



No. 312

February 2019



# Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

## Love in Shelta Cave

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*Also in this issue:* **Civil War Ghost**

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*Doimie Lewter*  
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# Love in Shelta Cave

by Tom Carney

In April of 1884 the citizens of Huntsville were invited to a small lot on Meridian Street to witness a most unusual demonstration. The crowd had begun gathering in the late afternoon and with each passing hour the anticipation grew. Finally, several hours after the sun had crossed the horizon and the evening had turned into a murky darkness, Mr. E. J. Beirne stepped into the center of the crowd and with a solemnity befitting the occasion, walked to the base of a small wooden tower. After pausing to be sure he had the gathering's undivided attention, Beirne reached up and pulled a small lever to its down position.

Instant bedlam broke out. Horses reared and tried to break their harnesses. Neighborhood dogs began howling and birds took flight from the surrounding trees in a noisy, chaotic attempt to escape the bewildering experience. Small children stood

with their mouths open while their mothers struggled to pull them away to safety. Some of the men, unable to comprehend the strange phenomenon they were witnessing, reached into the pockets of their overalls and pulled out flasks in the hope that a strong drink would make the evening easier to understand.

E. J. Beirne had accomplished the impossible. He had turned night into day with the help of a new marvel called electricity.

Electricity was still a relatively unknown phenomenon in the 1880s. A few cities such as New York and St. Louis had service on a limited basis but no one had attempted to mass market it. Small companies sprang up across the country financed by investors hoping to get rich and usually led by fast talking salesmen who traveled from city to city trying to interest municipal governments. Needless to say, many of the companies had original ideas about how to illuminate the cities.

E.J. Beirne, superintendent of Star Iron Tower Company of Fort Wayne, Indiana was one of the most persistent and original salesmen. After carefully canvassing towns throughout the southeast he decided Huntsville was perfect for his purpose. Accompanied by his assistant, John Younger, Beirne met with the city officials and with the aid of detailed draw-

**The reason some people get lost in thought is because it's not familiar territory for them.**



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ings and plans, explained his proposition.

He proposed to erect a tall tower in the middle of town and put in electric floodlights, powered by a small generator, "to illuminate the city to the furthest limits of its suburbs." He estimated the total yearly expense to the city at no more than \$1,200, including the labor for an "electricity manager."

While city officials were unsure of the idea, many people were more vocal about their beliefs. City hall was inundated with residents who complained the lights would make their chickens stop laying, it was unnatural and against God's will, and perhaps the most original, business owners complained their employees would not be able to sleep and would be worthless as labor.

Beirne refused to be deterred. He went back to the officials with a plan to erect a small ten foot tower as a demonstration. He was sure Huntsville's residents would change their minds once they saw "their city illuminated." Unfortunately, even the best laid

plans can go awry.

When Beirne pulled the switch the light bulbs began glowing, first a pale dim yellow and then brighter and brighter as power surged through the wires. Just when people thought the bulbs could get no brighter, there was a loud popping and cracking sound as bolts of electricity jumped from wire to wire, shorting itself out. Finally, with a last pop, the lights died leaving only a whiff of smoke trailing upwards. Beirne's assistant, John, worked frantically to repair the damage but it was to no avail. The wondrous light machine was history as far as Huntsville was concerned.

The failure was devastating for Beirne. He had invested all his money in the scheme and was now flat broke. In the end he chose the course of many other salesmen; he left town in the middle of the night, abandoning the light machine and leaving an abundance of unpaid bills behind.

The story might have ended there if it had not been for his assistant, John Younger, who

was owed several months back wages. After Beirne fled, John took possession of the tower with its wiring and generator. In a way John was probably secretly pleased as he was fascinated by the new science and wanted to continue experimenting with it.

At first John tried to interest business owners and farmers in the lighting system but no one was interested. Although everyone liked the young light-haired man, he just was not a salesman. After repeated failures he finally took a job at a blacksmith's shop, although he still spent his off hours tinkering with electricity. The small room he rented soon be-

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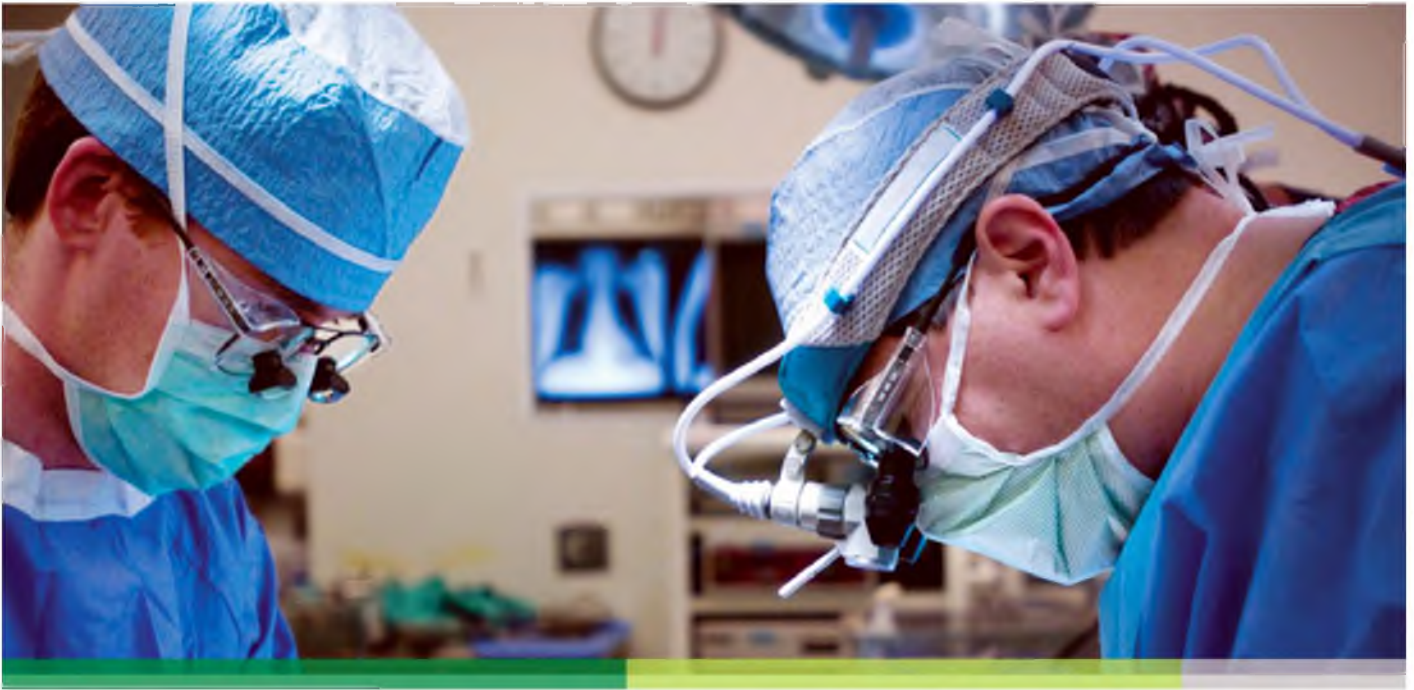
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Healthgrades has announced that Huntsville Hospital is the only hospital in Alabama to be included in America's 50 Best Hospitals for Cardiac Surgery for five consecutive years (2015-2019).

The respected national organization also recognized Huntsville Hospital as the only one in Alabama to be among the Top 5% of hospitals in the nation for Spine Surgery for 2019.

And if you're counting stars, Healthgrades also gave a Five-Star distinction (its highest rating) to Huntsville Hospital's Total Knee Replacement program.

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came a maze of wires and coils as he tried first one experiment and then another. John seemed content with his new life. He was a quiet, almost shy young man who took life one day at a time.

Like most new inventions, electricity took time to be accepted. In 1887, after much public debate, the city contracted with the Jenny Light Company in Gary, Indiana to install 32 street lights. Instead of being upset about being passed over for the contract, John went to work for the company helping to string the wiring and install the generator on Miller Street.

The new lighting system enraged many of the residents, with a city editor even demanding the city get rid of them. In the end, however, most reasonable people accepted them and John's services were greatly in demand as residents began clamoring to have lights installed in their homes.

Strange as it may seem now, people traveled for miles simply to stand on the courthouse

square and gaze at the street lights. People were both fascinated and amazed, a fact that a local entrepreneur by the name of Henry Fuller decided to capitalize on. In 1888 Fuller purchased a tract of land northwest of the city that included a large cavern known as the James Cave which he renamed Shelta Cave in honor of his daughter. Together with a small group of investors he intended to turn the cave into a major tourist attraction, complete with a dance floor, boat rides on an underground lake and with electric lights providing illumination.

When Fuller approached John about installing the lights, the young electrician was ecstatic. After a quick trip to the cave to make sure the idea was feasible, he began sketching

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**Groucho Marx**



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plans for the most elaborate electrical display ever seen in Alabama. Life could not have been better for John. He had finally gotten the job he had always dreamed of and, more importantly, he was in love.

Jennie Collier was almost the exact opposite of John. Where he was quiet and withdrawn, she seemed filled with a zest for life and was ready to laugh at almost anything. Even their appearances were opposite, with John being light haired and Jennie's having hair described as being coal black. Almost everyone agreed they made a striking couple and before long there were rumors of a possible marriage in the future. First, however, they had to wait until John's business became established, a fact they hoped would be helped by the publicity from the Shelta Cave venture.

With this in mind, John spent almost every free moment drawing plans, ordering materials and trying to correct mistakes. Glass insulators from Chicago ended up in New Orleans. Wiring from New York took forever to arrive, and when it did, it was the wrong kind. In addition to worrying about supplies, John spent hours deep in the bowels of the cave everyday drilling hundreds of small holes to anchor the wire connectors. Finally, with Fuller pushing to get the job finished, John decided to send for his brother Jake, who lived in Texas, to help him. Jennie had no idea that John had a brother and was shocked, but not nearly as much so as when he got off the train at the depot.

John and Jake Younger were twins, not identical, but so close that a man having several drinks would wonder about having a third after seeing the two brothers together. Equally strange was that both

brothers had the same mannerisms, same way of talking and even the same dispositions. Jake would laugh when people questioned him, claiming he was the oldest one because he was born ten minutes before his brother.

With both brothers working, the project began coming together. John had planned on using two generators, with one providing power for the main lighting which would be encased in Japanese lanterns hung throughout the cave. The other generator, running at a reduced speed, powered hundreds of smaller lights which flickered on and off like evening stars in the night.

Jennie was enthralled by the work and spent every possible moment watching and helping. As time went on she also began to grow fond of John's brother. When someone criticized her, saying it did not look proper to be spending so much time with her fiance's brother, she simply laughed and said they were so much alike it didn't make any difference which one she was with. Perhaps it was inevitable, but Jake fell in love with his brother's fiance. Maybe it started off with an accidental touch of the hands, an admiring glance or maybe a subtle compliment, but for whatever reason, Jake was smitten. In

**If aliens saw us walking our dogs and picking up their poop, who would they think is in charge?**

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the meantime, Fuller was having trouble with financing and construction and the timetable for the grand opening kept getting pushed months into the future.

Although Jake tried to keep the affair secret, before long, as in any small town, everyone knew about it. Jennie would be seen one day holding hands with Jake and the next day she would be walking arm in arm with John. It was a bizarre courtship that had everyone in town talking and wondering which brother would win out.

As for Jennie, her great niece recalled over a hundred years later, "John and Jake were both in love with her and strange as it may sound, she was in love with both of them. She simply couldn't decide. When she was with John she missed Jake but when she was with Jake she missed John."

After being delayed for almost six months, Shelta Cave finally had it's grand opening. Fuller had hired a band for the occasion and all of Huntsville turned out to witness what was billed as "The Wonder of North Alabama." Even the most reluctant person had to agree that the cave was everything Fuller had promised. It featured a huge oak dance floor, brilliantly lit by Japanese lanterns. Boats, guided by gondoliers dressed in colorful uniforms, were available for boat rides into the furthest reaches of the subterranean chambers. Overhead were strings of dim lights sparking like stars on a dewy night. All in all, everyone agreed it was the most romantic place they had ever seen.

To the amazement of all the

**"Friendship is when people know all about you but like you anyway."**

**John Bzdell, Huntsville**



other guests, John and Jake both accompanied Jennie to the grand opening. To say it was an unusual scene would be an understatement. Jennie would dance with one brother and then with the other one. With either brother she appeared like a young woman in deeply in love, gazing into their eyes.

No one was ever sure exactly how it happened but late in the evening both brothers met on the dance floor. Without saying a word they began swinging at one another. The battle went on for what seemed like an eternity as the brothers fought, hitting, biting and gouging their way across the dance floor, up the steps and out into the dark night. The crowd stood silent and no one knew what to do.

Even the wisest men hesitated to become involved in an affair of the hearts. Finally, Fuller stepped in, and after firing his gun into the air, ordered both brothers off the property.

Jennie was still unable to choose between the brothers. In the weeks and months that followed she continued seeing both of them despite the fact the community was turning against her. Friends stopped visiting and when she would enter a store the other customers would turn their heads and make excuses to leave.

For John and Jake it was almost a constant battle of fist-cuffs. Every time they saw one another on the streets they would start swinging. It finally reached the point where no one

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wanted to be around them for fear of becoming involved. Just when things could not possibly get any worse, they did.

A friend of Jennie's family visited one day and returned to town with the news that Jennie was pregnant. Jennie asked the friend to contact both brothers and have them meet her the following evening at the Shelta Cave where a dance was being held. A few hours later both brothers were seen purchasing guns at different times of the day.

The evening of the dance was cold and dreary, with moisture hanging in the air like an unspoken promise of violence. Many people would have preferred to stay at home but word of the impending conflict had drawn a large crowd despite the gloomy weather.

John and Jake arrived at almost the same time and went to opposite ends of the dance floor, both dressed in their best

clothes and with somber looks on their faces. A short time later Jennie arrived. People later said they had never seen her as beautiful as she was that night, dressed in a stunning new gown and with her dark hair piled high atop her head.

The room grew silent as she made her way across the room to where John was standing. Taking him by the hand she led him to the middle of the dance floor where the band had just begun a slow melody. To all appearances, there was

no doubt that Jennie was passionately in love.

When the song was over John retreated to his side of the room and Jennie went to Jake who had been waiting with a pained look on his face. Jennie signaled to the band to play the same song again as she welcomed Jake's strong arms around her. It was impossible for anyone to overhear what was being said but it was apparent from the way she caressed his cheek and the way he whispered softly in her ear



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that they too were in love.

Abruptly the song was over and with a last longing look at the two men she loved, Jennie made her departure. As the whole room watched the brothers to see what would happen next, they stood still at opposite ends of the room until finally, maybe five or ten minutes later, John gave a brief nod to Jake. Silently the two men made their way to the steps and outside. Just as the crowd started to follow them, a shot rang out, then another, followed by a flurry of more gunshots.

Almost as if on cue, moisture leaking from the rocks began shorting the electric wiring causing the lights to begin flickering wildly, with a loud hissing and popping as eerie blue flames of electricity jumped randomly from one wire to the next.

The terrified crowd waited a few minutes to be sure it was safe and then rushed outside to witness the conclusion. Both brothers were gone. Several people claimed to have seen traces of blood but with the heavy rain it was impossible to be sure. Both brothers had disappeared, never to be seen in Huntsville again.

Several hours later Jennie's father was awakened by the sound of a horse and buggy in his drive. When he made his way through the darkened house to the front door to see who the visitor was, he was met by Jennie who was carrying several boxes with her clothing.

Seeing her father, she looked

**"I was so ugly as a kid that my parents sent my picture to 'Ripley's Believe It or Not'. They sent it back and said, 'We don't believe it.'"**

*Joan Rivers*

at him with tears in her eye and said, "I'm leaving. It's for the best."

Her departure left more mysteries than answers. What happened to the brothers? Did one of them die? Who did she leave with?

Her great grand niece said that several years later the family received a brief note from Jennie.

There was a signature at the bottom: "Mrs. J. Younger."

Shelta Cave continued to operate as a dance hall and tourist attraction for several years but was never successful. In 1896 it was sold for back taxes.



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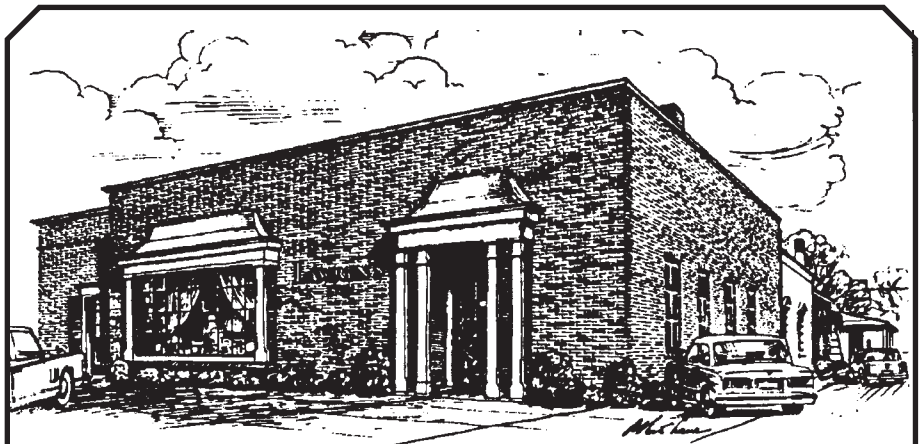
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\* Hug your spouse from behind and give a kiss on the back of the neck.

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\* List your spouse's best qualities in alphabetical order.

\* Tour a museum or an art gallery together.

\* Make your own movie scene—stop and kiss on a bridge as the sun is setting.

\* Place emphasis on the little changes she makes concerning her appearance.

\* Take a stroll around the block, hold hands.

\* Bring home foods she loves to eat but won't buy for herself. (Don't do this if she's dieting!)

\* Give each other a back rub.

\* Turn down the heat, rent a classic love-story and watch it while cuddling under blankets.

\* Give your spouse a back rub.

\* Walk through model homes and dream about your next house.

\* Stroll around a nearby lake.  
\* Sit in front of the fireplace and talk.

\* Turn the lights down during dinner.

\* Make a surprise call to your spouse while you're out of town (in addition to your scheduled calls).

\* Play music in your bedroom.

\* Write a poem for your spouse.

\* Stop in the middle of your day and talk to your spouse for 15 minutes.

\* Create your own special holiday.

\* Become your spouse's cheerleader when he's had a terrible day.

\* For a night, sleep in a sleeping bag together.

\* Do something your spouse loves to do, even though it doesn't interest you personally.

\* Write out romantic notes and leave them in places your spouse will find them.

\* Mail love letters instead of leaving them in the house.

\* Sketch your dream-house floor plan and talk about the possibilities.

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er than air and does not rise like smoke so that detectors can be placed low on walls.

Some will even plug directly into a wall socket. Make sure the AC models also have battery backup because our problem happened when power was out for five days one February from an ice storm.

They should not be mounted high like Smoke Detectors. Dual smoke and CO detectors are made, but how high to place them becomes a compromise.

Be sure to check the batteries when the time changes twice a year, same as you do your smoke detectors.

If anyone suddenly starts to have unexplained headaches, disorientation and dizziness,

this is often a sign of Carbon Monoxide (CO) poisoning. Get out of your home. Going to a hospital is wise to get checked out. Even though you may think you're OK, CO stays in your blood a long time and can continue to do damage to organs until it eventually gets out of your body.

While we were in the ER that time, a lady and her two dogs were brought in. It was too late for them, they had died as a result of Carbon Monoxide poisoning from a generator. Pets as well as people are susceptible to death from this poisoning. PLEASE read this and take heed.



Several years ago, my husband and I were overcome by Carbon Monoxide poisoning and when found were given less than ten minutes of consciousness.

Thank heavens Huntsville had two hyperbaric chambers at that time in the hospital where we were taken. If we had to be transported to Birmingham, we would not be alive today. So, I wanted to pass on some information to our readers that I hope will be helpful to them and may even save someone's life.

Carbon Monoxide is a silent and deadly gas that has no odor and can accumulate in homes. At VERY high levels, it has a slight sharp acidic odor. If an excess builds up in a person's bloodstream, it can cause permanent organ damage and even death.

There is a way you can protect yourself. Put Carbon Monoxide detectors on the walls in or near each bedroom and elsewhere in your home where it might likely accumulate. CO is slightly heavi-

A black and white photograph of an elderly couple sitting on a wooden dock, looking out at a body of water. The man is on the right, wearing a dark jacket, and the woman is on the left, wearing a striped shirt. The background shows a calm lake or sea with distant hills under a clear sky.

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# THE PINK MONOGRAMMED PAJAMAS

by *Judith C. Smith,*  
*written early in 2016*

I'm excited about going to Seattle again to see my childhood friend Anna. We have been friends since the seventh grade at East Clinton School. Back in our day the school had kids the first through the seventh grade.

I had been packing for three weeks. I certainly wanted the Seattle folks to know Alabamians were up on the latest dress of the day. I even monogrammed a pair of pink pajamas. They had a solid pink top with spaghetti straps, floral pants and with a matching jacket. The top was perfect for my monogram.

I got to sleep in Sally's old room which is on the third floor and done in beautiful shades of pink.

The room overlooks Lake Washington. When lying in bed at night I could watch cars going over the Bay Bridge. Being so high up I felt like I was on a Ferris wheel looking down. It was hard to go to sleep with all the entertainment they provided me.

At around 6:30 am, Anna comes running into the room screaming, "Judy get up, get up. Charles had a flat on the expressway going to the airport and he has a speaking engagement in Dallas, Texas and if he misses his plane he won't make it in time to give his speech. Don't get dressed - come as you are!"

So, I did as she said and I jumped up and headed for the car.

We found his truck and I was told to get in it so no one would steal it and to wait until Anna got back from taking Charles to the airport.

Being such a good friend, I did as I was told. After sitting there for what seemed like forever I decided to do what any female who had gone to the University of Alabama would do - use her head. So, I got out of Charles' truck.

I was wearing my pink monogrammed pajamas. I put my right foot on the bumper and raised the pant leg a bit. Well low and behold I didn't have to wait long before a nice gentleman came to my

rescue. After reading the manual to him we were able to change the tire in no time. I got his business card, thanked him profusely for I had no money since Anna had me jump out of bed without taking anything.

As I looked up here came Haile, Anna's son. She had called him to get off work at Harbor View Hospital and come change the tire. Upon getting out of his car he noticed that I was wearing my pink monogrammed pajamas. He wanted to know why I hadn't gotten dressed.

I said, "Haile, it's a long story. I'll tell you about it someday." Then he wanted to know which tire he needed to change and I told him I had taken care of it. Just about then Anna drove up and asked Haile if he had changed the tire.

Judy took care of it was all he had to say. When I was asked how I managed such a feat, I just said I did so with a little help from "the pink monogrammed pajamas".

Next time I will make sure I'm dressed before I leave the house.

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On the 23rd of October last, a man who called his name J. Wilbond sold me a horse, and said he was going back to Huntsville, from which place he came here. I paid him, he then took the stage coach, went a few miles, whereupon the driver said he got out and went into the woods.

That night my stable was broken open and the horse I bought off him stolen out, with a new saddle and bridle.

As said Wilbond has not been heard of since, no doubt but he returned that night and stole my horse. Wilbond is a large man, blue eyes and fair complexion, and says but little. He wore a black cloak and black cloth coat. The man's height was about 6 feet 2 or 3 inches, and he limped as one of his legs looked to have an injury. The saddle is new, had never been used.

Since he was a saddler by trade, he no doubt recognized the value of the article. His name was Thos. J. Wilbond, had on a brown or red brown set of pantaloons, probably pirated from someone else.

I will pay \$50 for the delivery of said Wilbond and the horse to me, living at the Bell Tavern in Winchester, Tennessee, and for the horse alone, \$25. Wm. Rawkins.

November 23, 1827

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# Buck's Canyon

by Bob Baudendistel



The landscape of Southeast Huntsville is marked by a string of Cumberland outliers including Green Mountain. The numerous hollows and creek valleys that highlight the mountainside slope areas once served as a popular hunting and gathering outreach for many Native American tribes. It was around 1800 when squatters and land speculators began purchasing these lands. The densely wooded areas which once flanked the Aldridge Creek Valley and its tributaries were then cleared for agriculture and farming. The modern-day urban sprawl began in the 1950s when the area saw its first influx of new residential subdivisions.

One unique hollow found at the base of Green Mountain is today known as Buck's Canyon. Located back within the depths of Weatherly Cove, this residential subdivision saw its first addition platted in 1976 when developer Elwin M. "Buck" Windsor and his wife Danese Gaines Windsor designated the subdivision in his name. This development continued for another ten years up until the seventh addition was launched in 1987. Buck's Canyon was built adjacent to the Sunset Cove subdivision platted in 1955.

I recall my first ever hiking expedition back into the greater depths of what would become Buck's Canyon in the early 1970s. Myself and some friends were at the time living in Willow Park near the intersection of Weatherly Road and Bailey Cove. It was on a warm summer day when we decided to follow a creek bed back into the hollow. Despite being a dry season, the cold and clear waters seemed to flow continuously. Our goal as young explorers was to then locate a source of the water.

Working our way back into the hollow amidst the dense canopy of trees along the creek bed, the air became noticeably cooler. After spotting

some old fencing, we found evidence of where the cattle had once grazed in an open pasture adjacent to the creek. Back at the creek bed we continued our exploration over larger bedrocks to where the slopes of Green Mountain suddenly opened up into a panoramic view beneath the overhead TVA power lines. Back about another 200 feet was a series of limestone springs which fed the stream.

After settling near the springs for some cold water refreshment, we found evidence of an old dilapidated barn. Our search continued as we found just about everything including old bottles, tractor parts and projectile points.

As the sunset was looming later that evening, we realized that getting home before nightfall was not going to be easy. Back out in the cleared areas beneath the overhead power lines we came across a more heavily traveled trail, and one that had seen its share of off-road vehicles. My instinct told me that this trail would be the safest and quickest way back to the developed neighborhoods.

By the stroke of luck, we made it back home just in time. Our parents were not too thrilled with us coming home so late, but it was a fun

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and meaningful hiking expedition none-the-less.

One of the most interesting pieces of history I learned about Buck's Canyon was told to me by a retired contractor who once worked with a public utility crew that cleared the pathway for the overhead TVA power line easement. While their efforts were taking place back in the early 1960s, he mentioned their finding evidence of moonshine stills across the slopes of the mountain, with many being active! He also noted that the moonshiners would only access the stills from high atop the mountain and not from below like where we had explored.

While working to clear trees for the power line easement, Mr. James also noted the taller sandstone bluffs found atop the mountain and how these escarpments forced them to take alternative routes to reach the upper portion of the mountain in their work vehicles.

While recently hiking along the trails being maintained by the Land Trust of North Alabama, the view off these bluffs in any direction helped me see what he meant.

The trees and forestry back within Buck's Canyon have some history of logging. When hiking out along the slopes of the mountain, there remains much evidence of where smaller eastern red cedar trees had been harvested. These were often a preferred choice of wood to have for fence posts, barn supports, and early hand-crafted furniture. Whenever hardwood deciduous trees get harvested, their stumps tend to degrade more quickly than those found with the red cedar and its naturally protective oil. This explains how so many of the cedar stumps remain evident for such longer periods.

Every creek hollow found running along Green Mountain has its own unique story to tell. Each of these hollows including Buck's Canyon has always been appreciated for its natural beauty and resources including clear running water, timber, rich soil, rocks, wildlife, hunting, gathering and cool mountain air.

Whenever I go out to enjoy the trails and scenery today, my early childhood appreciation for geology, forestry, nature and history can always be viewed as a great investment; even if it meant arriving home late some evenings to my parents' dismay.

**"A good film is when the price of the dinner, the theater admission and the baby sitter are all worth it."**

***Alfred Hitchcock***

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# Heard On the Street

by **Cathey Carney**



Our Photo of the Month winner was **Eddie Wilson**. The little boy in the picture was someone very well known in Huntsville - **Randy Roper**. Randy is a long-time interior decorator and is owner of Randy Roper Interiors. Eddie lives in the 5 Points area and says Randy has a beautiful old Cadillac that Eddie would love to buy!

More people than I would have guessed spotted my hidden flower in the January issue, on p. 43 in Oscar Llerena's ad. My first caller was from Kentucky, **Paula Defoe** who was born and raised in Huntsville. She worked at Humana Medical here years ago. Then our next call was **Ann Spencer** from Harvest. She is a retired store clerk and loves reading the magazine. Then I awarded the 3rd prize to **Betty Atkinson** of Huntsville. Betty is a retired nurse (20

years working) who said she set her alarm to be sure and call by 8am today and she made it! She said she has never won Anything til now! Congratulations for these wins and you all get a free year of Old Huntsville.

**Lloyd Garrison, Jr.** was a good friend to many and a monthly caller to "Old Huntsville", to try to identify the Photo of the Month. Lloyd was 78 when he passed away Jan. 7. He loved history, his family & friends and lived in Huntsville for 50 years. Lloyd began working at the Belk Company here in 1965 and in the 1980s owned his own clothing store and became a real estate investor. He had a heart of gold and spent much of his time helping others who couldn't leave their homes, providing food and supplies. Lloyd is survived by his son, **Lloyd (Chan) Garrison III (Lisa)**; grandsons **Will** and **Robert**; sisters **Katherine Self, Sarah Sullivan and Elaine Newman** as well as many nieces and nephews who all adored Lloyd.

Have you ever bought a large bag of pecans or pine nuts and when you used them in a dish, found that they were old or rancid? That happened to me once, so now I always open the bag as soon as I get home and taste them to make sure they're fresh! Then I toast them and when cool they go into the freezer in Ziploc bags. You'll never waste them that way.

Many remember **Clyde Barclay**, who was a long-time member of the Golden K Kiwanis. Clyde was 95 and his wife **Doris** was 85 when they were featured

in a Huntsville Times article about people who give back to the community - at this age they were delivering Meals on Wheels to people much younger than them, and had done that for 30 years. Clyde passed away years ago, and his sweet wife just passed away at the end of December, at the age of 91. She attended many of the Golden K activities until she just couldn't do it anymore. Doris was a caring, active volunteer for the Madison County Probate Judge's office and on Sundays at her church she took care of the toddlers in the nursery. Doris was a gentle, sweet lady, and she is survived by sons **John Nolen Barclay** and **Jerry Sanford Barclay**; grandchildren **John N. Barclay, Jr., Michael Barclay (Teasha), Jessica Stone (Ben)**; great granddaughter **Kylie Marie Barclay** and great grandson **Cohen William Stone**. She will be missed always.

Sometimes on a cold dreary day like we've had recently it feels good to just grab a friend and go to the movies. After extensive research, I have found the best hot buttered popcorn is at the Regal 18 on South Parkway. Be sure and ask for your AARP discount and have your card ready.

## 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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BB&T Bank on Church Street is where you'll find the best group of ladies who work there. There were some important dates in February and here they are: **Heidi Acosta** (Customer Care rep) and her husband **Armand** celebrated their 6th wedding anniversary in February. **Ianthia Bridges** (Customer Care rep) has a cousin in Mobile - **Mario Ramsey** - who has a Feb. 23rd birthday. In fact Ianthia just had a birthday on Jan. 10. Happy Birthday to you! **Susan Coulter** is Branch Banker at BB&T and her daughter **Brie Coulter-Clark** just celebrated a Jan. 16th birthday. Love to visit with these ladies when I go in to do my banking!

Mark your calendars for the Spring **NEACA** show at Von Braun Civic Center. This arts and crafts show will be March 15-17 and gets better every year!

We have some inquiries recently about whether Old Huntsville is available in large print. We only print one version of the magazine (because of cost) but the **Huntsville Madison County Public Library** has been working on a "book on tape" variety of the magazine that is audio, you can listen to the stories rather than have to read them. The person to call at the library if you would like to investigate this is **Bobby Lipscomb**, who works in the Blind

and Physically Handicapped area of the library. For more information call him at 256.532-5940 at the library. Or go to their website at <https://hmcpl.org/bph>. I know many of us have a harder time with eyesight the older we get. Nice to know there is an alternative and thanks to the library for their hard work on this project.

Years ago a magazine called "**A Taste of Home**" would hide a picture of a toothpick somewhere in the pages of their issue. People would try but rarely found the toothpick. So I will try that for this issue. Somewhere within these pages will be a very skinny, tiny toothpick. This will be Expert Level for you folks who tell me how easy it is to find the hidden item I put in the magazine. And remember if you find it and are the first to call you win a whole year's subscription to the magazine, worth \$28. I expect I'll get NO calls.

Our friend **Rosemary Leatherwood**, who owns Ole Dad's BBQ in Hazel Green, has been feeling under the weather and recuperating from surgery so I just wanted to say feel better soon, Rosemary, and we love you.

Don't forget your birds this winter - they can't find as much food and are hungry, buy a little birdseed and sprinkle it around your yard.

A packed crowd came to cel-

brate the 35 year career of Madison County Sheriff **Blake Dorning** in January. He is retiring after 4 terms. We want to add our congratulations for an amazing career with definite challenges. He wants to see what retirement is like for a while but he's still young so we know there'll be lots in his future! Blake is being replaced by **Kevin Turner**, and officials said that the transition between the two men was the smoothest they've ever seen. We know Blake's wife **Jan** is so proud of him too.

**CBA Publishing** is a local publishing company that is getting a lot of attention lately. They have worked with our local writers and have published quite a few books, winning prizes along the way. **Christine Brown** is President and CEO, **Anna Talyn** is President of Product Design & Marketing, and **John Carson** is owner. **Patricia Woolfork**, one of the authors whose book "Savoring Eden" was recently published by CBA says the following. "Christine did a wonderful layout and internal graphics, and Anna created an awesome cover design. CBA rocks!" So proud of this young, local company.

If you love birds and beautiful photography, check this site: [www.creativebirding.com](http://www.creativebirding.com). Amazing, more later about this.

Happy Valentine's Day!



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## Sweets for Your Sweet

### Tipsy Cake

4 egg yolks  
 1/4 c. sugar  
 Dash salt  
 2 c. scalded milk  
 1/2 t. vanilla  
 1 pkg. Lady fingers  
 Apricot jam  
 1/2 c. whiskey  
 Toasted almonds  
 Whipped cream

Beat yolks and stir in the sugar and salt. Stir milk in gradually and cook over hot water, stir constantly til mixture coats your spoon. Chill, flavor with vanilla.

Split the lady fingers and spread with the jam. Put a layer in a glass bowl and pour whiskey over it, let the cake soak up the liquor. Cover with half of the custard, repeat layer of lady fingers sprinkled with whiskey and pour over remaining custard sauce,

Garnish with toasted almonds and whipped cream.

### Almond Chocolate Truffles

2 pkg. Chocolate chips  
 1 15-oz. sweetened condensed milk  
 1 t. almond extract  
 1 c. chopped toasted almonds  
 Shredded coconut & nuts

Melt your chocolate chips over hot water, remove from heat and add the condensed milk, extract and nuts. Chill til firm, shape into little balls and roll them in coconut or finely chopped nuts.

### Peanut Butter Pie

1 4-oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened  
 1/2 c. confectioners sugar  
 1 c. peanut butter  
 1/2 c. milk  
 1 8-oz. tub whipped topping  
 1 chocolate pie crust

In a mixing bowl beat the cream cheese and sugar til

creamy, add peanut butter and milk. Beat slowly til smooth, 3 minutes. Blend in the topping til no streaks appear, pour into pie shell and freeze. Serve with a dollop of whipped topping, a drizzle of chocolate syrup and crushed toasted peanuts.

### Pecan Date Candy

2 c. sugar  
 1 c. milk  
 2 T. butter  
 1 c. pitted dates, chopped  
 1 c. chopped pecans

Cook the sugar and milk to soft ball stage. Add the butter, stir. Add dates and cook slowly, stirring all the while til dates are dissolved. Remove from heat and beat til mixture stiffens. Add the pecans, stir and pour on parchment paper. Roll into a long loaf, let cool and slice thin.

## HUNTSVILLE'S OWN KELLER SUPER CHIEF



As hard as it may be to believe, Huntsville almost became an automobile manufacturing center. In 1947 the Keller Automobile Company leased a building on Redstone Arsenal, hired 130 employees and began operations.

The Keller Super Chief, a subcompact station wagon, was to be sold for about \$900. The production line was slated to produce 16,000 cars the first year and 72,000 each year thereafter.

Unfortunately, when George Keller suddenly died, most of the financial backing collapsed. Only 25 to 30 cars were actually produced before the company folded.



### Hot Pineapple Casserole

- 3 eggs, beaten
- 1 c. sugar
- 2 c. crushed pineapple
- 1/4 c. milk
- 4 c. cubed white bread

Open can of pineapple but don't drain. Take the crusts off the bread, mix together all ingredients. Bake in buttered pan at 350 degrees for about 55 minutes.

### Chocolate Puffs

- 1/2 c. Crisco oil
- 4 sq. unsweetened chocolate - melted
- 2 c. sugar
- 4 eggs
- 2 t. vanilla
- 2 c. self-rising flour
- 1 c. confectioners sugar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix the oil, chocolate and granulated sugar, Blend in the eggs one at a time, add vanilla. Stir flour into the mixture, chill for 2 hours. Drop the dough by teaspoons into a bowl of confectioners sugar. Roll in the sugar, making balls. Place 2 inches apart on greased cookie sheet. Bake 10-12 minutes. They will puff up!

### Chocolate Sponge Pudding

- 2 c. scalded milk
- 1-1/2 c. sponge cake crumbs

- 1 c. shredded coconut
- 1 c. sugar
- 3 eggs, separated
- Grated nutmeg
- 1 T. water

Pour hot milk over a mixture of cake crumbs, sugar, beaten yolks and coconut. Let stand for 30 minutes. Add nutmeg, water and egg whites which have been beaten to a dry froth. Bake 45 minutes at 350, serve with wine sauce.

### Chocolate Popcorn

- 1-1/2 c. sugar
- 1 T. butter
- 1 square unsweetened chocolate
- 3 qts. popped plain popcorn
- 3 T. water

Boil your sugar, butter, chocolate and water til mixture spins a long thread. Pour hot over popped corn and stir til all kernels are coated. Delicious!!

### Amaretto Love Fudge

- 4 c. sugar
- 2/3 c. Amaretto liqueur
- 2 c. half and half or light cream

In a large saucepan combine all the ingredients and brush sides of pan with butter. Stir over moderate heat til your sugar is dissolved, bring to a boil and cook without stirring til it reaches 238 degrees on a candy thermometer,

or when a drop of the mixture forms a soft ball in cold water.

Remove from heat and let stand til temperature drops to 140 degrees. Beat with a spoon til mixture begins to thicken slightly, then pour quickly into a foil-lined 8-inch pan.

A Pyrex container, buttered, will work as well. Let it stand til hard and cool.

### Orange Fluff Balls

- 1 12-oz. box vanilla wafers, crushed
- 1 box confectioners sugar
- 1/2 c. finely chopped pecans
- 1 stick butter, melted
- 1 6-oz. can frozen orange juice
- 1 can coconut

Mix the wafers, sugar and pecans with orange juice. Mix by hand, roll into balls, then roll into coconut. Great for parties.



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games got into high gear.

During this pre-statehood period a group of wealthy Georgians, known as the "Broad River Group," immigrated to the Alabama Territory, acquiring land and power. Among them were: William Wyatt Bibb, who would become Alabama's first governor; U.S. Secretary of the Treasury, William Crawford; Clement Comer Clay; Leroy Pope; and Leroy Pope's son-in-law, John Williams Walker.

In early 1819 they were successful in getting Congress to pass and President Monroe to sign an enabling act, which authorized the people of the Alabama Territory to form a constitution and state government for the purpose of being

## In the Beginning

by *Hartwell Lutz*

In this Bicentennial Year it is easy to forget that Alabama was once part of Mississippi, and even before that a part of Georgia. Upon becoming a state in the Union, Georgia surrendered its claim to what now makes up the states of Alabama and Mississippi, and in 1798 that area became the Mississippi Territory.

From the earliest days of the Mississippi Territory there was considerable dissatisfaction among the people of the eastern (Alabama) side of the Territory, who felt that their rights and needs were being ignored by the territorial government, and very early in that unhappy marriage they began to petition Congress for their own government. After what probably seemed like an eternity to the people in the east, Congress settled that controversy in December of 1817 by making the western half of the territory the State of Mississippi and creating the Alabama Territory, which was the eastern half. With that the political

admitted to the Union.

It should be noted that the Broad River Group, which would become known as the "Royal Party", lost most of its political clout within a few years. As to the reason, the name says it all. They were seen by the common people, mostly small farmers, as lord-



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ing their wealth and power over them, and the "popular faction" later known as Democrats, displaced them.

But while they were still in power the Broad River Group, or Royals, furnished the principal leadership that would lead to Alabama becoming a state. It is conceivable that, without them, we would still be a part of Mississippi. (God bless 'em.)

The enabling act mentioned above called for the election in May of 1819 of delegates to a convention to begin July 5 in Huntsville, for the purpose of writing a state constitution. Amazingly, the election came off with no major hitches and resulted in the election of forty-four men, eight of whom were residents of Madison County. Of the forty-four, eighteen are known to have been lawyers, four were physicians, two were ministers of the gospel, one was a surveyor, one was a merchant and four were farmers. One was a former college president and several had been active in government and politics in other states prior to coming to Alabama.

Six of the delegates would later become governors of Alabama; six would become justices of the State Supreme Court and six would become U.S. Senators from Alabama. William Rufus King, Dallas County's delegate, was later elected Vice-President of the United States, the only Alabamian to ever hold that office. All delegates were men whose neighbors thought enough of them to send them to Huntsville to attend to the important work at hand.

The Royal Party was much in evidence in the convention. If an award had been made to the most outstanding convention delegate, it would almost certainly have gone to Madison County's John Williams Walker, himself a member of that faction. The fact that he was unanimously elected President of the Convention attests to his stature, given the extreme hostility then existing between peoples of the northern and southern ends of the state. Under Walker's leadership the convention went about its work in a most impressive manner. The delegates were, as best we can tell, to a man, in earnest about their responsibilities. They dealt with

many issues, and, although not always in total agreement on every subject, they were able to compromise and work out their differences on every issue to come before them.

The convention finally adjourned on August 2, 1819, less than a month after it initially assembled. On December 14 of the same year President James Monroe signed a bill passed by Congress approving the constitution written by the convention and officially declaring Alabama to be admitted to the Union, approximately nine months after Congress passed the enabling act that set the wheels in motion.

Considered against the backdrop of Twenty-First Century American politics, it is remarkable that so much could be accomplished in such a short period of time.

Like most of the state constitutions of its day, the Alabama Constitution of 1819 was not submitted to the citizens for their approval, but nothing in the record of the convention or newspapers of that day suggests that this was ever an issue. Compared to other state constitutions in effect at the time, Alabama's was very democratic. For example, for the purpose of voting and holding office, there would be no requirement of owning property, paying a tax, membership in a militia, or ability to read and write - all common provisions in the constitutions of other states.

But then, there was this thing about slavery.  
For a later article.

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# Love and Marriage - 1961

*by M.D. Smith, IV*

Having proposed to my sweetheart while we both were in college at Alabama, we set the wedding date for June 8 giving us plenty of time from early March until the end of the school term in late May, to make all the plans.

My "plan" was to stay out of it, as I had already heard Judy, my fiance, argue (let's say discuss) with her mother issues that her mother thought should be one way, but Judy did not agree with the "suggestions" which had more of a "parent says you do this" tone to it.

School was over, and I was peripherally involved but rarely gave an opinion, with plans ranging from kinds of flowers, bride and groom's cakes, what to be served at the reception, layout of invitations done earlier and several other hundred things.

No question it was stressful and tense on my new bride-to-be.

But we were in love, and adored each other, having first met several years before under the most unusual circumstances in Birmingham at a fraternity party dance of which I had been a member in high school. But that was another story called "The Black Velvet Dress".

Love does hold young couples together, but I could surely sympathize with Judy and the myriad of things calling for decision-making and sometimes even changed after the decision was made.

Being a man, I could not begin to understand the hassle over clothing, alterations at the last minute, veils and flowers for the

bridesmaids and the list was a mile long. Talk about stress on my sweetheart; it was enormous.

As the magic day approached, we were settling down to the very last-minute arrangements and that included my bachelor party, consisting mostly of the guys in my wedding and a few other male friends. It was fun, the alcohol flowed freely, and the practical jokes played on me were good-natured, but I still was uneasy all night about what the next "joke" was going to be.

I think being handcuffed to a steel handrail outside the house and told I would have to be there until the next day, might have been one of the more memorable ones. Like many at the party that night, we got well lubricated and all had a hangover the next morning. We were very thankful the wedding was taking place in the afternoon.

My mistake was talking to Judy before I retired after the bachelor party, and while I don't remember exactly what I said, she was upset by my condition that evening. With her stress level at 110%, I now understand, but I didn't at the time.

The wedding day arrives. It started smoothly. All the wedding party was there in plenty of time, photos made, flowers on suit coats for men, bouquets for the ladies and the wedding march started.

I stood there next to the minister with my father on the other side as my best man, and I with a

## OUR WRITERS

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big smile, as my beautiful and demure bride walked down the aisle on her father's arm.

I was nervous, about to take a giant step, but this lovely dream walking towards me erased my jitters in a flash. I could never have guessed even minutes earlier it was chaos in the waiting room with the ladies.

They stopped near me. Her father, after he said he was giving the bride to "this man", stepped aside.

Then we were standing in front of the minister facing each other about to take our vows. I noticed Judy was trembling just a little bit and had some worry wrinkles on her forehead.

"It's just nerves," I thought. We quickly got to the part where the minister says "Repeat after me," and turned to Judy.

He started with "I (your name) take thee (my name) to be my wedded husband," and he paused for Judy to repeat the

words putting in her name and mine.

There was silence, she started to open her mouth but only a bit of a gurgle came out, and I could see tears welling up in her eyes.

The church audience was deadly quiet, the minister had a serious look on his face, and I was worried.

Judy got out a bit more, "I, Judy, take..." And at that moment she started crying.

In hindsight, the stress had just gotten to her, and I suppose there were times she was not even sure we'd get to this point, so she had mixed emotions of relief, happiness, and not sure what all else.

The minister quietly said, "Now that's all right, little lady, you just take your time, however much you need."

In what seemed to me to be an eternity, but probably only a minute, she started up again,

with her voice a bit choked up, and the minister continued a bit at a time that she repeated after him.

I did my part, and minutes later, we were pronounced "Husband and Wife," I kissed the bride, and we led the procession out of the Methodist Church. There were more photos outside and we took the short ride to the reception at the Russel Erskine Hotel. There we entertained everyone, changed clothes and soon were in my father's borrowed Mercury convertible, leaving town for our honeymoon.

What a relief.

That was one wedding, which a fair amount of people were not sure was going happen, and for just a few seconds, I was not all that sure either.

Love holds things together, and now after over 57 years, it still does, through happy or difficult times.

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# Why Should I Become an Automotive Technician?

By Lewis Nall, Calhoun Community College

I was speaking to a high school class and was asked, "Why should I become an automotive technician?" Since then, I have thought a lot about that question, as well as why I became an automotive technician and more importantly, why anyone else should?

If I were to answer that question today, my first response would be "do what you love". At age eleven, I started working at a neighbor's Volkswagen repair shop, cleaning parts and helping out where I could. As I got older and worked in other shops, I discovered that I loved working on cars. There was nothing like making something run better than it did when it came into the shop, or faster than it did from the factory.

Secondly, money does matter. Yes, we all need to make a living and be able to give our families the nice things in life. Most people will spend more than one third of their life working and one third sleeping, so that leaves one third for family and fun. But after 40 plus years in the work force, I have discovered you can make a lot of money and be miserable; there is nothing worse than getting up every morning and hating going to work!

I think we can all agree there would be a great waste to spend a third of our life doing something we hate. Speaking from

experience, if you hate your job it will negatively affect that time you have for family and fun. So, find something you love or at least like doing and can make a nice living at.

Now, let's get to the economics of why you might consider becoming an automotive technician. Did you know that roughly half of all mechanics will be eligible for retirement

in just 15 years? According to the National Bureau of Labor Statistics, the labor force is expected to add 39,100 new auto tech jobs by 2024. Job growth for 2016-2026 is 6% faster than the average.

"If there is such a thing as job security, it's in the trades," said Tony Molla, Vice President of Communications for the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence.

What about the pay: The median annual wage for automotive service technicians and mechanics was \$39,550 in May 2017. The median wage is the wage at which half the workers in an occupation earned more



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1911

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than that amount and half earned less.

The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$22,610 and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$65,430. Much of this depends on the technicians training and work ethic, I know experienced technicians today that make \$100,000 plus.

It is important to remember that the automotive field has become very technical; today's vehicles are loaded with computer and electronic technology. In order to get a leg up on the competition when applying for those high paying automotive jobs, you need to develop the skills needed to work on these high-tech cars.

I would recommend going to a two-year college like Calhoun Community College and earning your associate's degree in automotive technology. If you, like me, love working with your hands and repairing things and you're looking for a job that has a great future, job security and diversity of options, then come see me at Calhoun Community College. I'll get you ready for a great career and future in the automotive field.

**See the quick facts below**

Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics Pay in 2017:

\$39,550 per year \$19.02 per hour

Typical Entry-Level Education - Postsecondary on degree award

Work Experience in a Related Occupation -None

Number of jobs in 2016 - 749,900

In May 2017, the median annual wages for automotive service technicians and mechanics in the top industries in which they worked were as follows:

Automobile dealers \$43,180

Automotive mechanical and electrical repair and maintenance \$37,420

Automotive parts, accessories, and tire stores \$33,640

(Source: <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/installation-maintenance-and-repair/automotive-service-technicians-and-mechanics.htm>)

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turn to the experts

# A Civil War Ghost

by Buddy Moon



For over thirty years I've traveled around the country to old buildings, secluded campsites and disappearing battlefields, trying to experience what life must have been like for soldiers who fought in the American Civil War. As a re-enactor, I've camped, cooked, marched, slept, sweated in the sun, shivered in the cold, and pretended to die on grounds hallowed long ago by soldiers' blood. Many re-enactors will tell you that, because we respect and seek to understand the men in blue and gray, we often feel their presence. On rare occasions, we hear and see their restless spirits. Re-enactors have many ghost stories, and this one is often told.

We were at the re-enactment of the 125th anniversary of the Battle of Shiloh. For several days we had been drilling, camping and fighting where the soldiers of the Union and Confederate armies had met. It was our third day of activities. The day had been filled with action and movement. Nighttime had come; dinner had been cooked over the fire; and most members of our company had already gone to sleep in their tents.

Five of us sat around the crackling campfire on boxes or stools, each sipping his own beverage. We reflected on our experiences that day - some of which seemed as real as if we had been there in 1862.

I was about to comment on how much powder I had eaten tearing open cartridges with my teeth during the battle, when I noticed someone standing at the opposite end of the fire from us.

"I haven't taken down my Christmas lights yet. They'll look so nice on the pumpkin."

Winston Spear

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We all noticed him at the same time, but none of us heard him walking up.

We could see by the light given off by the campfire that he was in a Confederate uniform, tattered and caked with mud around the bottom of the pant legs. We also could see his well-worn shell jacket, missing a button. His face was bearded but otherwise hidden in the low light. I thought to myself that he made a really good impression of a soldier.

How long we quietly studied him and he us, I don't know. None of us had moved. He broke the silence.

In a tired Mississippi drawl, he said, "I'm lookin' for tha 6th Missasip Infantree".

We told him that we didn't know anyone in the 6th, but that they were probably at one of the other campfires scattered about in the woods. He turned and walked away, disappearing into the darkness.

We talked about how surprised we were by our guest and how well he had developed the look of a Confederate soldier. We decided that in the morning we would go to the camp of the 6th Mississippi and see if their camp was as authentic as the soldier we had just met. One by one, we headed off to bed.

In the morning we went to the re-enactment registration and asked the person in charge where the 6th was camped. Puzzled, he told us no one at the event represented the 6th Mississippi Infantry. He also told us that during the actual Battle of Shiloh the 6th had suffered one of the highest casualty rates of any unit in the battle and very few had survived. He asked why we wanted to know, but we didn't know how to answer him. Instead, we thanked him for the information and quietly headed back to our camp.

*By Buddy Moon, author of "The Picket", now available at Shaver's Books and Amazon.com*

**"I have bad reflexes. I was run over once by two guys pushing a truck."**

**George Carlin**

## An Old Housekeeper's Tips

- Emptied fruit, such as oranges or cantaloupes, refilled with vanilla ice cream with raspberries or strawberries make dainty little bowls. Cover with pink whipped cream, garnish with red cherries and serve at your afternoon tea.
- When you rub lotion on your face, be sure and get your neck area too, as it needs moisturizing as much as your face.
- Having trouble sleeping? Oftentimes, just an extra pillow will help.
- Dip asparagus into egg batter, roll in fresh bread crumbs or cracker meal and fry to a golden brown in butter. A very select vegetable with a juicy steak.
- Two cups of flour, two teaspoons of baking powder, a pinch of salt, cold water to make a stiff batter. Drop by teaspoonfuls in meat broth for drop dumplings that never fail.
- Give your colicky infant mild ginger tea. It's wonderful for digestion and gas.
- For fever, eat grapes throughout the day. Also dilute pure grape juice and sip.
- For sinus headaches, sniff a little horseradish juice - the stronger the better. Remember to do it slowly.
- To ease the discomfort of a bad hangover, rub half a lemon under each armpit. This may ease the feeling somewhat.
- For asthma, eat 3-6 apricots a day. They help heal lung/bronchial conditions.
- For regularity, drink the juice of one lemon mixed in one cup of warm water, when you wake up every morning. A bit of honey may be added to sweeten. You'll be amazed at the good results.
- A lady who had ringing in her ears tried dropping 2 drops of onion juice into her ears 3 times a week and it stopped, much to her relief.
- Garlic is wonderful for your heart - take 2 capsules a day to protect and strengthen the heart and help thin your blood. Also, use garlic in cooking and raw in salads - the cloves get really mild and sweet when baked or roasted.
- For indigestion, scrub an orange and eat some of the peel 5 minutes after a meal. Also, cayenne pepper sprinkled on food or soup will help with indigestion.
- One quart of celery juice a day is said to provide a noticeable improvement in those suffering from shingles.

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# CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

by Charita Smith Avery

I believe childhood memories can help lessen the dread of growing old. After the death of my husband and having no children or grandchildren, one of my great comforts is reliving past memories. As I think back, many memories return me to my early childhood in Lincoln Mill Village – memories as early as three years old on Davidson Street where I was born. The earliest memory is of me dancing around in the front yard wearing the beautiful dotted-swiss dress my mother made for me. As I spun around, the circular skirt would stand out like a spinning top. I felt so pretty in that dress, especially wearing the black patent-leather "Mary Jane" shoes. I remember on Sunday morning, before leaving for church at Lincoln Memorial Baptist Church, sitting on the front porch steps shining those shoes with one of Mother's biscuits. Yes, biscuits! Not only were her biscuits delicious to eat, but they were useful for shining shoes also.

I think of the peach tree in our back yard and standing beneath its branches eating peaches as fast as Daddy could peel them with his pocket knife. I lost my first tooth sitting on the back porch steps with Daddy while eating an orange. Daddy would peel and section the orange before handing the sections to me to eat. Needless to say, he didn't remove the seeds; so when I spit out what I thought was a seed, to my surprise there was the loose tooth I had been stressing over how to get out of my mouth. I just knew I couldn't bear the pain – to my pleasant surprise, there was no pain at all.

I recall the old black washpot in the back yard and the two African American women who came once a week to do our washing and ironing and how they would poke the boiling clothes with a wooden stick. I was enamored with the entire process. The women were sisters, named Mary and Alice, and one of them would bring her little girl to play with me, so we would pretend we were helping them. At lunch (or dinner as we called it back then), Mother would prepare food for them, but they never ate with us. After we finished lunch, Mary and Alice would come in and eat their lunch at the kitchen table. I never

understood why they couldn't eat at the table with us. Both my parents worked in the Lincoln Cotton Mill, so Mrs. Lehman, who lived down the street, cared for me while they worked. That is a wonderful memory because she was always very good to me, except for the memory of her giving me a dose of Casteroil, which I'm sure Mother directed her to do.

Mrs. Lehman, aware of my interest in helping Mary and Alice with the wash, gave me a special gift for my third birthday – a little washboard with a glass insert (most of these you see have metal inserts) so that I could "help" do the washing each week. I still treasure that little washboard and the pretty birthday card I received from Mrs. Lehman back in 1945. Also, Mr. Lehman was the village fireman for the village "above the mill." The three Lincoln villages were known as "above the mill," "below the mill," and "new village"; and the way I remember, each had its own firetruck and driver. The Lehman's house



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was the only one in the village above the mill which had a garage, that housed the firetruck. How special was that – the firetruck was located right there where I could climb on it, at least, when they would let me into the locked garage. I remember receiving lots of attention from the Lehman family, including Ernestine, Helen, Buddy and Dewey. My childhood memories are all filled with love, and I feel blessed to have been surrounded by loving people.

One of those loving people was Mr. Bowen, an elderly neighbor. I loved to stop and sit on his porch beside him and talk to him. I can see him dressed in overalls, rocking in his chair and cutting pieces off that bar of chewing tobacco. To me it looked like a delicious chocolate bar, and my mouth would salivate thinking how good it must taste. He would never share any with me, and I did ask; but, knowing what I do now, I surely am glad he didn't. I guess my craving for chocolate started very early in life.

I remember going to Ms. Stoval's store (later J.D. Honey's store) at the corner of Davidson Street and Oakwood Avenue before I started school. There were never any worries in those days of any harm coming to a small child walking that distance alone. When I reached the store, nickel in hand, I had to stand on my tiptoes to see through the glass-enclosed counter at all the candy available. Oh what a decision – I could choose five pieces of candy for that nickel! I'm sure Ms. Stoval sometimes became impatient waiting for me to decide what I wanted, but, she never showed it.

One night, my sister's husband walked with me to the store, and that's when I learned (at least, this is what he told me) that "the moon only followed good little girls." Something that was really a tasty treat back then was the "sample" piece of ice the iceman would give me. We had an old icebox in those days, and the iceman would come down the back alley in his truck and, using those large metal ice tongs, bring a large block of ice into the house. On a hot day, I would run out to his truck so excited to receive the piece of ice he would chip off and give to me. It tasted so good! It reminds me how simple things were

back then when children were happy with simple things and created ways to entertain themselves, almost always playing outside in the fresh air.

How could these wonderful childhood memories not overcome any depressing thoughts I might have?

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# Willie and Monroe

by Hugh Michaels

Willie and Monroe - names that will live forever in Langston, Alabama.

They lived in a three room "shack". There were seven people who lived in this "shack". One room had three beds. There were no windows. A "potbellied" stove sat in the center of one room. A pile of wood sat in one corner. A pipe ran out of the side of the shack. This was done to prevent water and smoke from getting into the building.

The roof of the house was made of wood shingles. Water would come through the building and cause the beds to be damaged. Living conditions were horrible, but somehow they survived.

They were honest, hard working and very dependable people.

They had an "outhouse" with one hole. They were forced to use a ditch occasionally when someone was using the "outhouse". A two hole "outhouse" in those days were used mostly by the "Well to do". Thank goodness for Sears Roebuck and Montgomery catalog paper.

They were very religious. Church was usually conducted only on Sunday nights. Sometimes people would get overcome with spiritual happiness. They would shout and sometimes knock down benches.

White folks would watch the happy people and it was a sight to see. The white folks enjoyed watching.

The children went to school in the same building used by the church.

Grades one through twelve were taught by one teacher, who was not very educated.

The children had nicknames. Very few people knew their real names. Monroe's kids were "Dank, Dude, Juney, Son and Sister".

Many people in Langston had nicknames. Some of the nicknames were, "Bullet Eye, Percolator, Monkey Hen, Cat Eye, Bill Rooster, High Pocket and Popeye".

Often the landowner would need help in preparing a meal. The blacks would prepare a meal and get the "left overs" as a gift. Flies were a problem and to keep the flies away from the table, a limb from a tree would be used to swish across the table.

Everyone drank from the same bucket. A "sipper" or cup would be used.

Food was scarce. The men, Monroe and boys, would hunt possum, rabbits, squirrels and racoons for food. It was not unusual for a group of men from the community to go hunting with the Monroe family. They would hunt till daylight, trying for a "kill". Hunting for possum would occur in the fall. The main dish of possum would happen when persimmons were ripe,

Blacks were very superstitious. When someone died, the mirrors in the house would be turned to face the wall. The body would not be buried till Sunday, regardless what day of the week they died.

Life began to change for these people in the late 40s. Young people began to locate in a better place. Blacks went North to Chicago and Detroit.

Willie and Monroe have gone to meet their "maker". They were a big part of Langston, when it was a "booming" town.

Time changes everything. No more "shacks" and no more "possum" hunting.

Willie and Monroe - names that will live forever in the annals of time. The people of Langston, Alabama will never forget them.

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# A Cat Named Sambo

by Cathey Carney



Never in the history of Huntsville or perhaps the whole state of Alabama has there been a cat as famous as a Siamese named Sambo. (Picture above is from "Huntsville Revisited")

For, in the late fifties, Sambo started out as a pampered pet of Joyce and Tom Jones and became a well known photographic model, rising to the position of the city's chief endorser of civic drives.

Sambo's mistress, Joyce Jones, was a photojournalist for several metropolitan newspapers. Since cats are always good copy, it wasn't long before she found a way to press him into service.

His career started when he was staring down a hole in the kitchen baseboard. Since cats have weaknesses for concentrating on a possible mouse exit, the pose was a natural. The pictures were published in the Birmingham News and were seen all over the state. (The joke was on Sambo. It was not a rat hole into which he gazed, but an un-repaired hole from which a piece of metal had been removed.)

Then, the Jones embarked upon a repainting and re-papering session in the living and dining rooms, another golden opportunity came to cash in on a cat's natural curiosity. The camera followed Sambo as he unrolled wall paper, dabbled in the paint, climbed a ladder and generally made a nuisance of himself until he was "fired." This picture story, entitled, The Little Helper, appeared in the Nashville Tennessean Magazine.

Sambo's pictures with captions continued to appear in the Chattanooga Times, Birmingham Post Herald, Birmingham News, Nashville Tennessean and the Huntsville Times. Altogether, he appeared in print fifty-two different times.

Then, the state editor of the Birmingham News, who had been looking for a continuing model, chose Sambo to appear from time to time

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in a series of pictures.

Throughout the year pictures of Sambo appeared as he celebrated Thanksgiving, Halloween, Valentines day and Christmas. In fact, in observance of the Yule season, Sambo became a poet, (with apologies to Samuel Moore), writing a holiday poem which appeared in many newspapers.

As Sambo increased in popularity, Joyce had him insured by the famed insurance company, Lloyd's of London, as a photographic model. And, naturally, a picture story of the event appeared in the print.

In addition to metropolitan newspapers, including the Associated Press, Sambo began appearing in his hometown newspaper, The Huntsville Times, more often. When the city observed its Sesquicentennial, Sambo proudly "grew" a beard as all the males were asked to do. He was made an

honorary member of the Huntsville Chamber of Commerce. And as a result an account of this event and other activities were published in a book commemorating the Sesquicentennial.

Since Sambo was such a well known character, the photographer was asked to let him sponsor civic drives. So, he appeared in print for the Red Cross, Huntsville Symphony Orchestra, Civic Defense, Blood Bank, Community Chest, Crippled Children's Clinic and the Huntsville Humane Society.

As a matter of fact, when a heart drive did not succeed, the chairman said woefully, "It was probably because Sambo was not asked to endorse it." Through the years as Sambo's fame grew, from time to time people from throughout the state would stop by to see him and to sign his guest book. As an added honor, the Puss 'N Boots Company sent him an

unsolicited medal and certificate for "contributing to human happiness."

When Sambo passed from his first life, the late Reese Amis, editor of the Huntsville Times, published a long obituary reviewing the life of the famous cat. When the present courthouse was being decorated, then Commissioner James Record asked for a portrait of Sambo to be hung in a prominent place. For, he said, "Sambo is one of Huntsville's most outstanding citizens and deserves his share of recognition." As a lasting tribute to the famous feline, the portrait hangs today on the third floor of the Madison County Courthouse.

Now, Sambo's "pawto-biography" brings him info his ninth life. His mistress, Joyce Jones, compiled a photographic account of the cat's rise to fame and his interest in helping civic causes.

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# 61 Years, A Good Marriage

by Johnny Johnston

The day after Christmas 1957, I was on my way to a place I had only heard of, Baker's Cross Roads, Tennessee to meet the Brown family. Twice a year Tomie Brown, his brothers, sisters and all their children came home to the family farm. I didn't really know what to expect. I had only met Roberta Shockley, Tomie's sister who was going to meet me at the Sparta Post Office, and guide me to the farm at 10:00 that morning.

Tomie Brown was the father of my Life Love, Barbara. I had met her in June of that year in Huntsville, at Roberta's house on a blind date. We hit it off the first time we met, then had a couple of other dates before she had to go home to Concord, Tennessee. She enrolled at the University of Tennessee that spring. Since June I had been up there several times and we exchanged many letters. We become engaged to be married on her birthday Dec. 20, 1957. She especially got to my heart when I learned how well she cooked, having made me an entire plate of brownies on my first trip to Concord.

Concord was a community just west of Knoxville, Tennessee which has just about disappeared over the last 60 years. In fact, the community has become Farragut, Tennessee which is now a beautiful city with one of the most popular shopping centers in East Tennessee. All this was mostly developed by classmates of hers. One was elected Mayor who assisted in naming the town after the High School where they all graduated.

Barbara had graduated from Farragut High School just a couple of months before her trip to Huntsville. I was employed at Eastern Airlines just a short time. Her father had farmed as a child with his father and brothers until the Depression hit at which time, he joined one of President Franklin Roosevelt's new deal programs. It was called the "CCC" camp and located in East Tennessee. Tomie's father told me that he was paid \$25 per month and sent \$20 of it home to his parents to help them get by. Tomie stayed with "CCC" until after marrying Edith Smith in 1937 and relocating to Pennsylvania. He entered the Army during World War II and served in the Philippines.

Barbara was the first child born to her generation. When Roberta and I arrived at the farm I was a little in shock at what I saw. Standing on the porch was Barbara, her sister Diane and about 8 younger children. What I was in for was the greatest teasing and harassment I could ever expect. Tomie's brothers had agreed to not let me have a moment's peace. The jokes, the insinuations, the tricks played on me. I was a little shy in those days anyway so I

just crawled into a corner and stayed still as much as possible. It was not possible. Barbara was the first in the generation to go courting, let alone be engaged.

The Old Log House was small, only four rooms downstairs, two upstairs -and a path. The path led to an outdoor toilet which was very popular during the time that 20 family members lived there for two weeks. The two rooms upstairs were full of beds, hardly room to walk between them. I had never seen such a close and loving family. Three of the brothers had served in the war. One of them was still a Major in the service, lived in Arkansas and was a hospital administrator; one was from Michigan, a plant manager for General Motors; a third brother was a horse trainer and owned a horse farm in Pennsylvania. Tomie was supervisor of the medical lab of Tennessee Valley Authority. Barbara had been raised in that atmosphere visiting each family for long periods of time. It seemed that each of the younger generation could be a member of each family. Barbara's family had relocated to Pennsylvania during the Depression but returned to Baker's Cross Roads to give birth to her and her twin sister. They were born

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in what is now the living room of the farm home which is still owned by members of the Brown family. Afterwards they returned to Pennsylvania where Tomie was employed as a farmer. A tragedy occurred when the girls were only 18 months old. Her twin sister, in the same baby bed, became trapped in the side railing and perished. She was brought back to Baker's Cross Roads and buried near the farm in Savior's cemetery.

The Brown Brothers did not scare me off! We were married almost exactly one year after meeting. At each tick of the clock it seemed some of the Green family, who were cousins, or some of the neighbors were there to visit the children of James H. and Mattie Brown. In 1961, James and Mattie had their 50th wedding anniversary. Several hundred people came by to give their wishes. James and Mattie sat on the front porch greeting each guest. I had never seen such popularity or love between people.

The Brothers had a competition going on always; see who could tell the funniest story or joke. I think at this table I learned how to stop being shy, more than any other place or time. Before meeting Barbara and her family, I was very shy and self-conscious. Meals at the farm also mystified me. Our family never ate in shifts. When we gathered, we sat around wherever we could find a place to eat; not the Browns. The men, along with Mattie ate at the table for the first round. When they were through eating and telling stories, they would leave the table then their wives would sit down and eat before starting clean up. The next generation would be last to eat. I paid attention to the chicken meals. The brothers would slip into the kitchen, steal their choice of a chicken part, hide it, then retrieve it before sitting down to eat. Another event was them slipping back into the kitchen to find what the other had hidden, then steal it. It was amazing to watch. All this time the wives and sisters of the brothers were trying to prepare meals in the small kitchen.

Years later we had large family reunions at the farm. With some help, I usually cooked breakfast for everyone. I would cook eggs, bacon, sausage and ham. The women would cook biscuits in the kitchen while I cooked outside under a pavilion built by family members. Dinner was also cooked outside, usually by my brother-in-law from Texas. We served as many as 250 meals at one time. Barbara was always called on to cook several Banana puddings which were the best in the world. Anything she did was great.

From the very beginning I discovered I had married a fabulous woman. She took care of me and her children with great love and tenderness. Even though I moved her all over the country with Eastern Airlines, she made the best of it at all locations. She made friends everywhere, entered cooking contests and won a few. Had a hobby of making an ornamental Easter Egg from sugar and frosting which was a hit where ever we lived. She sold a few for a high price but most were made for close friends. One of the first opportunities we looked for in each location was a good church. Once we found that church, she saw that our three children attended on a regular basis and lived what they had





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learned. She delivered our first child in Alabama, the second in Georgia, the third in Missouri. Somehow, we missed having a child in Texas or Illinois.

Christmas was always a favorite time with Barbara. She has always been a collector of Tree Ornaments taking several days to decorate the tree. Each ornament has a story or memory to it. To anyone who would sit and talk with her while decorating she would stop at each one and tell the story of where it came from, when she got it or who it was from. This was a tradition for as long as we have been married.

About 20 years ago Barbara started collecting items from Christmas Village. Each year our home was filled with her handiwork. Entire communities sprang up on tables, shelves or anywhere there was a space. Children were brought in and I can still see and hear her telling

the story of the building labeled "Brown's Store" or the "Dentist Office". She has more than a thousand pieces of Christmas Village and displayed them liberally. That is through 2016 Christmas.

On November 5, 2017, Barbara suffered a stroke, it became more devastating in December 2017, with a horrendous fall. She requires total care. The Christmas Tree is in the attic above the garage, not to be used. The ornaments are in boxes, labeled with care, not used anymore. The Christmas Village is in storage, not displayed anymore.

We had a long run. We enjoyed nearly 60 Christmas seasons before this illness interrupted our precious Christmas celebrations. She spent her Birthday, (December 20,) Christmas and New Years day in the Hospital and Rehab during 2017.

Our family all came in 2018,

for her Birthday. I asked them to have Christmas Day at home with their families and continue their own traditions.

The story is left to be told. What happened to that plate of Brownies Barbara made for me in 1957? Concord was a little less than two hours from Chattanooga, Tennessee by car (before interstates, in those days). All the Brownies were gone before I arrived in Chattanooga. I tried to find someone to blame: Difficult, I was the only one in the car!

There were a lot of traffic lights on old Highway 72. The only thing I can figure is someone must have reached through the window (no air conditioning in those days), and snatched a brownie!

Well, that's my story and I'm sticking to it!



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# PET TIPS FROM ANGEL

## Your Date for Valentine's Day

Shauna, a pet blogger, says 20% of pet owners would rather spend Valentine's day with their pet than a date. So here are the top reasons why a dog makes a better date this Valentine's Day:

- Dogs don't talk.
- If you worry your dog will destroy your lovely home four seconds after you step out the door, you can put him in a crate. The authorities frown upon this when it comes to dates.
- Dog slobber is cute. Date slobber is very not cute.
- You don't have to share your dessert with a dog (and probably shouldn't). This is great because dessert is the best part about Valentine's Day and all that stuff makes dogs sick.
- For the not-so-romantic folks out there, a dog won't look hopefully, then desperately, and finally disdainfully into your eyes when the evening doesn't end in a helicopter ride to Paris and a romantic marriage proposal. Won't happen.
- When a dog follows you around it's cute. Am I right? Pretty much nothing is better than being adored by a dog. If a date follows you around ... we call that stalking.
- Dogs don't care if you are "presentable" or not. You don't have to buy expensive shoes to hang out with your dog. You don't even have to shower. Just head out on a couple of hikes, toss a ball around, dole out a healthy belly rub and you're golden! No makeup, no ironing, no Spanx required.
- You will never have to dream up a way to gently/firmly/sneakily "get rid" of a dog. Because you'd never want to get rid of a dog! Dogs are fun, goofy and handily clean food right off the kitchen floor for you when you drop it. Dates seem to think that kind of thing is below them.
- Pup snuggles are the best. Okay, snuggles from a human can be pretty darn good too, but when Fido nuzzles into the nape of your neck and huffs a grumbly sigh, you'll stay in that exact same position for ages so you don't disrupt the little guy's comfort.

Did I mention dogs don't talk?



## Fights about Pets - Top 4

**Fight #1: Should you get another pet?** If one of you doesn't want to get another pet, sorry to say, the other has to respect that. Too many pets end up in shelters because all the members of a household are not on the same page. If you've got the urge to bond with new pets, volunteer with a rescue group.

### Fight #2: Should your pet be allowed in bed?

Find out what really bothers the person saying "no" and see if you can compromise. Does he or she hate cat hair on the pillow? You could wash

the sheets more often, or train your cat to sleep at the foot of the bed. Does your dog hog the bed? You could treat yourselves to a bigger bed, or train your dog to stay on his own bed. **Note:** If your dog is displaying aggression toward you or your partner around the bed, call in a behaviorist, pronto.

### Fight #3: How much is too much to spend on vet bills?

Ultimately, this is something the two of you will have to decide for yourselves, and it's probably best to talk about this while your pet is healthy — before you have to make the tough choices. Vet bills can add up. Also, having pet insurance can help you avoid the stress of unexpected vet bills accompanied by giant fights.

### Fight #4: What's the best way to train and/or discipline your pet?

Effective training is simple: Ignore bad behavior and reward good. But the pet will only learn if everyone in the household responds consistently. It can help to hire a trainer who uses positive-reinforcement-based techniques and agree ahead of time that you'll both follow his or her advice — that way, you'll avoid an "I'm right, you're wrong" battle.

Pet-related fights are often really about "the couple's power struggle," says New York City-based marriage and family therapist (and pet parent) Emma Viglucci, LMFT. "If they are honest, one partner usually cares less about their stance than the other and can therefore give in to the other's wishes as an investment in the relationship. It's nice to throw the other a bone every once in a while" ... so to speak!

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## From the Desk of Tom Carney

### "We are Not Sorry for Anything"

*In the latter part of 1865 an unidentified woman wrote her cousin describing the devastation the Civil War had brought to the Tennessee Valley. It is believed she lived near Mooresville at the time the letter was written.*

November 15, 1865

"Dear Cousin Sallie:

Yours of Sept. 25 was duly received and should have been promptly answered had not sickness prevented."

"I wrote you in '61, indeed it seems a long time since we have heard from you; true I wrote your Father a line or two a year ago, and committed it to the care of the most reasonable man I found in all the Yankee army. I received his reply in January. It had been inspected and came to me by flag of truce from across the river. I do not remember anything I wrote your Father, but the circumstances under which it was written can never be forgotten. Heaven grant I may never pass another such day."

"Could you have looked in upon us but for a moment, you would have thought it impossible for life and reason to survive the torture to which mind and body were that day subjected. But that day had an end, and in safety we welcomed the much needed repose that night along brought us. But the act of dating my letter brings forcibly to my mind the fact that this day one year ago was the most miserable of all my life. The Yankee troops were then passing us on their way."

"Their orders were positive to burn and destroy everything

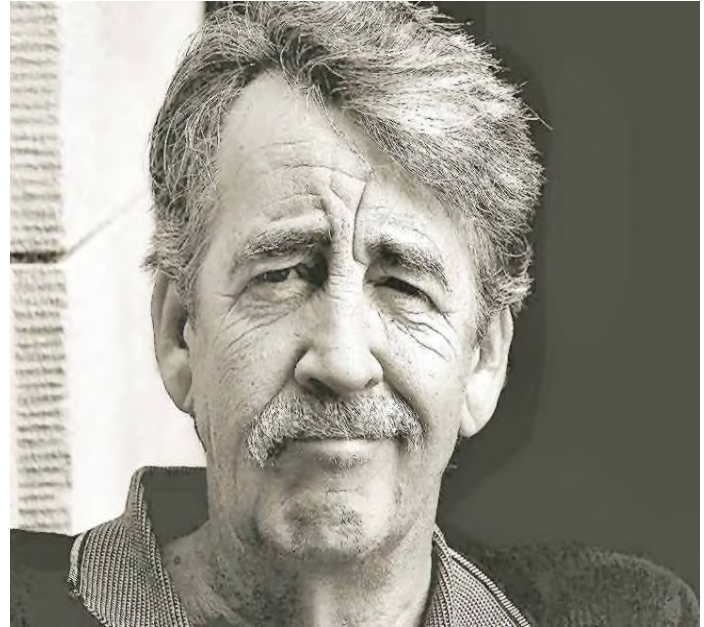
on their march, and well they executed this most Christian order of this most Christian majesty. All day and all night one continual stream of wagons and guards poured by."

"As dark-

ness came on, the work of burning commenced. On every side, as far as the eye could reach, the lurid flames of burning buildings lit up the heavens and dissipated the darkness of night. I could stand out on the verandah and for two or three miles watch them as they came on. I could mark when they reached the residence of each and every friend on the road. I could see the first building fired, then the torch carried round and round until I knew that everything on the premises was wrapped in flames; then hear the wild shout they raised, as torch in hand, they started for the next house."

"The night was cold, but I never once left my post. With my sister and others I stood from dark until daylight and watched their onward progress. I calculated the distance they travelled in a given time; how long it took to fire such a number of buildings, and ascertained almost to the very minute when the torch would be set to our own house. As the flames rolled on I could hear, or fancy that I heard, above the oaths, the yells, the eternal gab of the Yankee army, the screams of the frightened neighbors as the fire swallowed up the labors of a lifetime. Thus the night rolled on. The torch was several times brought to fire our house, but each time it was extinguished."

"Consequently an order had been given to burn nothing on this place. I knew nothing of it. I looked abroad upon the smoldering ruins, the smoke almost suffocated me. I knew it was not long until daylight - but had no reason to hope that we would have a change of cloth-



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ing, a mouthful of bread or a roof to shelter us. If it was sin may Heaven forgive me if I prayed that I might never see the destruction, the deep distress, that the morning would reveal to me."

"That, too, has all passed and lives only in memory; but no one, I hope, will ever expect me to love Yankees. They tell us the war has ended and some cry lustily, "Peace, peace." I have peered into the deep gloom that surrounds us and can scarce see a glimmer of that welcome visitant. The shadow of a great sorrow has darkened our land. He, who a short time since, was the pride of our Confederacy, the pure statesman, the Christian gentleman, the accomplished scholar, our beloved President Jefferson Davis, now ekes out a miserable existence in a Yankee Bastille. In proportion as his sufferings increase, our sympathy for him and hatred of his oppressors increase also."

"We are not sorry for anything we have done down here, are not repenting, are not whipped or subjugated, or anything of that kind. True, we were with numbers overpowered, but we battled upon our own soil, and for that soil we contended for every principle of honor and justice, and for the most sacred rights - for the sanctity of home, for self government, for the truths of god's word. The North fought for no principle and no right - her sole aim was to subjugate the South."

"We expected to go back to our home when the war ended, but our house and everything there has been burned and we have nothing to go to. This is now the poorest country in the world, and we are homeless wanderers through the desert. We had nothing left us and nothing to buy with, so I send you a scrap of our dresses we have been making. The cotton grew here and every thread of it was manufactured by the family. I wove it myself. We call it Dixie Silk."

The letter bore no signature.

## THE SMOKE DETECTOR

by Don Sanders

A few nights ago I was going to bed and my wife was going to watch a Hallmark movie, so I go into the bedroom, get ready for bed and jump under the covers. As I'm going to sleep, I hear a beep,beep,beep. My wife being up, I think she will take care of the problem. In a few minutes she comes into the bedroom and tells me that I have to get up and do something about the smoke detectors because they are beeping. There was no fire but they were too noisy for her to sleep. I go into the kitchen and listen, sounds like the smoke detector in the kitchen area. I get a ladder and take it down and I told my wife that I would fix it in the morning .

I stood around a minute and it wasn't long until I heard the beep again. I go to the one that I had just removed and took the battery out of it thinking that that would take care of the problem. I stood around a little longer to see if I had fixed the problem this time, but to my amazement, just about then I hear the beep again. A smoke detector will not beep without a battery, so now I am puzzled, but we have two more detectors in the house, my wife and I took one each and went and stood under them. In a minute we heard the beep again, my wife said that it was not the one that she was under; I informed her that it was not the one that I was under either. Now the both of us are really confused.

I really didn't want to be running around the house at this time of the night taking down smoke detectors when I could be sleeping. As my wife and I were standing by the island in the kitchen trying to decide what was next, I glanced over at the oven and I noticed the light was flashing on the monitor of the oven, about that time my wife figured it out, it was the timer on the oven. Seems that she had been baking sausage balls in the oven earlier that afternoon and removed the sausage balls from the oven but had forgotten to turn off the timer. I should have diagnosed the problem before starting to make repairs. But, this is just part of the drama around my house daily; cut that tree, the mice are eating the grass seed in the garage, my rose bushes need trimming or wild animals are digging up the lawn. I've been married 54 years and the honey-do gets worse every year. Good luck with yours.

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## A Fifty Year Waltz and Counting

by Ted Roberts

It was only a Junior Congregation Dance at Beth El Emeth Synagogue - celebrating Sunday School graduation. But in Memphis, Tennessee on a Saturday night in 1946, what choices did a 16 year old have except for the picture show. If your date liked popcorn with your movie, an evening at the Rialto Palace could set you back 25 cents. The Synagogue Dance was free.

But Betty Grable and Ty Power awaited us at the Rialto Palace. The Junior Congregation Dance, on the other hand, featured Rhea Mendel and Marsha Klodkin with a supporting cast of the Sunday school graduating class. I'd seen that show. Then I reminded myself that alongside the dance floor, there'd be a short oilcloth covered table with plates of sticky donuts and sugar cookies. The equivalent of free popcorn. Whatta bargain. So, I went to the dance in the synagogue basement.

Good idea. Because, besides Mendel and Klodkin and the crowd of extras who had overindulged for years on sugar cookies, there was a new star in the constellation of cuties that moved and grooved on the synagogue circuit. As the poet says, she was a dove with dove's eyes.

Around, between and behind the Sunday School graduating class, I watched her cautiously. I was so stunned by this newcomer that every platitude known to smitten

suitors leaped into my consciousness all at once, headed by "Where have YOU been!!" This was the evening star peeping between the clouds of the Sunday School graduating class.

But nothing about our first meeting would have inspired Jackie Collins or Danielle Steele. It was more of a Louisa May Alcott moment.

There was the usual third grade dialogue, which was beneath us since we were almost in high school and should have done better.

"Hi."

"Hello."

"Wanta dance?"

"I guess."

Not exactly zingy. But my radar screen lit up and my heart shrieked, TARGET! TARGET! TARGET! TARGET! Easy does it, I thought. Be the patient tortoise that won the gold: not the herky-jerky hare. I remember trying to impress her with my maturity and adult conventionality by remarking that the dance floor was slippery because only an hour ago the basement floor, which we called the social hall floor, had been the dining room floor. It still retained smidgens of spilled tomato sauce.

"Gotta be careful, you could

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slip and turn your ankle," I remarked. (Forty years later I made her the same speech about getting out of the tub - only this time I worried about her hip.)

Six or seven couples glided across that treacherous tomatoey floor. The jukebox churned out hymns to romantic love, not lust. Inside, we bubbled like an agitated fifth of champagne. But the culture alchemized lust into something mildly civilized: like the Hoover Dam tames that rampaging river into a force that lights our lamps.

So we danced carefully, under the baleful eyes of armies of chaperons. Only two dance forms were available to us: the hi-speed frenetic jitterbug, definitely not for lovers or talkers; and the walk-to-the-music-around-the dance-floor. (Great, if you weren't Fred Astaire.) Also great for lovers because it allowed hand holding and back touching. It was also OK to let your eyes flame with passion - if you knew how to do it without looking goofy. The walk-to-the-music was my choice since it also allowed me to show off my conversational skills about slippery dance floors and other hot topics that fascinated the young ladies of the dance circuit.

The two-armed torso clutch was only practiced in dimly lit dives. Definitely out. After all, this was the synagogue basement.

Looking back fifty years to that dance in the basement of the Beth El Emeth Synagogue, I marvel. I was wise beyond my years. Somehow I knew this was a marathon, not a hundred-yard dash. We've danced demurely now for more than half a century. May it continue.

*The humor of "ted, the Scribbler on the roof", appears in newspapers around the US, on National Public Radio, and numerous web sites.*

"I don't like to think before I speak - I like to be just as surprised as everyone else about what I say."

*Linda Drake*

Two muffins are in a toaster. One muffin says, "Man, it's hot in here!" The other muffin says, "Wow! A talking muffin!"

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# LOCAL NEWS FROM 1878

## The Horse Careens and the Rider Goes Under

Mr. J. E. Hall, who is engaged in business with Mr. E.S. Johnson, left Huntsville last Thursday evening to go to Brownsboro. He reached the Flint River shortly after sundown. Seeing that the river was rather high, he dismounted and tried to make his horse cross the stream. Several efforts were made to make Mr. Hall's horse cross the stream. Finally Sydney Johnson, a young carpenter, undertook to ride him across. He had gotten midway across the stream when the swift water began to bear horse and rider downstream.

The rider became alarmed, the horse careened, the rider went overboard and soon disappeared beneath the water. The horse landed across, a few yards below the regular ford. An effort was made that evening and next morning and again on Sunday, to see if anything further could be heard of Johnson, but without any success. He was undoubtedly drowned.

from 1878 newspaper

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and Chairs, 45 cents! Complete assortment of Gents and Ladies Trunks, from 75 cents to \$10!

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## Moonshine Stills Raided. Whiskey Makers Arrested after Desperate Shootout.

Messrs. T.G. Hewlett, Joseph W. Ellett, John Latham and T.A. Thurston made a raid into Blount County last week. They moved on Jere Cornelius at his home seven miles southeast of Blountsville. Latham and Hewlett went up to the house while the other two flanked on the outside.

Cornelius snapped his gun at Hewlett and then ran out and broke for a thicket. He encountered Ellett and shot at him, missing him. He reached the thicket and when Hewlett approached he was making ready to shoot. Hewlett got in a shot before he could and

let him have it in the belt. The shot, which would have either wounded him seriously or killed him, was caught by a belt which Cornelius was wearing and did not hurt him to amount to anything. Cornelius surrendered as soon as Hewlett shot.

W. Washburn, L. Hendricks, T. Brazeale, R.E. McAnelly, James Putnam and John Hand were likewise arrested and all of the parties were brought to Huntsville. Washburn, Brazeale and McAnelly were discharged upon an investigation. Putnam gave bond and Hand and Cornelius were put in jail. Putnam had carried a barrel of apple-brandy to Cullman to fire the throats of the Teutons. Cornelius, at the time he was arrested, had a double-barreled shotgun, two revolvers and a pair of brass knucks. He told them that they could kill him but they couldn't scare him a "damn bit" and the boys say that he wouldn't scare worth a cent.

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**Shooting and Stabbing in Hazel Green. One Person Shot Blind, another Stabbed by his Own Brother.**

We learn of two serious difficulties in the Hazel Green district last week. On Tuesday night, a Mr. Talent shot William Weaver in the head, the ball passing through the only good eye Weaver had, leaving him totally blind. They were in a quarrel at Key's Mill and it is said that there was a good deal of whiskey around.

Talent was arraigned before Justice Fowler and after an investigation was discharged. Weaver was alive when last heard from and may recover.

The second affair was between two brothers by the name of Holloway, in the same district four miles from Hazel Green, last Friday, in which Gabe Holloway was cut in the abdomen by his own brother. There was a game of cards going on and Gabe Holloway was trying to induce his brother, who was engaged in the game, to quit playing and go to work, whereupon his brother grew angry, according to our information, and cut him. He is in very critical condition and according to his doctor, not expected to live.

from 1878 newspaper

**"Men don't like to admit they forget anything. My husband forgot the code to turn off our house alarm. When the police came, he wouldn't admit he'd forgotten the code...and he turned himself in."**

*Rita Rudner*

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*Tom Carney*

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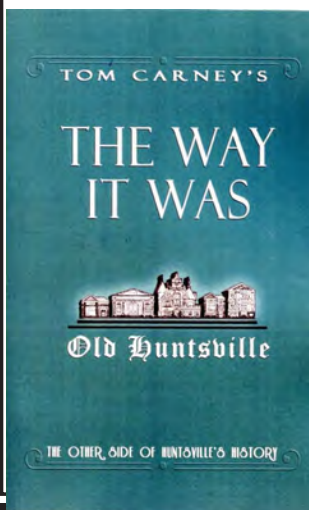
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# How About A Movie?

by Jerry Keel

Back in the early '50s and on into the '60s, Huntsville had many theaters. Most were nice, air conditioned, comfortable places to go enjoy a good movie and relax for a little while.

The Lyric Theater on Washington Street and the Grand Theater on Jefferson Street were the cream of the crop. Also there were the Center Theater in West Huntsville on Triana Boulevard and the Elks Theater just off the Courthouse Square downtown. The latter two were more economical than the others but they lacked some of the amenities the others had.

This was back in the days when segregation was the rule so the black community could not attend a movie at the whites-only theaters. Mr. Fred Heffle- mann saw the opportunity as a way to help the black citizens and also create a nice investment for himself. He built the Princess Theater on Church Street downtown as a blacks-only theater.

The projectionist at the Princess was Tommy Huskey's dad, Marvin Huskey. Marvin was a hardworking man who held two jobs. His other job was at the Meadow Gold Dairy. He had a delivery route which required him to deliver milk products to households as well as businesses. His day began at 4:00 a.m.

In order for him to get some much-needed sleep, he devised an ingenious alarm system for himself. The movie films were transported in heavy metal containers. He placed a recliner in the projection booth which served as his makeshift bed.

When a new reel was started he would have about 30 minutes

before he had to start another reel. He would take the film can in his hand while he settled down to doze for a few minutes.

If he went completely to sleep the hand holding the film can would relax, allowing the heavy metal can to fall. Heavy metal film can, concrete floor and a too-relaxed operator meant a loud noise when the can went crashing to the floor. He instantly became wide awake. His alarm system served him well for several years as he worked his two jobs. He also worked as manager and projectionist at the Parkway 231 drive-in.

I worked part-time at the theater filling in for Marvin occasionally whenever he had to take some time off. The job was easy but it had its drawbacks. After seeing a movie four or five times it became boring and would make me very sleepy. I tried Marvin's alarm system but it didn't work for me. I dropped the can so many times I finally gave up and tried other ways to stay awake.

Another problem was how to keep the curious kids out of the booth. It amazed them how the picture on the screen came out of that little room and they wanted to see what went on. Since there were many things that could hurt a kid they were not allowed to come inside the booth.

When the drive-in movies

came on the scene Mr. Heffle- mann was quick to realize the potential these movies offered. People who came home from work didn't always feel like cleaning up just to go to a movie. The drive-in offered a go-as-you-are opportunity so they all loaded into the family car and away they went. The idea of serving food brought another means of making money and made it possible for the moms to have a night off from the kitchen.

For those who don't remember the drive-ins, you drove to the ticket booth and paid your admission then you went in search of the best spot to park. Those with smaller children always tried to find a spot near the concession stand so the kids could play when they got bored with the movie. That was in the days before so many sick-minded people tried to prey on small children and the kids were safe



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while there.

Many times two people would drive to the ticket booth and get two tickets. Then they would park in an out-of-the-way place to allow the two or three others who were in the trunk of the car to get out. This was the only way some could get to go to the drive-in because of the scarcity of money (also it was fun to try to outwit the theater owners).

Each parking spot had a pole with a speaker attached. The speakers were exposed to the elements all the time. Frequently rain would get inside the speaker case and cause an electrical short-circuit which would render that speaker inoperable. Also sometimes people would forget to remove the speaker from the car window. The speaker would be torn from the pole when the car was moved.

About once a week the operator had to turn the sound on and go around the lot to check each speaker individually. Those that were missing were replaced and those that didn't work were carried inside to be repaired. The speaker check took about 2 to 3 hours, depending on how many had to be repaired.

Mr. Heffelmann opened the 231 Drive-In Theater on Meridian Street (which was U.S. Highway 231, then known as the Florida Short Route) just north of Winchester Road. When he saw how many people wanted to watch a movie from their car he jumped at the opportunity to serve even more people. He owned the property behind the 231 Drive-In all the way back to the newly-opened Memorial Parkway so he decided to build another drive-in there. It was named the Parkway Drive-In Theater. It too was welcomed as another means of entertainment. This theater was much nicer than the 231 Drive-In and began to show newer and better films. In addition the food items

offered became more varied and more tasty. The 231 continued to be successful by being more economical and showing older movies.

The Whitesburg Drive-In and the 72 Drive-In were built and were followed shortly after by the Woody's Drive-In on Meridian Street. Rhett Woody, the furniture store owner, broke the tradition of naming the theater after the street on which it was located, opting instead to place his own name on the theater. All of these were very nice and offered good food items which could be purchased.

Things rocked on for several years until people began to dress more casually in an anything-goes fashion and the drive-in theater was used less and less. The drop in attendance meant a drop in revenue and the drive-ins began to close their doors and darken their screens.

Eventually all the drive-ins were gone. Then someone got the idea of multiple theaters in

the same location. When that venture proved successful more and more mega-theaters were opened. The number of theaters in one building went from 2 to 4 and then all the way up to as many as 18. They were all really nice but the prices went up also. Now a night at the movies can run up to \$30 or \$40 very quickly.

Then along came the cable TV companies followed shortly by the satellite TV providers. They were joined by many other providers which I won't even try to name because there are just too many. Anything you could ever want to see can now be seen if you subscribe to one or more of these services.

What will be next? Who knows. Just be ready for anything. As with all things in this fast-moving world of ours everything is subject to the here-today-gone tomorrow concept. We had just as well get used to it. The only thing that will not change is change itself.



## Felix

HELLO, THE ARK NAMED ME FELIX. I LIKE THAT NAME DON'T YOU? I AM A BEAUTIFUL ORANGE AND WHITE KITTEN. I AM ONLY 7 MONTHS OLD. I WAS TRAPPED IN AN ANIMAL TRAP. THAT WAS VERY UPSETTING FOR ME. I HAVE A GREAT SENSE OF HUMOR, VERY OUT GOING AND KNOW WHAT I WANT IN LIFE AND HOPE THE ARK CAN FIND ME THE FAMILY THAT WILL MAKE IT HAPPEN. I WAS ABANDONED AND HAVE ENOUGH OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD. I WOULD LOVE TO SPEND A LOT OF MY TIME IN YOU LAP WATCHING MOVIES. I LOVED

THE MOVIE "PIG IN THE CITY" AND I REALLY LIKED THE MOVIE "THE BIRDS". ENOUGH ABOUT ME, HOW ABOUT YOU? DO YOU THINK YOU COULD PROVIDE ME WITH A NEW LOVING HOME FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE? IF THE ANSWER IS YES, COME TO THE ARK AND ASK FOR FELIX. THAT'S ME!

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# Love Omens and Superstitions



- A single or unmarried girl should never sit at the corner of a table. If a girl sits at the corner of the table she will not marry for at least seven more years.

- Yellow flowers signify the end of a relationship or betrayal. It is a sign of bad luck and giving them to your loved one should be avoided at all costs. Interestingly enough, it always should be an odd number of flowers in a bouquet. An even number of flowers is for funerals.

- If you accidentally step on your partner's foot, let them gently step on yours or the other way around. Thus you prevent a risk of a future conflict.

- A couple should not use the same towel to dry their hands or bodies. Doing that can bring major conflict.

- Never give a watch as a present to your partner. Watches and clocks are an omen of parting. It would also be a wise move not to give, as a present, a scarf (an omen of tears) or knives (omens of enemies).

- As a couple, do not bite the same apple and do not eat from the same spoon. It will cause arguments and bickering in the relationship.

- Do not plan your wedding in May. Even now, Russians still believe that marriages contracted in May are destined to be unhappy. The root of this belief is traced back to the pronunciation of May in Russian which is similar to "to suffer". Even in the West, many might be familiar with the saying-"Marry in May and rue the day"...

- If man lights cigar from lamp of any kind he will have a cheating wife.

- Sisters should never marry on the same day.

- It's unlucky to marry person with same first initial as yours.

- If bride leaps over the churchgate, she will lose her sense of humor.

- It is good for daughter to wear her mother's bridal shoes when marrying.

- You'll be a wealthy bride if your stocking has a hole in side.

- Blood on the gown is an omen of early death.

- It's unlucky for the bride to make her own gown.

- If the bride falls asleep before husband on wedding night, she will die first.

- If a couple marries on April Fools Day, the woman will be the dominant partner in the marriage.

- Those who wed when darkness falls will lose all children and die young.

- It is bad luck to see a pig on the way to the altar.

- For good luck, add an extra stitch to the wedding gown.

- If the bridesmaid stumbles while walking down the aisle, she will die an old maid.

- A bridesmaid that catches the bouquet is next to marry.

- To be a bridesmaid three times shows you won't marry. To be a bridesmaid seven times breaks the curse.

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**Glenda Huffstetler**

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# February Memories

*by Elizabeth Wharry*

I grew up in a neighborhood that was a mixed bag of European immigrants. February played an important part in our lives. Early February was especially important.

For those of us who were Irish and/or Catholic, February 2 (also known as Candlemas Day or groundhog day), was when the parish priests would bless the gardens. It didn't matter if one grew flowers, vegetables or grain...that garden was blessed. February 2 is midway between the Winter Solstice and the Spring Equinox. I remember there was an air of anticipation and excitement regarding this tradition. Although St. Brigid of Kildare (Ireland) has her feast day on February 1, here, it is celebrated on February 2. She is the patron saint of all that is related to farming and gardening.

February 3 brought another important and solemn tradition to the grade school I attended. It is the feast of St. Blaise. He was a physician in Armenia and is the patron saint of throat ailments. Traditionally, our throats were blessed by using two crossed candles. We kids thought it was quite exciting. As we got older, we used it as a wellspring of "horror" stories to scare our younger school mates. Of course, when the nuns caught wind of our silliness, their idea of punishment was to withhold this special blessing. That never happened.

February 14 was a special treat for us kids. We didn't have to wear our uniforms and we would have classroom parties. We would bring in a paper lunch bag and decorate it. Some of the classroom moms would bake cookies or cupcakes and decorate them with either red, pink, or white frosting. Sometimes, little heart shaped candies were used as well.

Somewhere around 2pm, we would put our bags on our desks and line up single file. We would drop our valentines into each bag. During the party, teachers would have a fun game for us kids. The two most popular games were bingo and

musical chairs. The prizes were small trinkets that parents donated. Musical chairs was always a bit chaotic as there were about 45 kids in a classroom. Somehow, we all had fun and no one got hurt.

About 45 minutes later, the clean up bell would ring, and we kids knew what to do. When the 3pm bell rang, we were dismissed. For those of us who rode a bus home, our drivers had some small sugary treats for us. We were admonished NOT to eat it on the way home. All sugared up, and nowhere to go!

Happy Valentine's day!

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# Love at First Sight

*And for a lifetime.*

*by Barry Key*

My story starts when Judy was sixteen, tall, dark, thin... a real beauty queen. She had three siblings, all female, one is a part of this story I'm going to tell. Her name was Sally and to my surprise, also a good looker, easy on the eyes. Judy and Sally went to Huntsville High, we had never met, I guess that's why.

Fred was Sally's beau and my good friend, they would go steady, off and on again. Fred came to me one afternoon late, "Sally's got a sister that's really great, how about setting you up on a blind date?"

What's she like was my reply, tell me the truth, don't tell me a lie. He said her name is Judy, she's real neat, one look, and "she will sweep you off your feet". What about her, how will you describe me? No problem, nothing to report, she has seen you on the basketball court.

We went to a drive-in movie to see a show, the evening went great so it didn't go slow. Too soon it was curfew time, this wonderful date had gone sublime. Driving home thoughts race through

my head, I kept thinking of what Fred had said, "She'll sweep you off your feet". It had finally happened to me, I'm too young, this can't be.

I knew Fred and Sally talked every night, would Judy tell Sally it was wrong or right? First time I had wished for Monday to come, I wanted to talk to Fred, my good chum. Would he tell me the truth, or play it dumb, or maybe Sally

wouldn't talk, she would be mum.

Monday at school I saw Fred in the hall, two thumbs up told it all. Sally said I was in, Judy wanted to see me again. From late '58 to November of '60, life was pretty nifty. We were together every weekend, I was in love like I had never been...not only was she my love, but my best friend!

One night after a date, we



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**"When I was kidnapped, my parents snapped into action. They rented out my room."**

***Rodney Dangerfield***



were standing on her parent's porch, it was getting late. My palms were sweaty, my legs unsteady, I wanted to pop the question, was she ready? To my surprise she said yes, but how would we pull off such a quest?

We needed a plan, an excuse to get away, Friday after Thanksgiving would be the day. We each told our parents we were going to see a friend, that we would be staying over for the weekend.

In Georgia we had heard people say, that you could get married right away. We traveled from town to town, but not a Pastor could be found, that would join us together.... we remained unbound.

It was late when we stopped alas, in Centre, Alabama to fill up with gas. What a nightmare, it just wasn't to be, after this will she still marry me. From out of nowhere a gentleman spoke to me, he said I live here, my name's Joe B. Joe B. was a true Godsend, he immediately became our good friend. We told him of our plan, how everything had gone wrong and now our marriage, we would have to prolong.

It sounds if your plan to wed is sincere, I can call a friend, she lives very near. His friend, her name I don't recall, was in charge of the courthouse, records and all. We met her at the courthouse in the middle of night, things were happening, will it turn out right? She handed me the marriage licenses with a grin, "How do you know Joe B., he says he's your friend." I took the licenses and returned her smile, "We have known Joe B. for a mighty long while." Joe B. said "Kids it's only half done, now we are going to really have some fun."

It was after mid-night when he called Brother Bob, said "Robert get out of bed I got you a job." When the Pastor saw me, he asked, "How old can you be?" I'm 18," answering with a sheepish quiet sigh, but Joe B broke in on my truthful reply. "He was 18 three years ago, 21 is the age the licenses show." The Pastor looked at me, and in his mind he knew it couldn't be, but the question was dropped without a plea.

Judy was 18 and of legal age, in the book of our lives, we were turning the most important page. Reverend Elliot, an elegant, sophisticated man, performed a beautiful ceremony, as we stood starry eyed, hand in hand. It was November 1960 that we were wed, the beginning of a lifelong marriage, that started with Sally and Fred.

Fifty eight years have come and gone, and our love for each other, still burns strong! We have shared these years with a mutual devotion, and cherished each other with celestial emotion. In life, all must end, but in our hearts we know, we will be together again.

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# When life was simple...



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