



No. 303
May 2018



Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

MEMORIES OF WHITESBURG PIKE
HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA - 1950



Also in this issue: **Fast Cars and Storm Damage**

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MEMORIES OF WHITESBURG PIKE

by Larry Maples

Photo credit Lance George

If I lean back in my old blue chair and conjure up a picture from my youth, the scene would likely be within a stone's throw or two from old Whitesburg Pike.

In the 1950s before Memorial Parkway was extended, Whitesburg Pike ran all the way from the Tennessee River to Huntsville Hospital. Today, Whitesburg Drive blends into the Parkway at the old community of Lily Flagg just south of the old gin before you go under the overpass.

The Parkway from there to the river now follows the route of the old Pike. The ten-mile Pike in the 50s was a two-lane concrete road with expansion joints so that your ride was punctuated with a slight bump every 10 yards or so. Most of my remembered childhood was spent on opposite ends of the old Pike. My preschool and elementary days were spent in Redstone Park at Farley near the south end of the Pike.

In 1956 we moved north near the intersection of Drake and Whitesburg. Let's take a sentimental journey from the Tennessee River to Huntsville Hospital as I remember it in the 1950s. Before we start, remember that none of the subdivisions and businesses which line the road today existed in the mid-50s. Scattered houses and a few stores were knit together by "those old cotton fields back home." This is how I remember it.

Let's start at the river. The old narrow Clement C. Clay Bridge (demolished in 2006) would take us across to two Delights just on the south side of the river. If Raymond Foster's old car with the running boards turned left just over the bridge, Bucky and Lee Ann Foster, Charles Pike, David Maples and I were headed to our sandy bottom swimming hole. If Daddy's '49 Buick chugged on to gasoline alley and hung a right at Charles Key's dad's Texaco station and bumped over some field roads, we were in prime muscadine vine territory with plump thick-skinned wild and sweet Tennessee River grapes plopping onto the ground after some encouragement from David, my tree climbing brother.

The fields and riverbank at the beginning of the Pike yielded many tools, arrowheads and other stone artifacts for Daddy's collection in those days when it was still legal to comb

"I was so ugly as a kid, my mother used to feed me with a slingshot."

Rodney Dangerfield



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(in memory)

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One day looking for stone artifacts, Daddy's eye caught the reflected sun from metallic evidence of commerce on old James Ditto's ferry line. He plucked a 1787 Spanish Milled Dollar out of the smooth stones only two feet from the river's edge.

In those days before the shortcut to the boat harbor was built, you turned on Hobbs Island Road right at the river and drove through Ditto's Landing over the little Aldridge Creek Bridge (closed to cars but still standing). That was our route from Farley to visit my grandparents in New Hope.

Back on Whitesburg and driving north toward Farley, the first house I remember on the east was the Turner place. Linda Turner was in my classes at Farley and we were both in the Class of '63 at Huntsville High. Across the Pike on the west side the Wall family home was up a long driveway just before you get to the crossroads where the stores were located.

Three things you need to

know about Linda Wall. First, she had the lead role in Lillie Latham's first grade play. I was jealous because Bucky Foster was her leading man and I was relegated to singing (with several others) "A Bicycle Built for Two." She was smarter than I was and proved it by skipping a grade. But, before she left me in the dust, she hosted Mrs. Gardner's second grade end-of-year picnic.

In those days the crossroads at Farley (corner of Whitesburg and Green Cove Road) had something on every corner. In the southwest quadrant was Esslinger's Store and Dr. Carpenter's office (he came from New Hope a day or two a week). Cooper's Store was on the southeast corner and Wilson's Store on the northeast (about where Hardees is today). To get to the Methodist Church, go east on Green Cove to the railroad tracks. Redstone Park and Farley Junior High School dominated the northwest corner of the crossroads.

Redstone Park was a post WWII apartment complex pro-

viding reasonable rents to returning servicemen and their wives saving their nickels for a home of their own. Picture white Army barracks and lots of children. It was a fun place to grow up especially in the summer playing baseball. The well-manicured baseball fields at Sandhurst Park now occupy the site of our scruffy old sandlot field of dreams.

Next to "The Park" was Farley School, a tight ship run by Louis J. Morris. He and Mrs. Morris (my third-grade teacher) lived next door in a house that was part of their compensation, a common arrangement in county schools in those days. My teachers Miss Latham, Mrs. Gardner, Mrs. Morris, Miss Nauls and Mrs. Gunn provided a solid 1-5 foundation for my education. The Baptist church was across the street from the school as was Burroughs Grocery (about where Dollar Gen-



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eral is today).

Leaving Farley and moving north the farm next to the school was run by John Hays' family. At least that is what I assume since I saw him going up the driveway many times. That driveway is now Oak Dairy Lane and at the end of it is the white farmhouse I used to see as a kid from my backyard. It appears to now function as a clubhouse for the subdivision.

On the other side of the Pike was a drive-through opportunity to purchase your favorite adult beverage without proving your adulthood.

From there to Hobbs Road my memory turns up nothing but Bell Mountain on your left and a small abandoned cemetery if you turn right on Hobbs. The next intersection at Redstone Road turns on two memory bulbs. There has been a mobile home park there as far back as I can remember. One of the tenants in the mid-50s was the eccentric Mr. Sherman whose door you could hardly enter because books were stacked everywhere. He was also known to give informal singing lessons under the cedar tree in front of Farley Methodist Church.

Across the street about where Ruby Tuesday is today was the former residence of a well-known woman who was murdered by a reclusive AWOL airman named Isham Hobbs. This story scared the wits out of me as a kid because years after the murder one of my teachers at Farley told me she believed Isham could still be hiding on Green Mountain. He was eventually apprehended in Florida and returned to Huntsville for a well-publicized trial.

The next big expanse of land on the west side was the Claude Buchanan farm. Mr. Buchanan was a friend of children at

Farley Methodist Church (candies could be expected from his pocket and maybe even a flower in your lapel if you were one of his special pets like my brother David).

I often sat behind him as he pulled out all the stops on one of his favorite hymns like "Beulah Land." A couple of years ago I was having lunch with some old friends I had not visited in 50 years. The conversation naturally turned to what we remembered about each other from our school days. James Foley told Norman Bradley that I was a very loud singer at church. Maybe I was copying Mr. Buchanan.

From the Buchanan farm north to Haysland is now only a big cotton field in my memory. As those cotton fields began to fill up with subdivi-

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sions, my old church at Farley became Latham Methodist just a stone's throw off Whitesburg at Weatherly Road. Then there was the old gin (still standing today), but beside it was my bus driver's house (Mr. McCorkle) which is long gone.

After another mile of fields, the Browns' farm appeared on the east side. Wayne Brown was a quiet well-mannered boy in my class and he had a sister or two who got off the bus with him. They had an older brother whom I did not know about until one day in the 4th grade the sad news went up and down the halls at Farley that Herbert had died while serving in the Army in Germany. That day came back to me a few years ago when my dad and I were looking for a relative's grave at Maple Hill. When we found it, I looked around and noticed that there was only one grave in the area which was decorated with recent flowers. The name on the stone stopped me in my tracks. James Herbert Brown had been recently remembered.

Moving on toward town Mr.

McCorkle would turn left on Byrd Spring Road and drive down a narrow tree-lined lane all the way to the entrance to the hunting club at Byrd Spring where he would drop off James Barclay. Then he would retrace his route back to Whitesburg without crossing the Parkway because, remember, it was not there.

When we got back to Whitesburg and turned north, Camille and Joe Fleming lived on the right. I have one very angst-filled memory of that house. Camille threw a party when we were in the 6th grade at Fifth Avenue. Someone had the bright idea this would be our first boy-pick-up-the-girl event so mother drove me over to Pat Engle's house on California Street. Going up to the door and shaking hands with her dad was not as hard as trying to make conversation on what felt like a 50-mile ride to Camille's.

When we arrived, the boys (Pete Fleming, Peanut Bright, Philip Sexton, Norman Bradley, John Whitworth and oth-

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ers) were all gathered under Joe's basketball goal and all the girls were standing next to the door trying to get us to come inside. When I told this story to Camille and her mother a couple years ago (her mother and my dad were residents at Redstone Village), they laughed and asked, "What did we do?" All I remember is standing around and being nervous.

Continuing toward town, the Aaron Fleming farm and home was on the west side before Four Mile Post Road. Interestingly, the Trail of Tears marker indicates that one of the trails used to forcibly remove the Cherokees to Oklahoma entered Whitesburg near Four Mile Post Road. In the mid-50s a man named Francis Courier had a sheep farm at that intersection. The house he and his family lived in is still standing on that southeast corner today.

The next thing I remember is Airport Road and the Alabama Highway Patrol office that stood on the northwest corner where Rite Aid is now. The cotton field where McDonalds stands is the site of the tragic accident that took the life of young Shelby Berry in 1957. Walter Philips and I were helping coach Ben Berry with some summer activity at Big Spring Park and he said he would take us home if we would ride with him to view the site where his nephew had been recently killed. He pulled over into the field and we watched a somber Coach Berry walk around the site examining the tire marks and broken glass.

Across the street was the Whitesburg Drive-In. A paint-

ing of that theatre property as it looked in the 1950s hangs on the wall of Walton's Table, a restaurant that occupies the site today. When my brother David and I ate there last year, two things about that painting triggered memories. First, there was a power line but no street on the south side of the property about where Airport Road is today. In other words, Airport Road stopped at Whitesburg in those days. Second, the large green lawn on the south side of the property reminded me of those Sunday afternoon baseball games old pal Pete Fleming was known to organize. We had a tendency over time to push home plate closer and closer to the ticket booth. One day, someone fouled one off the booth. Fortunately, no glass was broken or the nicest lady in south Huntsville (Pete's mother and the owner) would have had her niceness tested.

There were no businesses between the Drive-In and Walton and Martha Fleming's home which is still standing in a deep grove of trees. The large field on the north side of their home was only alfalfa in those days but is now partially occupied by the Christian Church.

On the northern extension of the church parking lot sat an aging white house we called home from 1955-1959 while mother and Daddy were plan-

ning and building their home on Drake Avenue. It was a fun place to live as we transitioned to Fifth Avenue School after our days at Farley. We had farms and woods to explore but were only two blocks from the bus stop to get to the Y or Big Spring Park. The icing on the

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Bill Kruse, Huntsville

cake is that Pete would often invite us to run down through the alfalfa field to his house to play basketball, pool or wrestle with his St. Bernard named Goliath.

I had always been curious about that old house because my grandfather's comment when he first visited us there was "This was the old toll house for Whitesburg Pike." In 2016 as we were going through daddy's papers after his death, we came upon a property description that includes not only his lot but also all the property from the top of the hill on Drake down to Whitesburg.

My grandfather was right. The 2-acre lot where we lived was clearly designated as the "toll house property." It was the first toll leaving Huntsville. The locations of the others are unknown to me, but maybe the name Toll Gate Road several miles further south may offer a

clue.

An elderly black couple lived just to the north of us. They owned the property over to Drake and east on Drake to Devon including Robin Lane and the Central Seventh Day Adventist Church. Their property also extended across Whitesburg to encompass all of today's houses on Wingate and Westchester and abutted the Fleming property which became Piedmont Subdivision. We knew him as Uncle John. When Daddy was confined to a nursing home, I brought up the subject of our old days on Whitesburg and asked him if he remembered Uncle John's last name. Without hesitation he said "McClendon." So, John McClendon and his wife were the friendly neighbors who allowed David and me to wander all over their farm and pick blackberries, pears and plums.

And despite his age, he could

play a good game of catch. One day he looked across the fence and saw me playing catch by myself and he said "Throw me one." "But, Uncle John you don't have a glove." "You don't worry about that. I'll catch it." And he caught them all despite encouraging me to throw it a little harder each time. Eventually, Uncle John sold his farm which sprouted two subdivisions.

In the meantime, the traffic was intensifying on the old two-lane Pike. We had a dog and a cat killed in front of our house and one morning as mother was trying to get us off to school, we heard a big thump. Running to the front porch we saw Uncle John's mule writhing in pain and a car with a smashed front. By the time we got dressed and rolled down to the street the policemen had arrived and poor Uncle John was giving them

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permission to use their guns to put the mule out of his misery. Mother got out of the car and successfully lobbied the police to allow her to get her children past the scene before they did their deed of mercy.

When we moved to 3111 Whitesburg, there was no Drake Avenue west of Whitesburg. A street called Donegan Lane ran a little way down to a dead end as I recall. Again, moving toward town, Ellis Overton lived a few houses down on Bibb. The next corner was Kent Road where Judy Ashburn lived. There I caught the Hospital bus coming from town which turned in front of Judy's house and circled through part of Mayfair back to Whitesburg via Bob Wallace passing Forest Summers' house across the street from Tidwell's Grocery. When I was downtown, the public library was the most convenient stop to catch the Hospital bus back to within 3 blocks of home.

Across from Kent Road, Scenic Drive ran east. If you turned off Scenic onto Woodmont, you could find the houses of Charles Pike and David Blankenship. Back to Whitesburg you pass Mr. Chandler's house on the right. He was my barber at the shop that was next to First Methodist Church. He had a son named Jerry who used to love to shoot his BB gun in the woods behind our house. Just past Mr. Chandler's you could take Thornton Avenue down to Mayfair Park where my brother David played Little League

baseball and Sonny Westbrook coached us in Pee Wee football.

As you approach the Y where California splits off from Whitesburg, you might get lucky and see one of the pretty Braden girls on her porch. In any event, Gardner Drugs is on your right and they make a terrific banana split. The only time they ever succeeded in filling up my bottomless stomach was the day I was cutting the lawn of the lady who lived next door to Charles Pike. She had a sense of humor and in haggling about the price for my services, I suggested that in lieu of my \$2 fee she could take me to Gardner Drugs and let me eat all the banana split I could handle. She called my bluff and she and the soda jerk had a jolly old time watching



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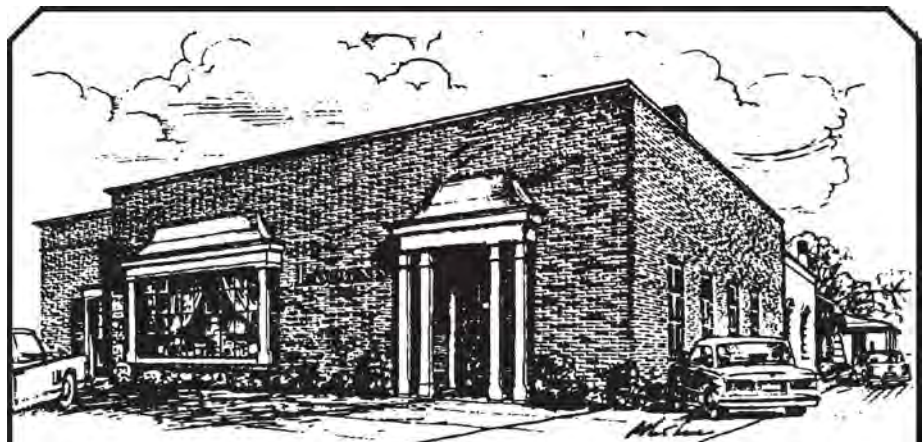
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Stephen Baker

me make an idiot of myself. I ate 3. I don't remember if I lost money on the deal.

George Apostolos lived on Whitesburg just north of Bob Wallace. I don't remember ever eating at his dad's steak house on the east side of the square. But, I do remember his mother preparing us a delicious Greek dish when I spent the night with him.

Daddy's favorite George memory was a summer evening we were having supper and George came tearing down the hill toward our back door screaming "Mr. Maples! Mr. Maples!" He pushed a face drained of color into the screen door and Daddy could see he was scared to death. He wanted Daddy to come with him back to Uncle John's pasture. Daddy grabbed some garden tool and they came back a few minutes later talking about what a big rattlesnake they had just killed.

One day walking toward town just a couple of houses before Marsheutz (about where the credit union is today), Randy Sublett ran out on his porch screaming at the top of his voice, "Maples! Maples! You've got to hear this!" The urgency in his voice was like maybe the President had just had a heart attack, but I should have known. Randy was not going to get this excited unless he was talking about something in his record collection. He believed he had discovered the next Elvis. And, after he played Charlie Rich's "Lonely Week-ends" about half a dozen times, I had a hard time disagreeing with him.



If you turned east on Marsheutz, the Shrout boys, Tommy and Roddy, would be on your right. Moving on towards town, there has been a gas station on the triangle created by Whitesburg and Frank-

lin since before time began. Just after Westmoreland was my parents' favorite grocery, Big Brothers (building now occupied by Los Mariachis and Great Panda). The Dairy Dip occupied the southern portion of today's Burger King parking lot and Austin Williams Shell station was next door on the point created by Whitesburg, Brandon and Longwood.

Turning west on Longwood was our normal route to Fifth

Avenue School. Turning east on Longwood would start us toward Monte Sano in the days before Governor's Drive was built. The last block before the hospital was occupied by a couple of service stations and Roper Florists.

This is all I can dredge out of my memory. A great mystery is why I remember what I remember and why I don't remember what I don't remember.

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The Red T-Bird

by Judith C. Smith

The Beach Boys have been singing to me all week after my son Martin heard me say, "I've sold my 29 Ford and my 30 Ford within the month."

Now if I had three wishes I would wish first for a Red 1957 T-Bird. Well, within minutes Martin called and said that he had found me one, with a detachable hard top. Now all you have to do is come up with the MONEY. That could be a problem since I had just bought another one of my sons a car last month. Just be careful what you wish for.

I get Martin to call the owner last Monday and we set up a time to go have a look. The set-up time was on April Fool's Day (Easter) afternoon to go look at it. I had already called the bank and to be more incognito had a Burger King sack full of paper towels to wrap the \$100 bills in. No one would think to rob me carrying hamburgers, at least that was my mind-set.

My husband and I head out at 4:45 pm to pick up my two sons and a mechanic. I guess it was either my nerves or I ate too much for lunch, but by the time I got there I was ready to throw up and had to sit in the car.

After much dickering, we finally reached a price. Thank goodness M.D. had a little extra on him as I was really short. After paying for the car, I quickly recovered from my sick spell and drove it to our storage building to leave the hard top.

Martin walked over to the car and announced "Mom, you have a flat tire". What an awful April Fool's joke, I thought. Getting out of the car I realized it was no joke. Thank goodness for three men who quickly changed the tire.

I drove it home singing "Fun, Fun, Fun till her Daddy took the Red T-Bird away!"

The NAAC Car Show is May 18th at the Senior Center on Drake Avenue. You better believe I'll be showing my Red T-Bird in the show. You be sure to come by and see me. I'll be looking for ya.

"When an angel gets mad he takes a deep breath and counts to ten. And when he lets his breath out, somewhere there's a tornado."

Joey, on a 3rd grade religion test

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Answered Prayers

by Elizabeth Wharry

God has an interesting way of answering prayers. May 2006 was a financially tough time for us. Bob was working second shift, seven days a week, ten hours per shift.

Our boys were 3-1/2 and 6-1/2 years old. I was praying that somehow I could make Bob's pay stretch just a bit farther. I had found a store that sold my brand of cigarettes for about ten dollars a carton less. It helped. Somewhere around mid May, I started to lose my taste for smoking. Little did I know what was going happen next!

Bob had gone to work, and I called the quit support line. I left a voice mail, hoping someone would return my call.

Somewhere around 10 p.m. local time, I got a call back. The caller's voice was warm and gentle with a beautiful accent.

He said his name was Joshua. He was a retired physician, who was originally from Israel. He asked me how I was feeling. I told him that I was having a problem with muscle spasms. He advised me to call my personal physician, and ask for a certain muscle relaxer, which would control the spasms.

I had a tickle in my throat, and tried clearing it. Joshua told me to cough, and keep coughing until I cleared my throat. I coughed up a big glob of stuff.

Joshua then asked me if I believed that God sent the Holy Ghost to be with Jesus during His passion, death and resurrection. I said that I did. That's when Joshua said that if God brings you to it, He will bring you through it. He went on to say to keep strong in my faith. That in three days, I'd be healed from my addiction.

Joshua was right. Three days later, the cravings and the spasms were gone! I felt like a new woman.

There's a tattoo on my upper inner right arm that says: No regrets!



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Seen in the Papers in the Year 1911

Mother of 13 dies from Paralysis

Mrs. Francis Limbaugh, 67 years old, died at 6 o'clock last evening in Patton Grove as a result of a stroke of paralysis suffered yesterday morning. She was the mother of seven sons and six daughters. The remains will be carried this morning to Monrovia, at her old home, for interment today.

Death Caused by Rubber Snake

J. F. Holder dashed in front of train when frightened by a companion. Frightened by a rubber snake in the hands of a companion, J. F. Holder, Sr., a young boy of Athens, dashed in front of a swiftly moving passenger train and was killed instantly. Jeff Tomlinson, 18 years old, and young Holder were standing near the railroad tracks, when suddenly Tomlinson drew the imitation snake from his pocket and shoved it towards Holder, who in attempting to escape from the supposed reptile, dashed in front of the train and was literally ground to pieces. Tomlinson was arrested.

Woman Starts Panic at her Own Funeral

Decatur, AL Stretching out her hands toward those who had assembled about her coffin, Mrs. Jane Pitcock, an octogenarian, caused a panic at her funeral here according to reports. The funeral sermon had been preached and the lid of the coffin was removed to permit friends and relatives to take a last long look at what they believed to be a corpse. It was then that Mrs. Pitcock regained consciousness. She remained alive for several hours.

For rent - six room cottage on East Clinton street - apply to C. F. Bost.

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Man Arrested for Killing Dogs

Triston Hooper, the surveyor, called at the Daily Times office to explain why he killed the two fine dogs about which the Sunday Morning Times had referenced. Mr. Hooper claims that the dogs had been killing his geese, which he valued at \$5 a piece and had also, he said, bitten a fine bull belonging to him. He was fined \$15 in the Mayors court for shooting fire arms in the city limits and appealed his case to the law and equity court, where he also has a case against him. One of the dogs belonged to Miss Margarette Wellman, the other to Frank E. Murphy, who had the warrants sworn out for the arrest of Mr. Hooper.

Ardmore, TN Mrs. Josie Lemman relates a very unusual experience she has had recently with a bird - a common English Sparrow.

Mrs. Lemman has been troubled for several months with falling hair and had begun to feel that she was going to be completely bald. She is very fond of birds, and regularly feeds several English sparrows near her front steps.

She had taken special interest in one which had a deformed wing, showing that it had been badly crippled at one time. This bird reciprocated the interest shown in it and would often sit for several minutes while Mrs. Lemman would talk to it, and she among many other things often told it about her falling hair, not for a moment thinking the bird could understand her.

Now, Mrs. Lemman does not claim that the bird understood the trouble she was having with her hair, but she does state and can prove that this bird is daily bringing her hair to her, such as it finds in its flights, and is leaving it on her porch.

"It makes eight or ten trips a day," said Mrs. Lemman, "and seems to be especially happy after bringing a real long hair, and I always let the bird see me take the hair, and I pretend that I am very much pleased, for I wouldn't hurt the little thing's feeling for anything on earth."

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Heard On the Street

by Cathey Carney



We had an immediate winner for the Photo of the Month for April. The little boy was **M.D. Smith IV** of Channel 31 fame, and the winning call came from **Michael Thompson** of Harvest. Michael is a retired Fire Captain with the Huntsville Fire Department where he worked for 37 years. He retired in 2007. Thank you Michael for so many years of service to keep our citizens safe!

We couldn't let an important birthday go - **Dr. Don Huber** had an April 18 birthday and he turned 89 with family and friends. He is a sweetheart with lots of good history and I hope we'll get some good stories from **Don** and **Mrs. Huber** soon!

One of my favorite BB&T Bank (on Church Street) customer care ladies is **Ianthia Bridges** and she and sweet hubby **Frazer** are celebrating their 25th wedding anniversary on May 15. Also in May

Ianthia's beautiful Mom, **Joyce Ramsey**, who lived in Camden, AL, will have a May 28th birthday so Happy Birthday to you from all of us here!

This is a tip I heard recently and just had to pass it along to you. A friend who is on blood thinners cut his face recently in a fall. After an ER visit and back home again he noticed one spot kept bleeding. His son found out that a home remedy to stop it might work. He took some powdered **Cayenne pepper** that was in the cabinet, applied it to the cut and put a band aid over it. The bleeding stopped immediately. After a visit to the drug store, the pharmacist said they sell something similar but that cayenne pepper is a coagulant (thickens up blood) and has worked for hundreds of years. Who knew? And you always have it in your spice rack!

I am hiding a **tiny hummingbird** somewhere in the pages of this May issue, because I just love birds. So if you happen to find it, which you won't cause it'll be so tiny, and are the first to call me, you win a year's subscription to "Old Huntsville" magazine. But since it will require a couple of flashlights and magnifying glasses I don't think I'll get the first call.

We want to send deepest condolences to the family of **Stephen Sylvester Bzdell**, who passed away April 3 at the young age of 64. Stephen is survived by brothers **John Bzdell (Margaret)** and **Joseph Bzdell (Debbie)** as well as three nephews and two nieces.

The brothers have good memories that will last forever.

We wanted to send a special hello to our Huntsville friends **Jim** and **Ola Lee**, who have been subscribers for so many years.

Bob Ward joined up with the Huntsville Times in 1957, covering the space program. He was promoted to Editor-in-Chief during his 43 years at the Times, and was a funny, smart and beloved member of the staff. He wrote 4 space-related books, including his 2005 biography of **Wernher von Braun**, "Dr. Space." He was President of the Chamber of Commerce, Leadership 2000 program, Huntsville Press Club and affiliated with the Land Trust, Cummings Research Park Board and the Huntsville Symphony Orchestra Association. He passed away on March 20 at the age of 83 and leaves his wife of 60 years, **Barbara Ann Ward**, a daughter, 2 sons and 3 grandchildren. He certainly left his mark on Huntsville and will be remembered always.

Happy 59th anniversary to our friends in Grand Prairie, TX - **Wayne** and **Mary Jane Miller** have not been to Huntsville yet but love reading about our his-

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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tory each month! Congratulations to the lovebirds, who celebrated on April 10!

Also on April 10 **Jean Ayers** of Ayers Farmers Market celebrated her 75th birthday - a beautiful lady inside and out!

A tip for your backyard birds - use lint from your dryer to put outside for your birds, they'll build soft nests for their babies.

Happy Birthday to **Ron Eye-stone** of Madison - we know he and wife **Barb** will find something fun to do! His birthday is May 8.

When we're young we think we are invincible and are going to last forever, but the fact is one day we're going to get older and maybe get sick. That's just part of life. But if you keep yourself as healthy as you can right now, those good days will last longer. When you think about it, what your grandma said was actually right. Everything in moderation - eat natural good food and drink lots of water, get exercise and good sleep and be kind to others! Pretty basic. Oh, and remove any complications in your life.

When I went in to Cartridge World the other day on Airport Rd. to restock on my laser cartridges I saw the most beautiful Collie. That is one dog you don't see much in Alabama but **Prissy** was a gorgeous girl and kissed me right on the face! She belongs to **Gary and Karen Campbell**, Gary is Gen. Mgr. of the store. I love seeing pets in stores (Lewters has cats with attitudes that are so friendly)

and love shopping with cats & dogs and even birds (Across the Pond.) Just adds alot more to your shopping experience.

Kirby McCraney was part owner in Huntsville's "A Good Book Store" downtown years ago. He was a very talented pottery artist whose works were shown throughout the South. Kirby was a quiet man who loved being out in nature and had his art studio in the hills near Cathedral Caverns. He received over 40 awards for his art and numerous grants from the Alabama Arts Council. Kirby died in his sixties of complications resulting from lung cancer, and most of his family had predeceased him. He leaves cousins **Joy Jung** and **Gay Orrahood** of Kentucky. Those who knew Kirby will not forget him, and his art lives on.

The folks at Hiller Plumbing did some work for me recently and gave some great advice - DON'T pour bacon grease down the sink. I always thought that if you followed it with hot water it would melt all through your pipes but it doesn't. I was shown a cut pipe full of bacon grease and learned something I didn't know. The rep said to pour it into a container til it hardens, then in the garbage. Lesson learned!

City Lights is a music event that happens a bit later up at Burritt Museum - many people love to pack up blankets and drinks of choice and listen to good music under the stars. Just remember it

gets a bit chillier up there so bring jackets. That gets started July 27th.

It's with sadness that we learned of the death of **David Clinton Everett**, who passed away March 16. He loved reading about history and was a contributor to stories in "Old Huntsville". He leaves **Lora**, his wife, and daughter **Diane Jenkins (Don)**, son **Curtis Everett**, grandson **Travis VanVlack (Amy)**; great grandchild **Caleb VanVlack** and also **Kyle, Katy and Abby Wright**. He'll always be in the hearts of his family.

Rosemary Leatherwood misses her sweet husband **Billy Leatherwood** every single day. He would have had a birthday on May 2 and always loved celebrating with his family. We send our love to Rosemary and know that she'll see him again one day.

I do alot of gardening and love those handy kneeling benches you can flip to sit on, or kneel if you're digging in the dirt. Mine was looking very used and rusty so I was going to get another one (a new one is about \$35) then I remembered I had some Rustoleum spray paint in the garage in a pretty green color. I wiped off the bench, gave it a good spray and it's as good as new! Money saved!

Happy birthday to our sweet friend **Linda Goldman**, who will have a May 25 birthday. She and husband **Darryl** will be doing some traveling soon, and we send our love to both of them.

Have a wonderful May and soak in the warm weather!

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Cooking with the Choir

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Corn Pudding

- 2 eggs
- 1 c. milk
- 2 T. butter, melted
- 3/4 c. cheddar cheese, grated
- 1 can cream style corn
- 1 c. cracker crumbs
- 1/2 c. chopped celery
- 1/2 c. chopped onion
- 1/2 t. black pepper

Beat the eggs with the milk and butter. Mix in all other ingredients. Pour into casserole and bake at 350 degrees for 50 minutes.

Poppy Seed Chicken

- 3 lbs. chicken breasts, boneless and skinless
- 8 oz. sour cream

- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 1/2 c. toasted, slivered almonds
- 1 stick butter, melted
- 1 stack saltine crackers, crumbled
- 2 T. poppy seeds

Stew chicken in salted water. Cool and cut into bite-sized chunks. Mix with sour cream and soup and put in a buttered 9x13" casserole dish. Mix the butter, crackers and poppy seeds and spread on top of the chicken. Bake at 350 degrees about 40 minutes til bubbly.

Bratwurst & Sauerkraut, German Style

- 6 slices bacon
- 1 onion, chopped

- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 32 oz. sauerkraut, rinsed and drained
- 2 medium potatoes, unpeeled and sliced
- 1 c. water
- 1/4 c. dry white wine or apple juice
- 1 T. brown sugar
- 1 t. chicken bouillon instant granules
- 1 t. caraway seed
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 lb. bratwurst (6-7 links)
- 1 lrg. apple, cored and sliced

Cook bratwurst. In a large skillet cook bacon over medium high heat till crisp, crumble and set aside. Reserve 2 tablespoons of the bacon drippings in skillet. Cook onion and garlic in reserved drippings over medium heat until tender.

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Then add sauerkraut, potatoes, water, white wine, brown sugar, bouillon granules, caraway seed and bay leaf. Add up to 1/2 cups more water if necessary to cover potatoes.

Bring to boil. Once boiling, add bratwurst (cut links in half) and then simmer for 20 minutes or until potatoes are tender, stirring occasionally. Add sliced apples, cover and cook 5 more minutes until apples are just tender. Remove bay leaf before serving and discard. Add crumbled bacon on top and serve.

Good Spinach

10 oz. frozen chopped spinach

1-1/2 oz. cream cheese

2 T. butter

2 T. grated Parmesan cheese

Put frozen spinach in small skillet with tight lid on low heat. Cook until thawed then continue to cook til liquid is gone. Add the cream cheese and butter, re-cover pan and allow cheese to melt. Mix well and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese, salt and pepper to taste.

Cinnamon Cream Cheese Coffee Bars

4 pkgs. Crescent rolls

16 oz. cream cheese

1 c. sugar
1 t. vanilla extract
1 stick butter
3/4 c. sugar
1 t. cinnamon, ground

In a 9x13" buttered pan, press 2 containers of crescent rolls. Combine cream cheese, sugar and vanilla and spread on top. Put remaining crescent rolls on cheese layer. Melt butter and pour over the rolls. Mix the sugar and cinnamon and sprinkle over the top. Bake for 30 minutes at 350 degrees. SO good with a hot cup of coffee.

World War One Cake

2 c. brown sugar
2 c. hot water
2 t. shortening
1 pkg. raisins or dates
1 t. salt
1 t. cinnamon
1 t. cloves
3 c. plain flour
1 t. baking soda
2 t. hot water

Mix first 7 ingredients in saucepan, bring to boil and continue to boil for 5 minutes. Remove from heat and cool. When mixture is cold, add flour and baking soda, dissolved in hot water. Bake in greased tube pan for 1 hour at 350 degrees. Makes a heavy, dark cake that keeps well.

Hummingbird Cake

3 c. flour
1/2 t. salt
2 c. sugar
1 t. baking soda
1/2 t. cinnamon
1 c. pecans
3 eggs, beaten
1 c. oil
3 mashed bananas
15 oz. crushed pineapple and juice
8 oz. cream cheese
1-1/2 lb. confectioners sugar
1/2 c. butter
1 t. vanilla extract

Mix dry ingredients in a bowl. In a separate bowl mix the eggs, oil, mashed bananas, pineapple and juice. Combine this with the dry ingredients. Bake in 3 8-inch pans greased and floured. Bake at 325 degrees for 25-30 minutes. For the icing blend together the remaining 4 ingredients and frost the cake.

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The Honor Box

by John E. Carson

On most weekday mornings, Jerry Lankford could be found at the American Legion Post at 2900 Drake Avenue S.W., sitting in one of the high, padded chairs at the end of the bar in the Social Quarters, drinking his coffee and checking for messages or making calls to members of the Post Honor Guard.

An Honor Guard member for over thirty years and Commander of Post 237's Honor Guard for more than twenty-three of those, Jerry was familiar with just about every patron of the organization and the stories behind most of the regular customers of the establishment.

Few of those stories were shared, if any, with others; the stories he loved to tell were of his travels to see his daughter in Florida or tales of the humorous happenings he had experienced on Details with the Honor Guard volunteers; like the one involving the nicely dressed woman in high heels on a rainy day as the family laid a loved one to rest in a heavy downpour that left the gravesite surrounded by mud.

Though the matching umbrella protected her black dress, it did nothing for her shoes at the end of the service. She hurried to the shelter of her car, leaving one of them trapped in the reddish quicksand of the Alabama clay, and a nylon clad foot exposed to the unsympathetic ground of the cemetery that seemed to be trying to pull her into an early plot of her own.

The route she had chosen was also the one the Honor Guard had embarked on after the command, "Left Face, half-step,

march," and holding their weapons at Port Arms, the Commander and the Squad faced the same perilous path. But unlike the lady in distress, they were not dressed in heels and their heavy boots were in no danger of being sucked into the Netherworld or being sent to Post Everlasting.

And as any Southern gentleman would do, the Honor Guard Commander retrieved the shoe for the young woman, at the cost of his striped, uniform trousers becoming splattered with mud as the stubborn ground held onto its black, shiny prize, finally letting go with a sudden release that sent Jerry backward into the halted members of the rifle bearing squad lined up like dominoes behind him.

The shoe retrieved, and balance restored, the team slogged their way to the waiting van, amazed at just how much mud their boots could hold and how heavy they could become!

Though the rain had stopped upon their return to the Post, the heavy clumps of clay on their feet required removal before being allowed to enter the building and each of the Honor Guard members took turns with an outside water hose attached to an outside faucet; ensuring their humility, which was often threatened by their status as an elite, uniformed team.



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There were other stories Jerry would tell, each one embellished with his unique style and magnetic charm; two things that had served him well as he searched for and recruited new members to an ever-changing roster.

A sense humor was essential in such an important duty as paying honor and respect to fallen veterans and comforting the families they left behind, for without it one could not go on without succumbing to the grief they witnessed repeatedly. Week after week - at one time reaching 300 Details in a single year - the Honor Guard of Post 237 responded to the calls for graveside services, memorials, flag raisings, flag disposal ceremonies and parades in its service to the community.

Master storyteller that he was, Jerry Lankford also took his duty seriously - as one patron of the Post discovered when he picked up a copy of the Old Huntsville Magazine from the rack in the Social Quarters behind the seat Jerry occupied that day. Apparently unable to read the sign, the coin box and the price on the cover of the publication, and oblivious to the watchful eyes of the man drinking his morning coffee behind him, the man took the issue to a table and sat down to read-or look at the pictures in the publication.

Not until Jerry Lankford appeared at his side did he look up. "What?" he asked, defiantly.

"I know you saw the sign that said, 75 cents," Jerry said, "You know, when you take that magazine without paying for it, you are stealing money from kids in hospitals and that is about the lowest thing anyone could do. Now, either put that back or put the money in the box."

The man looked at Jerry, "You're kidding, right? You would dress me down over a paper? I'll put it back after I read it," the man said, "I don't have any change."

"You'll put it back now or I'll put it back after I put you outside," Jerry said.


Regarding Jerry's tone of voice and the look in his eyes, the man chose the wiser path of nodding and saying, "Okay," as he stood up and walked to

the stand to replace the purloined issue.


Satisfied, Jerry returned to his now lukewarm coffee and held it up for the bartender's attention.

As she returned with a fresh cup, she motioned to Jerry with her eyes. Turning around in his chair he watched as the man struggled to put a rolled-up \$5.00 bill into the slot of the coin box, finally succeeding.

The Honor Guard Commander turned back around, winked at the bartender, and smiled as took the waiting cup and filed the incident for a future story to tell.



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Fast Cars and Storm Damage

Story & Photo by John Michael Hampton



The cars ran very fast around the track, so fast that their numbers and logos were just a blur. As the Busch series race continued, I told Charlotte all about the sights and sounds of the NASCAR event as she got ready for work back home in Huntsville.

After we started talking on March 27, 2004, Charlotte and I made a point of talking to each other every day. We would either talk to each other at work, call each other on the phone, or send each other messages using AOL Instant Messenger (otherwise known as AIM). It was fairly common for us to talk to each other multiple times during the day.

Thursday, April 22, was no different. And so it was that by the time I left the University of Alabama in Huntsville, heading home to Medaris Road where I lived at the time, I had already called Charlotte. She told me that she had just gotten off work at Wal-Mart, but was waiting on her dad to get his car fixed.

The announcer on WDRM had stated that there was a strong thunderstorm that had formed over Limestone County. I was fairly sure I could get home

before it got to North Huntsville, as the time was around 6:15 pm. The announcer had stated that the storm would be in Huntsville around 6:45 pm.

Around that time, as I crossed the Jordan Lane and Sparkman Drive intersection, my cell phone rang. Chris Lisauckis, one of my real good friends and a storm chaser, called me to ask me if I was interested in riding out to Pulaski Pike with him to chase this storm. I asked the family member driving if they could drop me off at Chris' house,

and then told Chris I would be there in about five minutes.

After hanging up with Chris, I called Charlotte. I told her that I was going to chase the storm with Chris. I told her "You and your dad stay at WalMart until this storm passes. It may have huge hail and strong wind with it!" She said that she would, as her dad's car still was not ready in the auto repair center.

Chris already had his Jeep Cherokee started and sitting on the side of the road when my uncle stopped our car to drop me off. I got in the vehicle with Chris, and we started moving toward the Pulaski Pike and Bob Wade Lane intersection. (Research Park Blvd had not been extended to Pulaski Pike at that time.)

We pulled off the road about a half-mile south of Bob Wade Lane under the high tension power wires because that gave us the best view to the west. As the storm entered the county, the National Weather Service issued a Severe Thunderstorm Warning, which we heard on the radio as we turned off the vehicle and got out to observe the storm.

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I had an old 35mm camera with me that was loaded with 200 speed film. As the storm appeared to our west, I started taking pictures, hoping to get a decent photo with such a low speed film that was not made for light situations like this. I hit the button just as a bright flash of lightning lit the sky west of us, finding out only after I had the film developed at WalMart that I caught it on film.

Chris told me after we took pictures of the storm, "We need to move! I do not like being under these electric wires with a storm coming in!"

We left that location, driving up to Bob Wade Lane. As we turned on Bob Wade Lane, the storm reached our location. Large hailstones fell from the sky and rain came down in buckets. Chris quickly drove under a carport next to a church for protection from the storm.

After the storm, Chris dropped me off at the house. I agreed that before I left for a trip to Talladega with my Baptist Campus Ministries group the next day, I would go to survey any storm damage. As soon as I got home, I called Charlotte. She and her dad made it home safely. They had stayed at WalMart until the storm passed them.

The next morning, Chris and I went to a business complex on Wall Triana Highway in Madison. We took pictures of damage that had been done to the buildings under construction due to the storm.

After we finished, my uncle drove me to Decatur so that I could meet up with the Baptist Campus Ministries group. Our group, from Calhoun Community College in Decatur, had been invited to volunteer in the infield at the spring race weekend at Talladega International Speedway.

It took most of the day Friday for us to pack everything we needed into the vehicles and make the trip to Talladega. I called Charlotte several times during the day, including from the Speedway office where we were picking up our special "all access" passes. We then went to the Motorsports Hall of Fame, where I bought a necklace for Charlotte.

Saturday, we arrived at the race track early. We set up a tent, and allowed kids whose parents were camping in the infield to paint and design their own pinewood derby car. Then, the cars were allowed to dry while the Busch race was run. After the race, the kids returned to race their pinewood derby cars with every child being able to get at least

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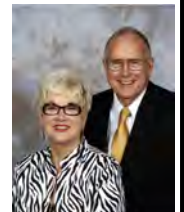
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one prize.

During the day on Saturday, I called Charlotte at least five times, checking to see how everything was going back home in Huntsville. That was when I told her about how fast the cars were traveling, and that the racetrack was a whole lot bigger than it looked on TV.

On Saturday night I asked our two directors, a married couple who worked at the Morgan Baptist Association, if they could join me on the porch of the cabin we were staying at, which was located at Shocco Springs Retreat Center. I told them I would like for them to pray for me as I was having so many things happening in my life, "and I really need for things to change soon." They prayed, and I felt a release, letting me know that God had taken over control of the situation.

That Saturday night, when we went to eat supper, we stopped at the WalMart in Talladega to allow members of the team to pick up any items they needed. I had to buy another 120 minute card for my prepaid cell phone, as I had already used up 120 minutes calling Charlotte since Friday morning.

On Sunday we started the day with an interdenominational worship service for people camping in the infield. Around fifty people attended, with two people coming forward to dedicate their lives to Jesus Christ.

After the service, a Fox Sports sound engineer showed us how they rig microphones for the race that capture the sounds

from the track. These microphones are used during the race when the television broadcast encourages viewers to "crank it up" to hear the sounds of the race.

We left Talladega with about thirty laps left in the Winston Cup Race, to avoid the traffic after the race ended. So, we heard on the radio about the people throwing beer cans on the track after Jeff Gordon beat Dale Earnhardt Junior during a race-ending caution.

I had told Charlotte that I would see her Monday at work. However, I had other plans.

When my uncle and I stopped at WalMart that Sunday night to drop off film for developing, I slipped into the garden center, where Charlotte was the cashier, and walked up to her, handing her the necklace. She thanked me and hugged me. I told her that I enjoyed the trip, but was glad to be back home where I could see her again.

The next important moment in our romance happened in late May, when I had my 30th birthday. That article will be the next installment of the series, titled, "Birthdays and Burning Ovens". Stay tuned!

Woody Anderson



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Walking Charlie

from Old Hsv 1997 issue

by Kathleen Broyles



If you are a native Huntsvillian, chances are you remember Walking Charlie. He lived downtown. Charlie walked everywhere, down the middle of the road, near the white lines. He had a stick that he would wave in the air when children followed him when school was out. The children would pull and tug at his old black coat, laughing and screaming Charlie, Charlie. Some throwing rocks, as if the blind couldn't feel. He felt those rocks.

Every day before sunset, Charlie walked down to the liquor store by the railroad tracks on Meridian Street. He went inside and would guzzle down the water provided by the men behind the counter, free of charge. He tapped his stick on the floor until he reached the door, then held the hands of the children who whispered now at the railroad tracks after looking both ways. He crossed the tracks home to his mother.

Early one morning, Walking Charlie's mother died. He cried and cried. A man named Billy came by the house and said Charlie, it's time to go. Charlie was huddled in the corner, crying

like a baby. The man named Billy picked him up by the arms of his old black coat and said it'll be OK, Charlie, and they left.

No one was there except the preacher, and an old lady. The sun was shining sharp into Walking Charlie's eyes. He picked up his stick and waved it at the sun, back and forth in the air, fast, while tears streamed down his face. He fell to his knees and couldn't stop crying, his face pressed to the ground. The preacher and the old lady let him be.

As the preacher read his words, Walking Charlie still cried, waving his stick into the air as if he could really see the sun. Its sharp rays cut through him like glass.

Walking Charlie's heart was broken.

One day Charlie guzzled down his water, as usual. He took the hands of children who said, don't go Charlie. Not now.

Charlie dropped their hands, moved to the middle of the tracks, and just stopped.

This time the whole town turned out. They came in hoards, and said he was an institution. A few women dabbed their eyes as the preacher read about salvation.

The man named Billy stood way back behind a tree. He pressed his face to an old tree at Maple Hill cemetery, until it hurt. He was crying when he said, Charlie, why couldn't you see the train?

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The Creek Wading Misadventure



by M. D. Smith, IV

Left to right:

M.D.'s sister,
M.D. and his
father on a
fishing trip

It was summer of 1950 and I was nine years old. It's always hot in Alabama in July and most of us boys didn't wear shoes at all around our neighborhood. If we went to town and walked on hot asphalt, we'd use the old leather sandals, that had a criss-cross over the toes, and a heel loop and strap over the bridge of the foot. Cool and perfectly adequate, but by mid-summer we had all built up a pretty thick layer of skin on our feet from hot sidewalks, roads and roaming in the woods and streams of our neighborhood.

On this particular July day, I had ridden my single speed heavy Schwinn bike near the shopping area with a nearby creek running under a bridge. I was accompanied by my faithful companion Ranger, my Collie dog, and we were on the hunt for empty Coke bottles which brought two cents each for deposit return at a near by grocery store. I was storing them in the cowboy type saddle bags strapped over the rear fender of my bicycle.

It was common for people to pitch the bottles out as they crossed the bridge in their car and they'd land both in the stream and the steep wooded banks on either side. So, this was a rich place to gather the refillable Coke bottles. After I had scoured the banks, there were rocks in the stream where the bottles would bust into pieces, but there was deeper water where they didn't break, over knee deep that went under the bridge where I was wading barefoot on this hot day looking for unbroken "two cent" treasures. A nickel would buy a candy bar and a dime would buy a giant sweet limeade in a cup with ice.

With those dreams in my head and my bags already half full of bottles while my dog lapped some water (but stayed in the

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shallows), I waded into the deeper murky water. I was sort of feeling with my feet for bottles, but on one step forward, I slightly lost my balance and put my right foot down hard in front of me. That was a big mistake because under my foot was a broken bottle with the jagged bottom half sticking up-right just waiting for my bare foot.

You know what happened next. The pain shot through my body and I lifted my right leg out of the water to see the jagged round bottle lodged into the ball of my foot and the back half just grazing my instep. I carefully pulled the bottle out and that hurt also, but the blood gushing out of my foot made me forget the pain for the moment.

I had to limp on my heel and other foot up the wooded dirty bank to the bridge where my bike was parked. I rode quickly, with blood dripping on every down pedal stroke of my bike, to the nearby grocery store. I jumped off the bike, and limped heel first into the store, with a small puddle of blood each time I put my heel down. I hated I was going to mess up the store's linoleum floor, but I had to get help.

Just inside the door, the lady at the counter saw what was happening and hollered for some help as she grabbed some kind of small rag behind the counter and ran to my aid. Pressure from the cloth slowed the bleeding down, and shortly a larger cloth or something was tied around my foot as they sat me down and propped my foot up on a chair. My mother had already been called at home because we had an account there and they all knew me well.

Very shortly my mother showed up, they all got me in the car and we headed to the local GP who did everything in those days. He gave me some shots of Novocain and proceeded to stitch up the jagged large and deep cut on the ball of my foot.

I was on crutches for a few days and being young, I healed quickly. I vowed I'd never wade into water in a creek without wearing my sandals and I never did after that.

We sure learn the hard way some times. And if you are wondering about my dog, Ranger, he was smart enough to figure out when I left in my mother's car, to head on home and he was there waiting for us when we returned from the Doctor's office.

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Rules for Cats Who have a House to Run

by Harold Reynolds



DOORS. Do not allow closed doors in any room. To get a door opened, stand on hind legs and hammer with forepaws. Once a door is open, it is not necessary to use it. After you have ordered an outside door opened, stand halfway in and halfway out and think about several things. This is particularly important during cold weather, rain, snow and mosquito season.

CHAIRS & RUGS. If you have to throw up, get into a chair quickly. If there is no oriental rug, shag is good.

GUESTS. Quickly determine which guest hates cats the most. Sit on that human's lap. If you can arrange to have Fish 'n Liver on your breath, so much the better.

For sitting on laps or rubbing against trousers, select a fabric color which contrasts well with your fur. For example: white-furred cats go next to black wool clothing (what else with basic black?)

For guests who gush, "Oh, how darling, I just love kitties," be ready with aloof disdain; apply claws to stockings or use a quick nip on the ankle.

When walking among dishes on the dinner table, with guests present, be prepared to look surprised and hurt when scolded. The idea is to convey, "But you always allow me on the table when company isn't here."

WORK. If one of your humans is sewing or writing and another is idle, stay with the busy one. This is

called helping, or otherwise known as hampering.

PLAY. It is very important. Get enough sleep in the daytime so you are fresh for playing catch mouse, or King-of-the-Hill on the bed between 2 am and 4 am.

TRAINING. Begin people-training early and you will have a smooth-running household. Humans need to know basic rules. They can be taught if you start early and are consistent.

Rules for Hampering:

1. When supervising cooking, sit behind the left heel of the the cook. You cannot be seen and thereby stand a better chance of being stepped on, then picked up and consoled.

2. For the book readers, get in close under the chin, between the human's eyes and the book, unless you can lie across the book itself.

3. For knitting projects, curl up quietly onto the lap of the knitter and pretend to nap. Occasionally reach out and slap the knitting needles sharply. This can cause dropped stitches or split yarn. The knitter may try to distract you with a scrap ball of yarn. Ignore it. Remember, the aim is to hamper work.

A sweet grandmother telephoned St. Joseph's Hospital. She timidly asked "Is it possible to speak to someone who can tell me how a patient is doing?"

The operator said, "Sure, I'll be glad to help, dear. What's the name and room number of the patient?"

The grandmother, in her weak, tremulous voice said, "Norma Findley, Room 302."

The operator replied, "Let me put you on hold while I check with the nurse's station for that room."

After a few minutes the operator returned to the phone and said, "I have good news. Her nurse just told me that Norma is doing well. Her blood pressure is fine; her blood work just came back normal and her Physician, Dr. Cohen, has scheduled her to be discharged tomorrow."

The grandmother said, "Thank you. That's wonderful. I was so worried. God bless you for the good news."

The operator replied, "You're more than welcome. Are you Norma's daughter?"

The grandmother replied, "No, I'm Norma Findley in room 302 - no one tells me ANYTHING!"

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ARCHAEOLOGY IN HUNTSVILLE THIS SUMMER

by Jen Knutson

As an archaeologist who endeavors to share our work with the public, I often hear from people who wish they could have chosen archaeology as a career path but never knew anyone in the profession to teach them about such possibilities. As I child, I fondly remember that there were a few occasions when my uncle took me to freshly plowed fields to look for arrowheads. My grandma has always been a wonderful storyteller and enthralled me for endless enjoyable hours about her childhood on our many days spent antiquing. Despite being inspired as a young reader of this publication, having a wonderful education among my family and in the Madison County school system, I share people's sentiment about never learning about archaeology from an archaeologist nor about archaeological sites in our hometown. Now, as a professional archaeologist, it is a major interest of mine to share my lifelong passion of systematic research and excavation with as many people as possible, especially children in the context of secondary education.

Children are naturally curious, intent on learning as much about the world as possible though they often find the classroom setting a boring place. In this way, they have much in common with an archaeologist, who also prefers to be outdoors as well, looking for clues to their many questions about the people who came before us and searching for answers that help us with current problems facing our society today. Archaeology is a multi-faceted discipline, involving both the sciences and the humanities. Children of all ages benefit from instruction about archaeological methods and systems of inquiry; no matter what their favorite subject in school, as archaeology has something to satisfy everyone's curiosity. Through engagement about the nature of archaeological investigation, young people develop better critical thinking skills, foster an understanding of other cultures and past life ways, and become better citizens and stewards of our shared national heritage and environment.

For these reasons, this is why I have chosen not just to be an archaeologist, but a public one, and to offer my knowledge to the next generation of students. My hope is that they may carry these lessons of scientific and historical inquiry with them on their own path in life. Even if they do not become an archaeologist, it will surely benefit them no matter which profession they decide to pursue. As a Project Archaeology Master Teacher, I encourage you to join me to "Discover the Past -- Shape the Future!"

Educators, you are invited to attend the workshop hosted by Project Archaeology to Investigate Archaeology and Rock Art on June 13-14, 2018 at the Bailey Cove Library in Huntsville, Alabama.

Participate as a learner in Project Archaeology: Investigating Rock Art and "Investigating Painted Bluff Rock Art Panel." Join Project Archaeology as we explore Rock Art and visit the Painted Bluff archaeological site. You will be able to teach 3rd - 5th grade learners about rock art in an effective way that aligns with state common core standards. \$60 includes books, lunches, and the Painted Bluff field trip during the workshop. Graduate course credit is also available; please visit projectarchaeology.org/calendar or email Jen Knutson at jknutson@uwf.edu or Karen Mann at mann.karen@hcboe.us for more information.

This two-day course has the following outcomes:

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Golden K Kiwanis Spotlight

Bill Grunwald



I was born October 11, 1925 in Royal Oak, Michigan, the son of a carpenter and homemaker. I was around the age of 11 when I first remember meeting a girl who lived across the street, Jean Barker. It would be the start of a relationship that would last over 81 years.

When I was 17, I quit high school to join the Marines. I had always wanted to be a photographer but after acing the math part of the test, I was sent to radar school in Ward Island, Texas. While I was on guard duty one day, my mother walked across the stage of Royal Oak High School to accept my graduation diploma.

During WWII, I served in the South China Sea of the Pacific Theatre and fought in the battle of Okinawa. When the war ended I was part of the occupation force in Japan, stationed across the bay from Nagasaki.

After I was discharged in April of 1946, I went to college on the GI bill and graduated from Wayne University in Detroit, Michigan with a degree in Electrical Engineering.

While still in school Jean and I got married and settled in Birmingham, MI. Soon thereafter we moved to Long Island, NY where I worked on missile guidance systems for Sperry Gyroscope. Less than two years later we moved back to Michigan. I worked at Cadillac Gage which led me to work at Chrysler Missile Division, taking over the guidance lab for the Redstone and Jupiter rockets. During this period we adopted two lovely children, Nancy and Mark.

In October of 1960 we moved south to Huntsville and have never looked back. We joined a new church, Trinity UMC, and have been members ever since.

At that time the German scientists had been moved

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to form NASA and I took a job with the Guidance and Control Lab of ABMA on Redstone Arsenal. In 1966 I volunteered to take an appointment with NATO at the SHAPE Technical Center in The Hague, Netherlands. On loan from the Army, our family lived three years in Europe.

I took a new Plymouth Satellite convertible with me and came back with over 125,000 miles on it and had no annual leave left! We visited many countries and my son learned to love weiner schnitzel. We returned in 1969 aboard the S.S. United States, the final voyage of what was at the time the world's fastest ocean liner.

Back in Huntsville I was assigned as the Chief Engineer of the Land Combat Support System (LCSS) which tested missile guidance components for land combat missiles. After that assignment I became the Chief of Engineering Services Division in the missile labs and worked in that capacity until my retirement in 1990.

Upon retirement I became a yard man and chief dog walker. Jean and I enjoyed the company of pets all of our lives with the exception of the three year period we lived in the Netherlands. In the 27 years after my retirement, Jean and I spent time enjoying and supporting our children and grandchildren. We took time to travel and see the places that we had wanted to see all of our lives.

In the last year, Jean passed away (we were married for 69 years) and I have enjoyed the friendship and support of my church and Kiwanis families.

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An Anti-Anty-Auntie-Matter

by Mark Dyer

I received my battlefield commission early in my sixth year when my family took up temporary residence with my father's older sister, Ruby or "Knuckles," as I liked to call her when out of earshot. My aunt was what might be termed "old school" when it came to discipline, if by that you meant Old Testament school. I believe her favorite Bible verse must have been Proverbs 13:24 in which rods are not spared and a little chastening is thought to be an expression of love. Knuckles loved the living stew out of me.

We had just started a new chapter of life in Fosters, Alabama, a wide spot in the road whose population was about the same as a middle school soccer team, although we did have our own zip code. My first assignment at Fort Hard Knox consisted of patrolling a dusty plot of dirt clods and weeds charitably referred to as the front yard. My Aunt had a simple philosophy which she applied with equal enthusiasm to both little boys and seasoned tank commanders. She believed if the sun was up, it was "outside time" - no exceptions.

I pretty much spent an entire year left to my own devices and consumed much of each day building tactical fortifications, formation drilling, and begging for a TV furlough now and then. On the bright side, my quartermaster provisioning was dependable, supplying my unit with regular peanut butter and jelly sandwiches (full crust for battle-hardened warriors) and canteens of whole milk.

We warrior types love our slang. I mean who wouldn't prefer saying "drug deal" to "unauthorized acquisition?" "Make a hole, battle rattle, and soup sandwich" are all favorites. And acronyms! I am telling you, the creativity and use of abbreviations can make or break a career. I became a bit of an expert in this arena. OBAG (Old Box and Guts), was the proud call sign awarded

to my faithful, CRAPFLOP (Cardboard Reinforced Armored Peacekeeping Fighting Land Obscured Patroller), basically an early precursor to the M-1 Abrams.

My CRAPFLOP's main distinction was a sophisticated urban camouflaging scheme consisting of an upside-down green giant holding a corn cob. This vehicle was not one of those fancy-dancy, heavy assault turtles with a cannon, machine gun, tracks, or even an engine to weigh it down. No sir, no way. This was your basic, no frills light-armored model. In fact, it was so no frills (largely due to unreliable supply lines and red tape), my crew was denied permission from Battalion Command to even carve out any peep holes.

Sadly and unbeknownst to me, there was

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Jeremy Phillips, Birmingham, AL

a stealthy local force that was quite capable of inflicting serious casualties that had crossed territorial boundaries and was in the process of violating a treaty or two. Their intrusion provides the single exception in an otherwise stellar career and ranks as one of the most horrific, but largely unknown, military engagements of all time. History books don't tell the full tale of the Battle of Hard Knox in Fosters, but the entire skirmish was vastly one-sided with hordes of enemy forces employing their anti-anti-tank capabilities, eventually overwhelming a single, brave tank commander. This is the stuff of legend and what follows is the true and unabridged report:

DECLASSIFIED: "Starting just after zero dark thirty, spent most of the morning patrolling the perimeter. Mission constraints were specific, having previously received orders from General Knuckles that crew would not only be decommissioned, but would experience the full extent of her proverbial chastening love if crew got anywhere near the road.

Commanding a CRAP-FLOP with no optical periscope or radar enhancements proved to be a particularly irritating problem on that cool, autumn morning. Commander had 'gotten tired' of constantly peeking out from under OBAG for course corrections and de-

decided to exercise the remainder of the operation in Charlie Delta mode also known as 'Cruising Dark.' Charlie Delta mode, for all its exhilaration, comes with a few severe operational shortcomings and as a result, apparently OBAG blindly crossed enemy lines.

It seems Military Intelligence had either failed to note or report a potent invasion force deploying their forward command between the roots of an old oak tree across the driveway from the head shed. The CRAPFLOP came to a halt a few feet from the trunk and, very regrettably, happened to bivouac directly on top of enemy HQ. As the entire crew innocently sat there in the dark, anticipating a delicious PB&J (with battle crust), it wasn't long before it was obvious that something was terribly wrong and not Oscar Kilo at all. Despite corrugated armament, the crew started taking on serious fire from all directions, especially from below. Someone shouted 'Ambush!' Commander exploded from under the CRAPFLOP and made a beeline for HQ, caterwauling for all he was worth. Later, he

referred to this maneuver as an 'official advancement to the rear.'" END REPORT

The truth was that I was a fairly tough little soldier and I rarely made a peep throughout my daily adventures. My screams got General Knuckle's full attention and sent her trundling outside with rolling pin in hand. Once she ascertained the area was free of both vagrants and varmints, she be-

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gan examining her noisemaker more closely. This was not an easy task since I was dancing a modified Cotton-eye Joe with a little early Watusi inspired Elvis thrown in for good measure. Aunt Ruby's triage quickly and accurately diagnosed a severe case of solenopsis or common fire ants.

I hoped I was headed for treatment at our M.A.S.H. (My Aunt's Small House), but instead I was commanded to strip right on the front step. This is the singular moment in my life during which I probably qualified for the preschooler's Medal for Bravery. I was a very modest boy and as bad as the stings were, there were few things more deadly to me than being seen outside in my birthday suit. I preferred my firing squad (this is a heck of a pun). In spite of the fact that insubordination with General Knuckles was never a wise (or safe) option and in spite of a whole lot of pain, I protested and refused to disrobe. Aunt Ruby was not only an experienced muleskinner, but she had some serious guns hanging from her shoulders. Soon I stood there utterly humiliated as she raked the little demons out of my hair, swatted them off my backside, and scraped them down my chest and legs. Some estimated the enemy losses in the thousands, but humility demands I lower the number to mere hundreds.

My battle scars faded with time and it is a strange thing that I can no longer remember the pain of my wounds, but I can still vividly recall the embarrassment of standing naked on Aunt Ruby's porch. I guess some scars are invisible because they run so deep. As I stood there for the whole world to see, anticipating certain death from mortification, I was reminded of three poor legionnaires who found themselves sentenced and standing

before a firing squad. One was asked if he had any last words and in an effort to save himself, pointed back over the heads of his executioners and yelled "TORNADO!" When they turned to look, he jumped over the wall behind him and escaped. Once things had settled down, one of the two remaining legionnaires, who had picked up on what had just happened, was asked if he had anything to say. He pointed back over the heads of the squad and yelled, "FLOOD!" The riflemen once again turned to look and the second soldier scrambled over the wall to freedom. The final man, who was still standing in his place, was asked if he had any last words. He thought for a second and then his eyes lit up as he yelled, "FIRE!" I would have preferred that finale myself.



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Dave Barry

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by David Ohlrich

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In 1993 Fulgham's Inc. began offering urban forestry services by providing construction site management of mature trees and root/soil remediation. By 2001 the business began solely providing Urban Forestry consulting as demands grew. At that time the business sold its client list to another spraying company and removed itself from the spraying business.

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Poor White Trash

The following letter was submitted by B.I. Landrith. It was discovered among his mother's belongings.

Mary Edwards Brown was a tiny, frail, straight-backed, old lady living in a one-room apartment in Springfield, Ill., not far from the Lincoln house. I visited her twice in 1956. She was 90 years old then. Her mother was Mary Todd Lincoln's sister.

Her mother said they (Lincoln and Mary) married. Though it was the grandfa-

ther who made the trouble and forced Mary to write a letter breaking off the engagement.

But they met secretly and decided to get married that evening so the mother and the two married sisters worked all day. She baked one of her famous cakes. It was still warm at the wedding – well, good enough for plebeians according to the sisters.

It was in that same house 24 years later that Mary Edwards Brown was born. Mary's father said Lincoln was, "poor white trash," and wouldn't allow his daughter

to marry him and threatened to cause trouble. Edwards was the flower of the Todd family and quite intelligent. She always had her nose in a dictionary.

In February of 1861 President-elect Lincoln left Springfield for the last time. It was raining hard and very blustery when he made his farewell address and most of the people were crying.

When the funeral train returned to Springfield the tracks were so slippery with crushed flowers the train was delayed 3 hours because it had to plow through flowers.

People reported that they had never seen anything like it before or since.



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PET TIPS FROM ANGEL

Dog Park Bullies



How to Spot a Dog-Park Bully

Bullying means one dog is playing too rough for another (remember the bully might be YOUR dog!) and when it happens, it's time to leave. Here are signs that play has stopped being fun:

- One dog repeatedly pins another down, with no reciprocation
- One dog repeatedly chases another, with no reciprocation
- A dog does not back off when the other dog gives a high-pitched yelp
- A dog continues to pursue another who is trying to end the play session by, for example, hiding behind your legs or jumping on a bench
- You see anything that makes you uncomfortable (you know your dog best, so trust your instincts!)

Signs Your Dog Is Uncomfortable

Your dog might not come to you when he's feeling bullied or uncomfortable, so keep an eye out for these body-language cues:

- A tail that is low or tucked under
- Lip licking
- Yawning
- Barking while backing away from another dog
- Avoiding eye contact and turning his head away when another dog approaches

What Does Good Play Look Like?

While it's important to remove your dog from a bullying situation, it's also good to know when play that looks rough to you is really fun for him. Here are signs your dog is having a great time:

- A tail wagging in wide sweeps or fast circles
- A playful bark that's slightly higher than his "alert" bark at home
- Reciprocation: each dog taking

turns doing the chasing, pinning, etc.

The fact is, any dog of any breed, size, sex, age or temperament can be a bully — or a victim of bullying — and many dogs can go from bully to bullied in different contexts.

A few other summer tips for your pet:

* Be aware of the plants you have in your home and yard. The ingestion of azalea, oleander, castor bean, sago palm, Easter lily or yew plant material by an animal can be fatal.

* Never allow your pets to have access to the areas in which cleaning agents are being used or stored. Cleaning agents have a variety of properties; some may only cause mild stomach upset, but others can cause severe burns of the tongue, mouth and stomach. Store all cleaners, pesticides and medications in a secured area above the counter. When using rat, mouse, snail or slug baits, or ant or roach traps, place the products in areas inaccessible to animals. Most baits contain ingredients that can attract your pets, and they will try to eat them.

* Make sure your companion animals do not enter areas in which insecticidal foggers or house sprays have been applied for the period of time indicated on the label.

* Make sure your pets do not go on lawns or in gardens treated with fertilizers, herbicides or insecticides until they have dried completely.

* Keep all prescription and over-the-counter drugs out of your pets' reach, preferably in closed cabinets above the counter. Pain killers, cold medicines, anti-cancer drugs, antidepressants, vitamins and diet pills.

* Automotive products such as gasoline, oil and antifreeze should be stored in areas that are inaccessible to your pets.

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From the Desk of Tom Carney

It's Hard to Go Home

by Tom Carney

I pulled off to the side of the road and took a long look at Riverton School. There wasn't much left that I could recognize. The buildings had all changed, and looking into the faces of the young, bright-eyed children, there wasn't much that I could identify with, either.

I fell in love with Sally Baker while going to Riverton School. She was the most popular girl in school and I was a runny-nosed little kid five grades behind her. I was also nine years old and she didn't know I existed. I could have just been invisible as far as she was concerned.

Mrs. Riddick was my school teacher. Also my mother's, my uncles', my aunts' and everyone else's in Hurricane Creek. She began teaching at Riverton part-time during the second war and she just never left. I hope there's a plaque or something in her honor inside the school. I never forgot her.

We used to ride the bus to school. The best thing about riding the bus was that it would stop at Bobby Bragg's store, giving us a chance to load up on Cokes and candy.

Bobby Bragg was every boy's hero. He would fish all summer and hunt all winter. If he wasn't in the woods or on the creek bank, he would be sitting in front of the wood-burning stove, swapping stories with all the other men. He had some of the best stories and they were probably all true. It's strange how a brief fleeting thought can stir up emotions and cause a longing for times gone by.

Using the excuse to myself that I needed gas anyway, I decided recently to drive over to Hurricane Creek and visit the Bragg's store.



Stopping my car in front of the store, I got out and stood there for moment. I remembered the benches in front of the store and the old cotton gin next door. And if I squinted my eyes just right, I could almost see the old school bus unloading its cargo of laughing, boisterous children.

After pumping my own gas, I walked inside to pay for it. Nothing had changed. The building seemed smaller than I remembered, and the canned goods seemed a little dustier, but I still remembered it. Bobby Bragg was still sitting in front of the old wood-burning stove; only his hair was gray now and he seemed to move a lot slower than I remembered.

He looked at me with a quizzical look on his face as if he was trying to figure out what a stranger was doing stopping here. I paid and left. He didn't recognize me and it was just as well.

Sometimes it's just hard to go home.

"The patient was to have a bowel resection. However he took a job as a lawyer instead."

Seen on Mobile hospital patient chart



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Rolled

by Harry S. Dill

The year was 1974 and I had lived in my country farm house for a number of years. I had bought the house and nine acres of land that went with it for \$1,400.00 cash, paid in full. I had cleared the land and had a one acre garden and also apple trees and another acre of peach trees planted and was enjoying all the fruit and vegetables I could possible use. There were large oak trees around the house in front on the sides and in back, so I called my farm TWELVE OAKS because there were 12 Oak Trees around the house which provided a lot of shade in the summer time and leaves in winter.

But in the summer of 1974 I started noticing something around in the country and that some of the houses that had big trees were full of toilet paper! I found out that the seniors from high school in town had started doing this at night when the farmers and their families had gone to sleep late at night. It was a fad back then and a nuisance.

The seniors called this "Rolling". They would drive out in the country very late at night and park their pickup truck not too near the trees and they threw the rolls of paper up as high as possible into the trees in the front yard of people's houses. It was really hard to get the paper off the trees and a lot of it stayed in the trees until a big rain or storm came and washed it all away.

Well they started rolling the big oak trees in my front yard too and I would try to stay awake to catch them in the act but would drift off to sleep and they would do it again. They did this several times that year and I had a hard time getting most of the paper off of the trees.

I loaded my 12 gauge shot-

gun with birdshot and had my gun and a box of birdshot shells by my bed. I was getting ready for them. I just wanted to scare them away.

One night my wife woke me up and told me she heard something, so I opened the front door and looked out with my gun in hand. It was a full moon that night and I could see several boys throwing the paper rolls up into the trees. My house was built facing the way the road ran and there was only about fifteen or twenty yards to the road. I could see that the boy's pickup truck was parked on the road by the side of my house.

I didn't want to hit them so I shot the first shot up into the tree they were rolling. They all started running, four or five of them, for the pickup truck and the driver was starting to pull away so I shot another shot high over the heads of the ones in that pickup truck. I heard one that was running say "wait for me"

and he jumped in the back of the truck as it was rolling.

The next day I found eight or ten rolls of unopened toilet paper in the front yard! I really scared them good as they never came back to do that prank again and I think that they stopped the rolling of people's trees altogether!

God has really been good to me and I really enjoyed living in the country. I had a lot of adventures and pleasures there. I enjoyed all the fruits and vegetables I grew. I enjoyed pulling up the peanuts I planted and seeing how many peanuts were on the root and reaching my hand into the hills of sweet potatoes and finding how many were growing there. Kids should do more of that these days.

I really enjoyed the fruits of my labor back then and God provided all that for me just as he does now in a different way. Praises to God Almighty.

God Bless everyone!!!!

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scrap pile. Russia put another satellite in orbit the same year. The United States was now desperate for a successful launch and finally in early 1958 put "Explorer I" into orbit.

John Kennedy became president in January, 1961. It was in the middle of our cold war with Russia. Kennedy saw the dire need for space exploration and gave his speech challenging NASA to put a man on the Moon by the end of the decade. Kennedy was assassinated in November of 1963 and did not see his dream come true.

But the challenge

was met in July of 1969 with 5 months to spare. NASA's Apollo Project successfully landed Neil Armstrong on the Moon and just as important....returned him, and two co-astronauts, to Earth safely.

From man on the Moon to the International Space Station (ISS). In orbit assembly of the station began in 1998, with different modules (laboratories) being added throughout the years. The ISS was a space laboratory to prove man could exist and work in space for extended periods of time. The ISS is also planned as a base for future trips into deep space. In 2030, NASA's plans are to put astronauts on the surface of the Red Planet, Mars.

An expedited round trip to Mars is expected to take 18

ROCKETMEN

by Barry Key

After WWII, Dr. Werhner Von Braun and several other German engineers immigrated to the United States to lead in the development of military rockets for the US Army. The Von Braun team initially started in Texas but after a few years were transferred to Huntsville, Alabama to develop the Army's Redstone rocket. Later, Von Braun's team was given the task to convert the Redstone into a civilian system, the Jupiter C, capable of putting a satellite into Earth's orbit.

The United States was in a race with Russia to see which country would be the first to put a satellite in orbit. Native Huntsvillians remember well how that went. Sometime in late 1957, Russia successfully launched Sputnik and placed the first Satellite in orbit. The United States attempted a couple of launches, the Vanguard project, but the rockets never cleared the launch pad before becoming a burning

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months to 2 years. Astronauts Peggy Whitson and Scott Kelly, as well as other astronauts, have made major family sacrifices to prove man can survive in space. Ms. Whitson and Mr. Kelly hold the U. S. records for continuous time on the ISS. Ms. Whitson, women's record of 289 days and Mr. Kelly, men's record of 340 days. A Russian holds the all-time record of 438 continuous days on the ISS.

Back to Earth and the mid-1950s in New Hope, Alabama. Coy, one of my closest friends, had a well-equipped work shop in his father's garage. We were forever tinkering with something. NASA and rockets had become the buzz word in the 50s. Coy and I decided to build a rocket. We built several sizes using different materials. We used powder from shotgun shells and firecrackers for fuel. We used the firecracker fuses to ignite the rockets. We could never get enough thrust for liftoff. We did

create some spectacular bombs with tail fins and a nose cone. We would probably be arrested today as terrorist.

One of us had recently seen the Movietone News film on NASA where they mounted a rocket on a sled. The sled was on tracks in the desert. As I remember, NASA was testing rocket engines. We decided since we couldn't get the thrust required for aerial flights, let's try mounting a rocket on a sled... but where would we get a sled? To make a long story short we strapped a rocket to a roller skate.

Coy lived on the south side of New Hope on Highway 431. From his front lawn, the highway was flat, level and straight as an arrow to the hump back bridge at Paint Rock River, approximately half a mile. The perfect runway for our "sled". We put everything together and made sure no cars were coming. At ignition, the skate started

down the highway... and finally success....for about 5 seconds. I can't remember for sure, but I don't think we ever found the skate. That was the last rocket (a.k.a., bomb) we ever made that was loaded with fuel.

The picture is a rocket that Coy built, but was never loaded with fuel. We have kept it for approximately 60 years as a reminder of our endeavor to participate in the space race. We each still had two eyes and ten fingers, luck was surely running out, it was time to start a different project. We packed up our components and decided to "Leave space travel to NASA".

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JAMES KING DRAKE, AGE 87

SEP. 6, 1870 - DEC. 22, 1957

by William Sibley

In 1807, Drake brothers James, age 27, and William, age 18, arrived in south Huntsville after sailing south down the Tennessee River in their flat-bottomed boat. James Neely, brother-in-law of the Drake brothers, accompanied them on their trip. The trio left their boat at Little Cove, near Ditto landing, which has other names such as Drake Cove.

In 1810 and 1811 other Drake relatives joined the Drake brothers and Mr. Neely. Among the newcomers were Captain John Drake and his wife Jean (Neely) Drake, parents of James and William. Captain Drake was an officer in the American Revolutionary War. Many American children are familiar with the story of General George Washington crossing the Delaware River, but most of those children probably do not know that General Washington used Neelys' Landing. Bobby Drake, historian and descendant of Andrew Drake, furnished this history.

Some of the Drakes, including Elijah and wife, Elizabeth Wills (Buford), parents of twelve children, crossed Huntsville Mountain and settled in Big Cove. Elijah's brother, Andrew, did not settle in Big Cove, but his children settled in the New Hope area and probably passed through Big Cove.

Captain John Drake was probably a humorous sight to the younger Drakes. He was a religious man, a Quaker Baptist, who wore knee breeches and high buckle shoes and he spoke Olde English.

Rev. John Henry Drake was educated at Cumberland University and became a circuit-riding preacher in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. He performed countless marriages in Big Cove and was known in that community as Parson Drake.

Rev. Drake married (1) Nancy Jane Worthem and (2) Mary Ann Anderson. Two children were born from marriage #1. They were Mary Ann, who died young and Elijah Donnell "Don." He was named for Rev. Robert Donnell, founding

minister of Mt. Pleasant (Big Cove) Cumberland Presbyterian Church in 1816. Eight children were born to Rev. Drake and Mary Ann Anderson. Three of the sons were William Ewing Drake, James King Drake and Frazier McAdow Drake.

Those men were given the surnames of the founders of the Cumberland Presbyterian denomination. Other children were Milton, Nancy Elizabeth, Grace, Zachariah, an attorney who was Madison County's solicitor, and Samuel Tate, who was owner of a large dairy farm in Big Cove and who was president of the Alabama Cattlemen's Association.

James King Drake married Annie Eliza Miller, a first cousin of my grandmother, Anna (Miller) Sibley. They were contemporaries and were often confused by others. Mr. and Mrs. Drake had five children: Herman, Marvin, Annie Lee Brooks, Grace Ikard, and Roberta Nunn. Mr. Drake was a very religious man whose prayers were sometimes longer than sermons. He was president of the Sixteenth District Sunday School Association

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and was an elder in the Big Cove U. S. A. Presbyterian Church.

To be sure that the Drake children were well-educated, the Drakes built the private Drake School, where my Grandfather Sibley's sister, Nannie (Sibley) Bartee, was a teacher. Mr. Drake also served on the Madison County Board of Education for sixteen years.

As a farmer, Mr. Drake, according to merchant Leonard Taylor (Drake relative), would be in his barn at midnight, making sure that his livestock were comfortable. He raised sheep for wool and set production records in sweet potatoes, Elberta peaches and hogs. His peach orchard covered more than seven acres. He perfected his own cure with sweet potatoes.

Mr. Drake, with the help of his son-in-law, Ed Ikard, would shear the sheep in Mr. Drake's barn and pack the wool into large bags. Mr. Drake would remove the back seat of his 1939 green Chevrolet and load the wool into the empty space.

He would then load his grandchildren Mary Ann, Betty, James Ikard and Billy Brooks into the front seat and drive to Fayetteville and sell the wool. "By the Way," a saying that Mr. Drake used often, Mary Ann has pleasant memories of the green Chevrolet, and if that car can be located Mary Ann would like to buy the car if possible.

Mary Ann Ikard's father, Ed, bought Tate Drake's huge farm, which has a beautiful spring with an electric-powered spring house. Church groups had many picnics at the spring and sharecroppers would do their washing at the spring.

At the end of both World Wars, Mr. Drake blew a loud bugle-like instrument to let Big Cove citizens know that their sons would be coming home. My father was a World War I Veteran and Mr. Drake's sons, Herman and Marvin, were veterans of World War I and World War II, respectively. My mother said the loud sounds of the bugle echoed off the Big Cove mountain, but the chilling sounds were welcome.

Mr. Drake lived a long, wonderful, happy life, and the citizens of Big Cove have happy memories of him. He is buried in Drake Cemetery, King Drake Road, Big Cove, AL.

The Dinner Guest

My wife hosted a dinner party for all our friends, some of whom we hadn't seen for ages and everyone was encouraged to bring their sweet children along as well.

All throughout dinner my wife's best friend's four-year-old daughter stared at me as I sat opposite her.

The girl could hardly eat her food for staring. I checked my shirt for spots, felt my face for food and patted my hair in place, but nothing stopped her from staring at me.

Finally I just asked her, "Why are you staring at me?"

Everyone at the table had noticed her behavior, and the table went quiet, waiting for her response.

The little girl said, "I'm just waiting to see how you drink like a fish."

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Tales from Ridgetop, TN in the 1930s

by Bill C. Mayes

PETS

I have mentioned my first dog, a little bulldog. I don't recall whatever happened to him. I had another dog as a child. Rudy was given to me by Dr. W.S. Rude, who brought me into this world. We had no fence at that time, and the field behind us, Bailey field, was full of tall Sage Grass.

I would wander out in that field, and could not be seen above the Sage Grass, and was too little to know that I was supposed to answer when my mother called. Rudy would always be right with me wherever I went. My mother would step to the back door and call me. I wouldn't pay any attention, but Rudy would.

When she called Rudy would always run out of the tall Sage Grass to a point that my mother could see him, then run back to me. That way she knew where I was and Rudy would lead her to me. We had no fence at the time, and one sad day my uncle, Charlie Palmer, found Rudy over on the highway. He had been run over.

It was several years before I had another dog, but I had a cat once. Just once. I had seen men ride big horses by the house, so I got the idea that I could ride that cat! As I said before, during that period of my life I had not mastered the

"My mother was 88 years old and didn't need glasses. Drank right out of the bottle."

Henny Youngman

"A long life may not be good enough, but a good life is long enough." Benjamin Franklin



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letter "F". When my mother discovered the tragedy, there I was with the cat, minus all its nine lives, saying "Stand up Pool!" Good bye to the only cat I ever had.

When I was around seven years old a family across the street, the Jerdins, moved away. They gave us a female red Chow. She begat two more females, purebred. Before we knew it we were in the Chow business. Daddy bought a male Chow down on Gallatin Road. We went to get him and Daddy put him in the trunk of the car to carry him to Ridgetop.

It was obvious when we unloaded him that King Po did not appreciate being treated like a second class citizen. He let my daddy know, in no uncertain terms, that because he was the one who put him in the trunk, he would never be forgotten!

Because of his behavior upon arrival at his new home, Daddy thought King Po was vicious. He chained him to a tree and told me to stay away from the dog, as Chows were said to be vicious anyway, and he knew this one to be.

After breakfast the next day I forgot about the warning and played most of the day with old King Po. He and I never had a problem, but old King never forgave my daddy for putting him in that trunk. I think King was supposed to ride in the front seat!

Olie Callis had a few dogs. Olie was the son of Mr. John Callis and brother of Forde Callis, Margaret Edging, Billie Sue Callis and

others. If I'm not mistaken, it was Olie who painted a green stripe down his dog's back. I don't think Olie had a drop of Irish blood in his veins, and it wasn't even close to St. Patrick's Day!

Another time, and maybe a different dog, Olie decided he wanted his dog to be bob-tailed. With the help of a butcher knife, he proceeded with the trim job! He had heard something about pulling the flesh back when you cut off the tail, so that it would heal back over the bone. However, Olie wasn't sure what direc-

tion that was, and pulled it the wrong way. The dog went around for ages wagging a bone!

The Mitchells had a dog named Frank. Old Frank also had a bad experience with his tail. I think it got caught under a tire, because I found the end of Franks tail in the street imbedded in the snow and ice. Frank also wagged a bone for awhile.

Eczema and Psoriasis

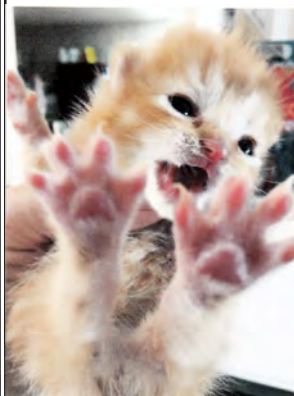
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Rocky

Hello, I am a 2 week old orphan kitten. I came to the ark with my 4 siblings. We do not know where our mommy is. Mommy taught us to be survivors so she named me Rocky.

As you can see I am a Kick Boxer. At the time of this picture I was very mad and a little scared. I tried to use my kicking skills on Ms. Heike but it did not work. She makes me drink milk from a

little bottle! I am an orange tabby and will be ready for adoption before too long. I decided I love Ms. Heike and I thank her for raising my siblings too. When you come to the Ark, ask to see Rocky the kick boxer. That's me.



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Huntsville Coffee Talk

by Aunt Eunice

*With pearls of wisdom
contributed by the Liar's Table*



This was from one of Aunt Eunice's columns, in the fall of 2000. She owned one of the best known restaurants in Huntsville and many famous visitors came through over the years. She passed away in February of 2004.

My 81st birthday came up on me so fast, but what a wonderful day it was. Even my bad arthritis couldn't ruin it. Thanks to Channel 19 and Robert Reeves for coming out at 5 o'clock in the morning and staying until 8:30. Many of our Channel 19 friends came out and we all had a great time. Also, thank you to Channels 31 and 48 for coming out. There was so much fun with flowers, cake, and friends. Robert, you're one of a kind. I love all of you so much.

My youngest brother John had his 70th birthday. Congratulations. He's my only brother now.

It sure was great to see my nephew and his wife from Tampa, Florida. They came to see me recently. Ferrell Jenkins and Elizabeth. Sweet kids.

A special word for Ed and Sted Bradshaw who are moving to Florida. Ed has been an active member of the Golden K Kiwanis for years and was always the first person to donate his time for any charitable cause. Your friends are going to miss both of you.

Congratulations goes out to our friend, Mr. Olin King who has been inducted into the Alabama Business Hall of Fame. Great!

**"In my attempt to kill a fly,
I drove into a telephone pole."**

Seen on Gurley auto accident report

We were saddened when our old Channel 19 pal Mike Motley passed away. He was our weather man for a long time. I just loved for him to come see us with our old friend, the late Grady Reeves.

Our sympathy to Mrs. Ruby Marsh in her illness. Get well soon, come on down and have some breakfast with me. Bring your sweet sister Chris Bridges with you.

We had a nice reunion here recently: Mary Bridges, Johnnie LaBarde, Tee Shores, Betty Bridges,

Marjorie and Art Williams had not been together for a long time, and boy did they have fun. Great! Great!

Rebeka Reed is teaching school at Gurley now and she says she LOVES it! She is the kind of teacher all kids should have.

Bill Easterling's new book, "A Locust Leaves Its Shell" will soon be available at Shaver's Bookstore and other fine outlets. Since I started this column, Bill and his lovely wife Pat have come by to see me several times. Bill looks great and he is fixing to start a new treatment soon. I love Bill so much. I ask God every day to let him stay with us much longer.

I bet the political talk is heating up Floyd Hardin's barber shop these days. When it gets down to those last few weeks, you know the fur (or hair) really starts to fly!

I hear my dear friend Cecil Ashburn stopped by to see Tom and Bo at Old Huntsville Magazine. They



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Featured Wines of the Month

Francis Ford Coppola Wines

said that he was doing fine and stayed quite some time telling old stories about himself and his buddies. Cecil, I'm sure glad to hear you're out and about. Come see me.

Thought for the day: With all the talk about schools these days, shouldn't we just do what's best for the children?

As I'm writing this column I get word that my dear friend Jerry Tomlin just lost his Dad. I'm so sorry and our sympathy goes to the Tomlin family.

We are going to miss Harold Harbin, Mr. Billy Harbin and Mr. Frank Riddick around the courthouse. You have worked hard and I wish for you all the very best life has to offer.

We keep hearing gossip that a member of the city council has decided not to run again in the next election. Wonder who it could be?

Byron Laird had a successful book signing here at the restaurant on November 14 and greeted lots of his friends. His just published book called "Thou Shalt Not Boil Eggs in a Microwave" is chock-full of amusing stories. I well recall the incident he tells about the night he missed a turn and got us lost and out of gas between Birmingham and Cullman.

For all the people who have asked my advice about the perfect gift, I recommend the gift of Love ... it doesn't cost anything, it will be cherished forever and it will make us all better people.

A big Happy Birthday to Margaret Tucker who just turned 70. Margaret is married to J.B. Tucker, also known as the Mayor of Hurricane Creek.

We hear that Bobby Bragg is raising a big patch of turnip greens. That will be some good eating. And I hear that eating greens helps stop arthritis pain!

Mary Jane Caylor has been by to see me a few times lately. She's looking good. Love you.

We've all been enjoying the

many new pictures I have on the wall here at the restaurant. My last one is John Walsh. All are real nice. Come in and get you some ham and biscuits and visit!

Please, everybody remember to vote, it's your right and is SO important. We're having a party for Bud Cramer the morning of the election. Come by and see Bud, and then we're all going down to vote. Please Vote!

The Crime Prevention classes are now in session. It's sure wonderful for seniors. We need to know all we can on how to protect ourselves.

Jerry Craig came by and visited with me. I'm so proud of Jerry. He does such a wonderful job for his community. Jerry was a great part of my family when my children were young. Job well done!!

This is all for now but just remember that I love all of you!

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Dracula

by Marijke Given

Around 1958 a lot of American movies came to Holland, some funny, some war stories, and one category was scary movies.

One day my friend and I read that a DRACULA movie was coming to town. I lived in the city of Gouda, in the Netherlands and this was big news.

It was said that this movie was really scary, different and something never shown in theaters here before. My friend and I decided to go and see for ourselves, without telling our parents, because we were pretty sure that they would not allow us to go.

In order to get to the theater, we had to ride our bikes; not too much of a problem for my friend as she lived in the city. It would be short ride for her. However, I lived in the country in a small town called Reeuwijk. There were narrow roads and meadows all surrounded by 11 lakes and small canals. A very quiet, almost deserted area. To ride my bicycle to the city took a good half hour.

So, my friend and I planned to go on a certain afternoon and we were excited to see this frightening new event. The movie started and soon we were both horrified; so scared that we moved to sit on the floor, in between the seats!

We felt more at ease this way and could hide from time to time. And if we felt like watching, we could peek between the seats in front of us. Also, the music gave us the creeps, and from time to time we covered our ears. Needless to say, we were happy when the movie was over.

But now we had to go home. It was almost dark outside, and I had to go the distance on my bicycle, by myself again. My friend did not have that problem; remember she lived in the city not far from the theater.

We parted ways and then I realized that I was alone! In my imagination I saw Dracula, looking at me from behind the trees and from the meadows. I must have peddled my bicycle 100 miles an hour to get home. When I reached the corner of the street I lived on, I lost control of my bicycle and drove

straight into the canal! I managed to pull out my bike, and soaking wet I reached home - crying, shaking and shivering.

My parents felt sorry for me, but were also angry at me, for disobeying them and going to this horrible scary movie to begin with.

It probably took me a week to lose my fear of possibly seeing Dracula. I checked under my bed and in my closet every night before going to bed. Eventually, I realized that Dracula was not real, and that I did not have to fear him.

Editors note: Marijke is a writing student in the class of John E. Carson, who conducts his Creative Writing classes at the Senior Center each Thursday at 1pm. Email John at carsonjohn936@gmail.com if you would like to join the free class.

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Handy Home Hints

- Pulling off band-aids can be painful, especially for kids. To make it easier, just use your heated hair dryer on it for a few seconds, it will come right off.

- Do you have very small holes developing in your outdoor screen? You can seal them up with clear nail polish.

- Many food dishes are very bland. To add excitement to your cooking, kick up the garlic, salt and hot peppers a bit, then wait for the applause.

- If you like feeding the birds, add some chopped apples to their menu - they'll love you!

- Most insects hate tobacco juice - just put a few cigarettes or cigars in a spray bottle of water and place in sun 2 days. Use on outdoor areas.

- Your bacon shouldn't curl if you sprinkle it with a little flour before frying.

- Keep a regular blackboard eraser handy in your car to wipe off steamed windows. There will be no smear marks or streaks.

- A couple of coats of dark rose nail polish will make most feet look much better.

- Camphorated oil will remove those white marks made by hot dishes on a polished table.

- When you don't have a small funnel, use half an egg shell with a hole in the end, place on bottle and pour.

- If you like that crisp, cool feeling in bed at night, buy cheaper sheets. The more expensive, high thread count sheets feel much warmer to your skin.

- Custard should be baked near the bottom of the oven to cook the bottom and prevent the top from scorching.

- When seating your guests, the lady sits to the right of the host. The gentleman sits at the right of the hostess.

- Before serving dessert all dishes are to be removed from the table, also salt and pepper, and the table is to be crumbed.

- Lemon or orange oil is perfect for removing shower scum from stained glass windows.

- Clean your fingernails by digging them into a lemon or orange rind.

- If you're driving at night and don't want to fall asleep, sit on a board that you've placed in the front seat. Open windows also. Or try chewing on ice.

- Make sure that no heavy furniture is sitting on any electrical cords - it can cause a fire.

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