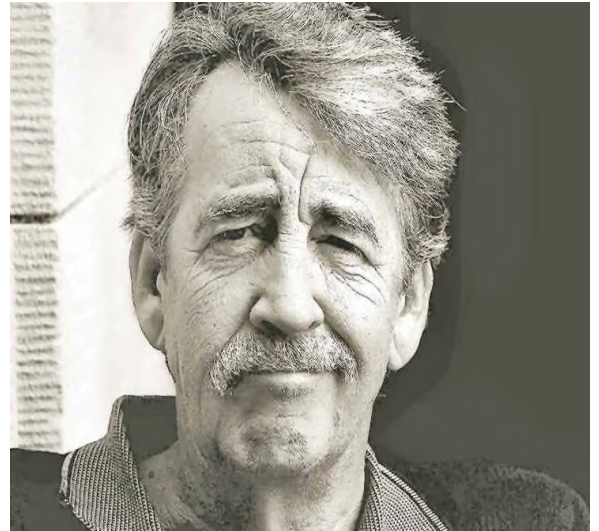
With this new influx of money from investors came new opportunities and it wasn't long before Fuller heard of a new attraction in Nashville that he thought would be perfect for the business.

There had been much talk in Huntsville about a new inven-

tion called "electric lights." But while most people dismissed it as just another crazy idea, Fuller was determined to light his dance floor with the "marvel of modern technology." Within days of Fuller's visit to Nashville, workmen arrived to begin stringing wire throughout the cave.

Although few people realize it today, when Fuller pulled the switch on his new lighting system, he earned himself (and the dance hall) a place in Huntsville's history as having the first electric light bulbs in Madison County.

Even this was not enough for Fuller, for as he cast his eyes upon the vast underground lake he began to see another possibility for potential profits. Within the week neighbors watched in amazement as workmen un-



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loaded three large boats from a wagon and awkwardly maneuvered them down the steps.

The citizens of Huntsville must have had a good chuckle when he announced his intentions of providing "Underground Boat Rides." And, as if that was not enough, he purchased hundreds of Japanese lanterns to hang overhead!

Finally the day of the "Grand Opening" arrived, and true to Fuller's predictions, crowds thronged the cave to see the marvel of electric lighting, ride the boats and dance to the sound of a newly hired band.

With the admission price of one dollar, Fuller should have been able to make a profit, but unfortunately, he was too deeply in debt. Also, the townspeople, after making one or two visits to the entertainment mecca, quickly lost interest.

Desperate for money, Fuller began to travel throughout the South promoting Huntsville and Shelta Cave as a convention center. Evidently he had some success, as the Huntsville Mercury in 1889 ran an article about a gathering of the press association:

"The entertainment of the Press Association by the citizens of Huntsville closed today with a grand barbecue in Shelta Caverns and nearly one hundred delegates and their ladies were in attendance. The affair was gotten up in a delightful manner and the beauties of the place were fully investigated by the astonished guests."

According to rumor, Fuller, or one of his cohorts, in another effort to stimulate business, (and keep down overhead)

actually operated a moonshine still in one of the dark corners of the cave. Years later when it was discovered that Shelta Cave was the home of a rare species of blind shrimp, one local wag laughed and said, "Hell, that likker made a lot of people almost blind, I reckon some of it could have spilled into the lake!"

Another story of the day concerns a duel fought over a lady's honor at the edge of the dance floor. The gentlemen, each slightly intoxicated, were pursuing the same girl at the same time when they happened to accidentally meet at the dance. Harsh words were exchanged and to everyone's horror, they pulled pistols from underneath their coats. Both fired, and both missed. Fortunately they let themselves be led away before real harm could be done.

The only casualty of the duel was a member of the band who was slightly injured by a falling stalactite.

As almost any nightclub owner can tell you, crowds are fickle, and within a few years the dance hall was again facing financial ruin. This time, even Fuller's salesmanship could not save it. On June 28, 1897 the cave was sold at a sheriff's sale on the steps of the courthouse to settle a judgement.

Although there is no documentation to support it, natives of Huntsville who remember the 1920s and 1930s swear that there was once a speakeasy located in the cave.

Other sources claim that moonshine was produced in the cave at intervals all the way up to World War II. Another persistent rumor claims the cave was used as a liquor and beer warehouse during prohibition.

In 1968, after being neglected for years, the cave was purchased by the National Speleological Society. An iron gate has been placed over the entrance to prevent accidents.

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**Fun things to do when
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My Brother Brice

by Harry S. Dill



My brother Brice was born in the Dreger household at 610 Holmes Avenue NE, Huntsville, Alabama on February 29, 1941. He was born on a leap year and his birthday is on February 29th. The doctor came to the house and delivered him there. Unlike today doctors made house calls. Brice is 13 years younger than me. His full name is Brice Mitchell Dill.

When he was a baby my mother gave him a pink blanket that he liked very much and as he grew older he always wanted that pink blanket even after he was big enough to walk. I remember him sitting on the back porch steps at our rock house wrapped in that blanket and enjoying it. He finally did outgrow

it though.

When Brice was rather young he belonged to the Boy's MacDowell Music Club and hosted a meeting or two at the home of his uncle, Alvin Dreger who lived at 610 Holmes Avenue NE at that time.

One winter there was a big snow on the ground, maybe one to one-and-a-half feet deep. I had a sled and I rode Brice all the way down Toll Gate Road to the bottom going around the big curve and coming out on Wells Avenue. He really liked it and we went back and did it several

more times.

That summer my good friend Charlie Prince lived on Wells Avenue and was very good at making things. He made a little buggy complete with a harness for me. I traded a goat to him for it. I got one of our billy goats and hooked it up to the cart and rode Brice around in it, he liked that a lot. Charlie made all kinds of things like bird houses and even a little saddle and bridle for a goat so I could ride.

When Brice grew a little older I taught him how to sit still and silently hunt for squir-

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***Sign seen at Alabama
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rels. We sat down on a big rock out in the middle of the woods and waited for the squirrels to come out. Pretty soon one big one came out up in the top of a tall tree that was about 30 feet high. I shot it with my old 16 gauge shotgun and the squirrel fell just a little and hung up in the top of the tree.

Brice said that he would get it and climbed up to the top and threw the squirrel down to me. But then he stepped on a rotten limb and it broke and he fell down all the way to the ground! But God was with him because there were some vines and bushes at the bottom of the tree that broke his fall and he landed on his feet! If the vines and bushes hadn't been there he might have been killed or severely injured.

After I had built my little house on Toll Gate Road and lived there a while the city finally put water up the road. All residents who had land

bordering the road had to pay a fee according to how many feet they had along the road. I started to turn my cistern into a septic tank and made a large heavy concrete slab to go over the hole in the top. I asked Brice to help me put the slab over the hole as it was too heavy for me to do it by myself.

As always he was willing to help me with anything I asked him to do. A very good brother indeed! I was lifting the slab up with a iron bar and we were both going to turn it over on the hole. Brice was lifting on the edge with his hands. I told him not to put his foot under the slab. About 3/4 of the way up we lost it and it fell down on his leg. his foot and leg were under the slab. I got superhuman strength and lifted the slab enough to pull his foot and leg out from under the slab, but the leg was completely broken.

I was shocked to see that his lower leg was broken about half

way between his foot and his knee. And it was laying under him, only the muscles and skin were holding it on. His foot and part of his leg would go in any direction!

We rushed him to the Huntsville Hospital, the only one back then in Huntsville, and they set his leg, put it in a cast and tied it up over his hospital bed and took real good care of him. Brice stayed for several days in the hospital and since they were so good to him and gave him good food to eat he didn't want to leave when it came time for him to go home.

Brice joined the U. S. Army in 1959, took basic training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina and graduated from the Army Electronic Repair School and then flew to Berlin, Germany. On the way his airplane had engine trouble and they had to land in the Azores where they worked on it for eight hours before they could take off again

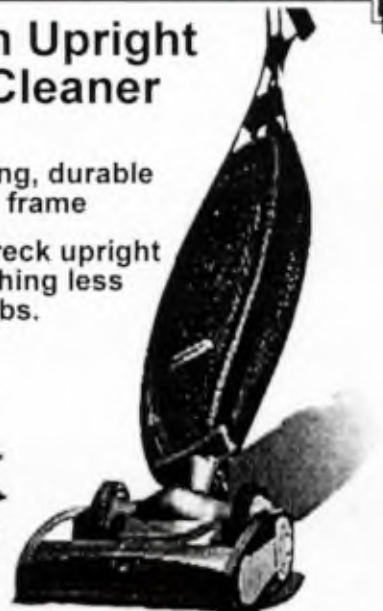
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for Germany. While in Germany he studied the German language and continued to speak German. He was in the Army at the rare time that we were not at war with some country - from 1959-1962. Very unusual for the USA!

I had planted a "show me" orchard that I bought from Stark Bros. Nursery and most of the trees had done well but my small city lot in Huntsville was not big enough for them, so I found a small rundown farm of 11 acres in the Alabama Farmers' Bulletin and bought it. It was in Fayette County, Alabama.

I planted 20 apple trees and 20 peach trees on it after I had cleared out the space for them. I also had a one full acre vegetable garden there. I soon had all the fruit and vegetables I could use and gave away and sold some of it too. Brice came out to visit me quite often in the country.

On November 22, 1963 we were watching the new color TV I had just bought (color TV's hadn't been out long) and we were shocked to see that President John F. Kennedy had been shot while he was riding in the motorcade in Dallas, Texas! I will always remember that day and so will Brice - where we were on that day, just as I remembered the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor and the beginning of WWII. I am sure Brice remembers Kennedy getting shot and killed too on that day.

Another time he came to visit me in the country. We were cutting and loading pulp wood on Brice's pickup at the bottom of a rather steep hill. We loaded it heavy and when we were finished I went on ahead and opened the gate in the electric fence so he could get out of the pasture. I told him that I would open the gate.

When he got up near the gate he couldn't see if it was opened or not so he took the truck out of gear leaving the motor running and got out to see for himself. But the pickup jumped into gear and started going down the hill. Brice grabbed on to the driver's door and tried to hold it back so he could get in, but it was too much and he couldn't stop it.

He was lucky that he wasn't dragged along with it and the truck rolled down the hill and jumped across a big ditch going high into the air. It landed on the other side with logs flying all over the place! We got a neighbor to pull Brice's truck out of the ditch and up

the hill to level ground. I pulled the truck to town and we found out when it jumped the ditch with the full load of logs on it, it had a bent rear axle and would take some time to fix it.

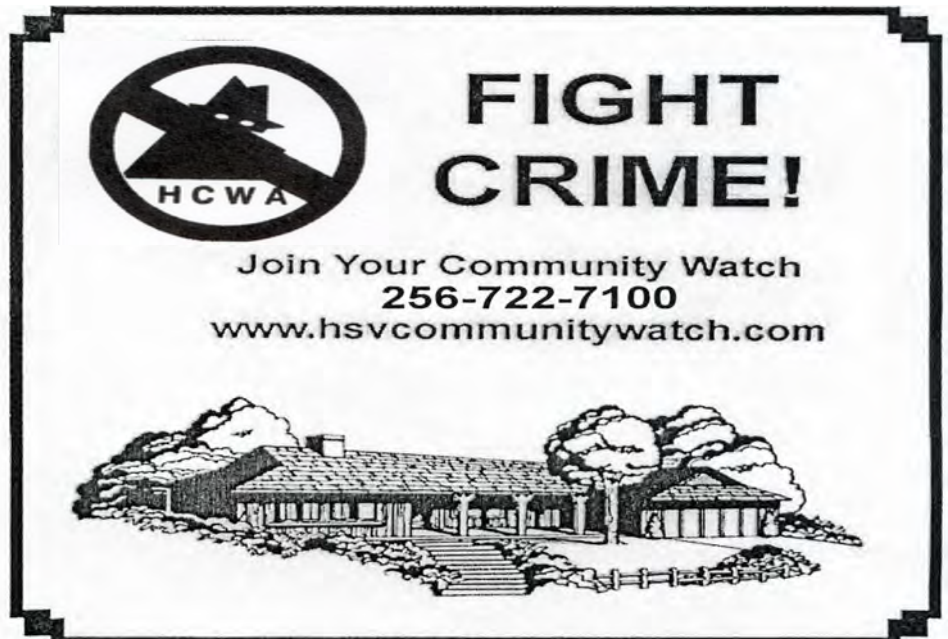
Brice wanted to go home to Huntsville so I gave him a green Dodge pickup that I had traded for and he started out for Huntsville. After some little time Brice called me on the phone and said that he was near Brilliant, Alabama and had broken down.

The truck had thrown the drive shaft and he couldn't find it so I came and helped him look for the drive shaft but neither one of us could find it although we looked carefully up and down the sides of the road and in the woods. We never could find it. That is very unusual that both universal joints would go out at the same time! I had a cable so I hooked it up to the truck and pulled it back home.

Brice stayed with me a few days until the repair shop had put in a new rear axle on his truck and then he returned home to Huntsville.

When my mother and oldest sister, Jean, died Brice handled the sale of the rock house and advertised and sold the rock house on Toll Gate Road. I was living too far away in the country at the time to do this so Brice took over this responsibility and handled the selling of the house very well. I think that he got a fair market price for it at the time he sold it.

Brice and his wife, Virginia, live in New Market, Alabama. I have been trying to get in touch with him for several days now. Brice is sick and I am waiting word as to what has happened to him. I am hoping everything will be all right with him and his wife. We've certainly had some good adventures. God rules supreme!



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Around Town 1927

Man Lives in Hollow Log on Monte Sano

Mr. Frank Coe, inventor of the Coe's tractor wheel, is at present using a hollow log on the side of Monte Sano mountain as his living quarters pending completion of the first of a series of cabins for which he has plans.

The log is located several hundred feet from the new Monte Sano road which will be formally opened tomorrow on the old stage coach road which runs off the east side of the mountain.

Although the log was originally hollow, Mr. Coe has improved upon it until it is more comfortable than a Pullman berth. With the use of fire he has enlarged his quarters, improvised a small screen door and a wooden door over the two and a half foot entrance. Near the entrance he has two small holes on each side which enables him to look out in both directions.

By closing the screen door he is protected from insects while at the same time a lantern hung at the entrance furnishes sufficient light for reading or writing which he has a great deal of.

A.E. Sampson, an architect, is Mr. Coe's only companion. He is cooperating with Mr. Coe in an architectural way and expects to open an office in Huntsville soon.

The first of a series of cabins which will be known as "Coe's Roost," is under construction a short distance from the log. When completed Mr. Coe says "the latch string will always be open to right thinking people."

As Mr. Coe traveled east 36 years ago, he has decided to face all the cabins in that direction.

Mr. Coe is noted as the inventor of the tractor wheel bearing his name. More than a year ago he left his home in New York for Miami, Florida. His wife and two children were called from this earth a short time before. After engaging in the building game in Miami for one year he arrived in Huntsville.

Mr. Coe states he will spend the remainder of his days on this spot on Monte Sano.

Editor's Note: Shortly after this story appeared in the newspaper, the weather turned cold and Mr. Coe, with no explanation, disappeared from Huntsville forever.

Sneak Thieves Loose in our City

A band of professional sneak thieves is at work in Huntsville

and during the last few days they have secured quite a large sum of money in small amounts as well as a considerable quantity of "junk."

Most of the work of the thieves has been done in daylight. The police have a record on each of the following cases: Boston Shoe Company, cash drawer robbed of \$40 in silver, M.S. Barnett, cash drawer robbed of \$7 in money, A. Campbell, cash drawer robbed of about \$8 in money, Gilbert & Clay's brokerage office, robbed of small sum of money.

Constable James Overton reported the latest piece of thieving this morning. He had left his trousers near the window of his room at his home in Patton Grove last night and when he got up this morning they were not to be found anywhere. The pockets of the garment contained a gold watch, \$11.25 in money and several valuable notes.

It is believed that the thief reached in the window and made off with the booty. The work of the thieves shows that they are accomplished in the thief profession.

In our daily lives we must see that it's not happiness that makes us grateful, but gratefulness that makes us happy. There is always, always something to be thankful for.



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An "Unprayerful" Moment

by Ernestine Moody

Many, many years ago when this writer was about twelve years old, she experienced an unforgettable, embarrassing happening!

Dad had built a small wooden beach cottage for the family. On occasion he would take "Imogene", our shiny black 1940 Chevy from the garage, and with much excitement we would pack a lunch and begin the long journey to our "vacation" dwelling.

There was a church in the vicinity of this beach location, thereby allowing the family to attend services when enjoying our home away from home.

Before advancing with the rest of the story, it is necessary to enlighten the reader with these family details. Mom had been blessed with a baby boy sixteen years prior to my arrival in the world. Surely it was a surprise to all when this little bundle made her unplanned appearance.

Always I considered that I had two males, my Dad and my older brother, to advise me on life's important decisions. Therefore, it was with such happiness to hear that my brother and his spouse would be coming to visit us us for relaxation on these special traveling occasions.

It was a beautiful sunny Sunday morning and time to go give thanks for our many blessings. My brother, his wife, myself and Imogene arrived at the quaint white church as on any other Sunday, except there was one difference.

Approaching teenage years, it had begun to take "a little longer" to adorn special occasion looks and fashion. The hair and small amount of cosmetics, had to be "just right". It was absolutely necessary to view one's image several times in the mirror before departing the house. This Sunday, being in an undecided mood, perhaps the mirror glances became much too frequent.

Imogene was almost blowing her horn solo, notifying us that the religious service would begin before we arrived.

The three of us were the only ones entering this quiet place. All others were seated and glancing forward at the energetic minister addressing his congregation from the pulpit. The door hinges squeaked loudly. The floor moaned in pain as we tiptoed in, trying to be inconspicuous searching for a seat.

Finally, glancing to the side, there was the perfect spot. A very elderly elegant lady sat at the end of that pew. Regretting that it was necessary to disturb this prayerful soul, but knowing we needed to be seated, I approached the church bench. The lady sighed, I could only imagine her thoughts. Unfortunately, she chose not to move from her chosen position. Here this well nourished young lady with her big wide-brimmed 1940s hat began walking on the pew's attached kneeler to reach the awaiting spaces. Somehow this particular kneeler had become loose, and therefore it no longer had the quality of being

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secured. Suddenly there was a sound as loud as a burst of angry thunder. The kneeler flipped, this young girl was thrown, the minister became silent, the older lady was in shock! Upon her lap sat this rather large preteen girl, whose wide brimmed hat had now interlocked with the hat of the unsuspecting victim.

My reaction, because of the demise of the lady's prim and proper attire, and the angle with which both head coverings were now balancing in a sideways manner, well I got amused. The lady still tried to maintain her elegant dignity. Her eyes were displaying astonishment. Try as hard as I could my apology was not spoken for several moments. My inside silent laughter was causing my eyes to produce visible tears. My sister-in-law was not helpful, since she also saw unwarranted humor in this awful situation.

Dear lady, if you happen to be reading this article, please accept my sincere apology. I was "raised better" and knew better. One good thing did evolve from this "unprayerful" situation. Now I am very aware of time when preparing to go to any event if, especially, it involves a visit to a quiet spiritual ceremony.

After that day I wondered how did the minister and the rest of the congregation receive this unorthodox event. Perhaps some thought it was Armageddon, or a sign of anger from a superior being. Upon further investigation they had to realize it was an accident caused by a young lady whose vanity was to seek one too many looks in the mirror!

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Who Takes Care of the Care Givers? "THE SPIRITUAL CARE OF CARE GIVERS"

A WORKSHOP PRESENTED BY THE HUNTSVILLE ASSOCIATION FOR PASTORAL CARE
Alzheimer's * Parkinson's * Stroke * Mental Illness

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2017 5:30-8:30 PM FIRST BAPTIST Church, Governors Dr.

Dr. Willie Brunetti will address the needs of those who care for Alzheimer's patients and encourage churches to create a ministry for care givers in their congregations.



Dr. Elizabeth Hall, a professor, author, and Stephens Minister, will speak to care giving for the mentally ill - "a life sentence" she says, from experience.

To register call 256-883-6539

\$35 includes workshop, materials, dinner and CEUs

These veteran caregivers will articulate the pain of the caregiver, offering rare insight and depth of understanding.

Pastors, Chaplains, Stephens Ministers, Elders, nurses, social workers, professional and family care givers will not want to miss this opportunity!

Bigamist Marries Mother, Daughter and Niece



DECATUR, 1914 - Robert "Piker" Easley, a former resident of our county, is behind bars in the County Jail on a charge of bigamy, having married three women in the same family; the mother, her daughter and a niece.

The marriages were over a period of ten years, during which time he worked as a sawmill hand during the day and a stable hand at night.

The arrest was made on an affidavit sworn by Deputy Sheriff A. S. Grubbs before Magistrate E.R. Raney of Decatur. Sheriff Forman had heard several times of Easley's misbehavior involving damsels in Jackson and Madison counties and was successful Saturday in capturing the man. He was courting another lass at the time.

The sheriff expects to have a hard time finding witnesses willing to testify against Easley. The womenfolk who became his spouses are hesitant to find disfavor with him, saying instead that they would be willing to continue on with him as an amorous quartet.

The defendant, Mr. Easley, however, has rejected attempts to be freed on bond, preferring to stay sheltered safely in the jail house.

Local men are truly amazed that this man has the sheer energy to be married to 3 ladies at once and still work two full time jobs.

Judge John C. Eyster is expected to preside at what should be a very interesting trial.

"My 60-year Kindergarten reunion is coming up soon and I'm worried about the 175 pounds I've gained since then."

Peggy Jamison, Athens

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The Policeman

by Scott Nixon

His uniform always looked perfect. His shoes would shine so much, you could see your reflection. He always stood tall with absolute confidence and he never complained about his job and what he did. He was a hero to me and I bragged to all of my friends about how he was the best policeman.

He is my Dad. Ed Nixon gave 36 years to the Huntsville Police Department. When he retired, he was Deputy Chief Ed Nixon. I remember, as a child, how he worked so much to serve and protect. He put in 88 hours a week for a long time. I could never do that but he did all the time. A lot of times as a kid I would stay awake at night worrying, will Dad come home safe tonight?

He worked 3rd shift for a long time and that is when a lot of bad things happen. He always came home safe and I was thankful to God for that and I still am.

He worked at "The Mall", directed traffic for a church and he worked part time as well at the Sheraton Motel on University Drive. My Dad had to drink a lot of coffee understandably as the nights were long for him. He still loves coffee!

There were a lot of policemen that I knew at that time

but, of course, my Dad was my favorite! I remember Dowling Kritner, Nolan Sanders, Aaron Wright, Willie Culver, Jim Norton, Bill Davis, Rex Reynolds; well, I could name the whole police department in those days! They seemed to always be good policemen.

In this world today, I'm glad I'm not a child and my Dad is not a policeman. We live in a scary world these days. So many policemen have died in the line of duty. It breaks my heart. My Dad put his time in and he served the city as my hero. He still is my hero.

My sons Dalton and Payne were fishing with their Grandpa the other day. I was there but it wasn't about all the fish we caught that made me happy. It was his stories of the old days and his knowledge that were most important.

Dad, thanks for always being there in my tough times. I got in trouble a lot as a teenager but I had the best man to set me straight during those times. He is my Dad, The Policeman, Deputy Chief Ed Nixon.

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Wife looking in the mirror, says to her husband: "I feel horrible. I look old, fat and wrinkled. I really need you to pay me a good compliment."

Husband to wife, after a pause:
"Your eyesight is damn near perfect."

Events in Huntsville's History

*By Thomas Hutchens,
Courtesy of Special
Collections, Huntsville
Public Library*



May 15, 1967- The Huntsville Times - Morris Dees, board chairman of Fuller and Dees Marketing Group Inc. of Montgomery will be guest speaker Wednesday night at the Huntsville Jaycees "Good Government Award" banquet. Dees recently was named one of America's 10 Outstanding Young Men for 1966.

The meeting begins at 7 p.m. at the Russel Erskine Hotel. Mayor Glenn Hearn will welcome Dees to Huntsville and present him with a key to the city. Dees also

will receive honorary lifetime membership in the Huntsville Jaycees.

John Putman, director of employee relations and public affairs at Spaco Inc., will introduce Dees. Putman, too, was elected one of America's 10 Outstanding Young Men for 1966. Dees will address

the group on opportunities of the American free enterprise system.

May 15, 1942- The Huntsville Times - Certificates for five new automobiles, six passenger tires, eight truck and 13 tractor tires were awarded by the Madison County Ra-

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Don Broome

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tioning Board at its meeting last night at the Chamber of Commerce.

Receiving permits for new cars were Mrs. Hazel Thompson, Huntsville Arsenal; Dr. J. E. Whitaker, Huntsville; Dr. E. O. Williamson, Gurley; William C. Flack, Huntsville Arsenal; and Marion Guy Sonner, Huntsville Arsenal.

Certificates for the purchase of passenger tires were given to Dr. W. G. McKissack, Huntsville; A. E. Jacks, New Market; James H. Blakemore, Huntsville and Charles L. Sanders, Brownsboro.

The following persons were authorized to purchase truck tires: Dr. J. E. Whitaker, Huntsville; McDonald Coal and Scrap Co., Huntsville; J. W. Cochrane, New Market; and Dr. H. J. Coons, Huntsville.

May 15, 1917- The Huntsville Daily Times - Fresh Tender Meats Cheap For Cash Delivered- Choice cuts 25 cents; Pork, choice cuts 20 to 25 cents, a net savings of 25 cents to 40 cents on a dollar. W. E. Barr, Proprietor- L. F. Stoltz, Expert Cutter Telephone 277.

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of W. E. Barr & Co. lighten your burden by cutting your fresh meat bill almost half- W. E. Barr & Co.- Butchers and Cattle Dealers- Meridian Street- Huntsville, Alabama.

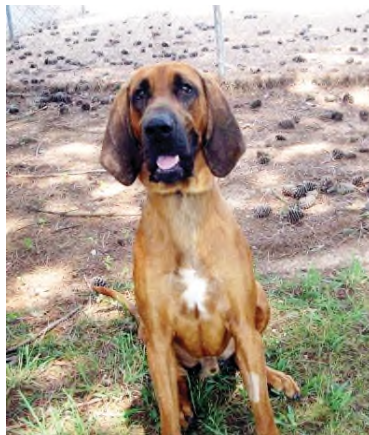
May 15, 1886- The Huntsville Daily Mercury - About 5 o'clock yesterday afternoon a long string of carriages rolled up Randolph Street into the Square, and they presented the appearance of an imposing cavalcade on wheels. There were pretty girls, school girls, studious girls, modest girls, nice dressed girls, and girls and girls and girls.

We soon learned that these self-same girls were the pupils of the Huntsville Female College. They were returning from a jaunt to the new hotel on Monte Sano,

whither they had been taken by Rev. A. B. Jones and the faculty of the College to see the imposing sight and enjoy the bracing mountain air. The trip, or perhaps the romantic associations lingering around "Ella's Rock," had enlivened their spirits somewhat. They broke into snatches of song as their carriages rolled around the Square.

May 15, 1846- Notice- All persons indebted to Walter or Alonza Scott for Billiards or "anything else," and do not settle by note or money, by the first day of June will be warranted certain.

Banging your head against a wall uses up 150 calories an hour.



Big Red

Hello, the Ark named me Big Red. The doggie doctor thinks I am a Blood Hound. My coat is red except for a little white on my chest. I was a stray with nowhere to go.

A kind man found me and brought me to the Ark. I am a big fellow and I weigh 98 pounds. Don't let my size scare you. I am a happy-go-lucky, affectionate, loyal and sociable guy. I have plenty of

energy because I am only 2 years old. I am taking classes at the Ark on how not to pull hard on the leash when you are walking me.

I get kind of excited when I hear a squeaky toy and act like a Mac Truck. Please be aware of the truck when you squeak the toy! Can you give a big guy like me a loving forever home? When you come to the Ark, ask to see Big Red. That's me.

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