



No. 323
January 2020



Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

THE LEGENDARY HOME OF MOLLIE TEAL



Also in this issue: Memories of Lincoln School; Remembering Rex; The Squatter's Church; Sally Carter Legend; A Raccoon Story; Pet Tips; 1911 News and Much More!

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The Legendary Home of Mollie Teal

by Kay Cornelius

From its beginnings as a frontier town in the early 1800s, Huntsville, Alabama has always attracted many different kinds of people from a wide variety of places. Most, if not all, no doubt arrived in town with hopes and expectations that in Huntsville they would be free to make or add to their fortunes. While some failed and left in disappointment, many others stayed, succeeded and settled down to become civic minded citizens.

Over the years many of Huntsville's most successful entrepreneurs have generously contributed to the betterment of the growing city. One of the most unusual of these donors and certainly the most colorful was a woman named Mollie Teal, who in the latter part of the nineteenth century made her mark as the operator of the largest and most successful bordello in town. Before her death the sporting house

that she had run for a number of years was willed as a gift to Huntsville. The building then became the Huntsville City Infirmary, predecessor of the present Huntsville Hospital.

Very little is known about Mollie Teal's early life. According to her tombstone in Maple Hill Cemetery, she was born on August 20, 1852 and died in 1899. Her mother, Mary A. Smith, also buried in Maple Hill, died in 1872 at the age of 43. These facts suggest that either Mary Smith had followed her daughter to Huntsville or that Mollie Teal had joined her mother there at some earlier time. Mollie may have come to Huntsville from Memphis, where newspaper accounts there mentioned that one "M. Teal" had been arrested for prostitution.

Whether she ever worked for anyone else in Huntsville isn't known, but in June of 1893 Mollie paid \$300 for a large Victorian style house at the present-day corner of St. Clair and Gallatin Streets, where she set up her business. Less than a year later she was able to mortgage the house for \$ 1,900, a note which she later repaid in full.

Mollie's bordello is said to have resembled a boarding house, with many rooms opening from a central hallway. She wasn't the only madam in town, but with as many as fifteen to twenty girls housed there, hers was the largest op-

"I have a great make-up crew. They're the same people restoring the Statue of Liberty."

Bob Hope



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eration and reputedly the most popular. Mollie's establishment included a still in the backyard and the sale of her home brew may have further contributed to her financial success. Pictures exist of the house, but none of Mollie.

Older people in the community who remembered seeing her reported that Mollie Teal made a most attractive appearance and dressed in the latest fashion when she went out. No doubt she wore the wasp waisted, heavy bosomed styles of the time— leghorn-sleeved dresses with bustles and perhaps trains, sometimes with a feather or fur boa around her neck. Her costume would be completed by a large felt or straw hat, usually decorated with flowers or feathers and probably tilted at an angle.

Mollie Teal habitually took an afternoon ride about town in her elegant black Victoria carriage daintily holding a parasol to her shoulder.

Sometimes Mollie paraded her finely attired girls through the Huntsville streets as a form of advertisement for her es-

tablishment. The fact that they wore obvious makeup would have made their profession clear enough, but Mollie's presence also confirmed where they could be found.

One of Mollie's most famous outings occurred when she filled her Victoria carriage with some of her most attractive girls and made an unauthorized appearance in the town's Fourth of July parade. Needless to say the entourage created a sensation which was generally welcomed by the men of Huntsville, but perhaps understandably, not by their women.

Like the residents of the town's other sporting houses, Mollie's girls had regular medical checkups under a pragmatic system that privately regulated prostitution while publicly censuring it. Several times a year the local police or sheriff would dutifully raid the bordellos. These shows of official outrage served to appease the segments of the community who spoke out against the operation of the bordellos, but they had other benefits as well. The raids also netted fines, fees

and other legal charges for the city coffers. In addition, the authorities were able to make sure that any girl who might need a health check would receive it before being released from jail.

One of the most often told stories about these sporadic raids concerns a time that Huntsville's volunteer fire department was called to fight a blaze in one of the local bawdy houses. The firemen quickly put out the fire before much damage had been done, but they made no haste to leave the scene, "lest the flames should erupt again." While the firemen were still on the premises the police descended on the house in one of their routine raids and arrested them all. The volunteers then resigned their fire fighting posts in protest, leaving the city without fire protection for a while.

Apparently houses like Mollie's never lacked for either customers or residents, but among



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the girls there was a steady turnover. According to the late Miss Bessie Russell, a number of Mollie Teal's and the other madams' girls managed to leave their chosen profession and marry into Huntsville families. Such instances horrified the "good people" of the town. They might grudgingly tolerate the presence of Mollie's business as a necessary evil, but they expected its practitioners to keep away from the rest of the townspeople.

Others of the girls probably grew restless and moved on, perhaps in search of whatever elusive dreams had brought them here in the first place. However, Mollie Teal herself stayed on in Huntsville and continued to prosper over the years, acquiring real and personal property, jewelry and cash. In 1898 at the age of 47, perhaps having some premonition that she wouldn't live much longer. Mollie made out her Last Will and Testament.

Although Mollie Teal had relatives, perhaps some who were even then living in Huntsville, she left nothing to them in her will. The immediate beneficiary of Mollie's property was a woman named Mollie Greenleaf, who could have been her personal friend, housekeeper or loyal servant.

After the usual request that her "Just debts and funeral expenses" should be paid, the second clause of Mollie Teal's will stated that she wished to give Mollie Greenleaf during her lifetime "my house and lot, said lot occupied by me now as

a residence... together with all household and kitchen furniture."

Another clause specified that at the death of Mollie Greenleaf, "it is my will that the city of Huntsville accept said house and lot for the use and benefit of the public schools or for a city hospital, as the city authorities may elect and the household and kitchen furniture be sold for cash and the proceeds be used towards buying a library for use of said public schools." Then Mollie requested that "all my other personal property be sold for cash by my executors and the proceeds to be donated to the public schools."

No one will ever know for certain why Mollie Teal chose to leave anything to the town in which she had lived for so many years. One story quotes Mollie as saying on her deathbed, "I've done much to ruin the young men of Huntsville. Now I want to help." However, it is debatable whether Mollie ever felt any such pangs of conscience or remorse about her contribution to the city's morals. Mollie Teal died only a year

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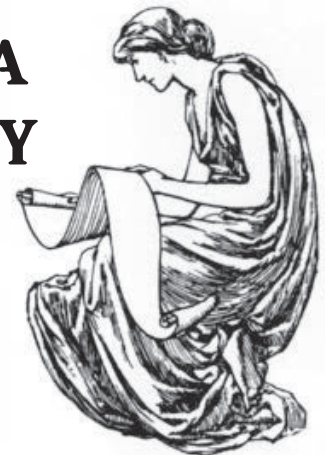
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Jack Sublett, Athens

after her will had been written and apparently Mollie Greenleaf passed on to her reward only a year or two afterward. At any rate, before any of Mollie Teal's property could be disposed of under the terms of her will, it was challenged in court by 'John W. Smith, et al' claiming to be Mollie Teal's "heirs at law and next of kin."

In a tangled web of legal suits, the Smiths claimed in Chancery Court that Mollie Teal's bequest to the "City of Huntsville" was void because it should have been addressed to "The Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Huntsville." When the plaintiffs (the Smiths) won their case, the defendants (the city of Huntsville) appealed and the decision was reversed by the Alabama Supreme Court in a ruling made February 28, 1903. However, the Smiths made one more attempt to gain some benefit from Mollie's estate by filing an Application for Rehearing. They argued that since the money in the bank was not specifically mentioned, it should not go to the city of Huntsville.

In an opinion dated July 9, 1903 the Alabama Supreme Court ruled that the heirs were entitled to the money Mollie Teal had on hand at the time of her death, which was deposited in two banks in Huntsville. Presumably the proceeds from the sale of her other personal property would, however, still be given to the city as Mollie Teal had designated in her will.

On August 5, 1903 the Huntsville Daily Mercury quoted City Attorney Murphy as reporting that the contest of the will of the late Mollie Teal had been settled and the city was to get Mollie Teal's house and property.

The gentlemen who ran the city of Huntsville now had Mollie Teal's house and lot, but they found themselves at a loss to know what to do with it. Mollie's primary request, that the property be used as a school and that the proceeds from her personal goods be used to supply a library for the same, could not be honored. The citizens of Huntsville might have been able to tolerate Mollie Teal's presence and profession in her lifetime, but even to think of having their children going to school in or checking out books from a building that had been a bordello too far exceeded the bounds of propriety to be considered.

Mollie's will had specified that the city was to get the house for use "of the public schools, or a city hospital," As such, it could not legally be sold.

Into this dilemma stepped some doctors' wives and other civic minded women who had long advocated the establishment of a place of treatment for the sick in the city of Huntsville. Since such a use as that not only

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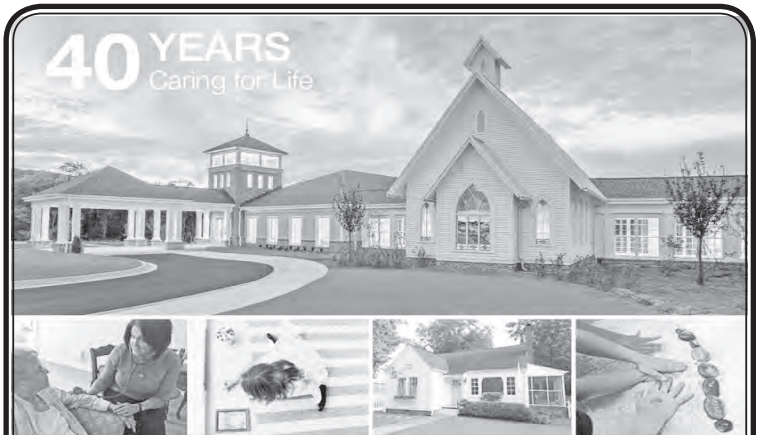
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"Just because you're paranoid does NOT mean you're not being followed."

Jerry McNeil, Woodville

met the legal terms of Mollie Teal's will, but also filled a genuine need, the city fathers decided that the property she had willed to Huntsville should be utilized as a hospital. The large house with the shady past was then extensively remodeled and opened for use in 1904 as the "Huntsville City Infirmary." In addition to being Huntsville's first hospital, it also housed a school of nursing. Both remained in operation until 1926, when Huntsville Hospital opened.

Throughout the years, the Huntsville City Infirmary's occupants were quite aware of its former history. A woman who trained at the school of nursing in the building recalled that the front screen door would sometimes slam and hook itself shut, at which time it would jokingly be said that "Miss Mollie" had locked the door and was "checking on the customers."

After Huntsville Hospital opened, the infirmary building was sold and soon fell upon hard times. Becoming ever more dilapidated, the building in turn saw use as a cheap boarding house, a "shot


house," and it is said, eventually reverted to its original purpose although not in a manner that Miss Mollie would have tolerated or approved of in her day, before it eventually burned.

Although Mollie Teal has been gone many years, tales about her still persist and she has never been completely forgotten. Even to this day, her grave, located near the Confederate soldiers' section of Maple Hill Cemetery, is periodically decorated with fresh flowers. Who brings them no one knows. Perhaps it is someone who thinks that Mollie Teal should be thanked in some small way for adding a splash of color to Huntsville during her lifetime and then giving part of the city's wealth back after her death.



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The Tragedy of the Mary Francis

by Anna Lee

In 1910, when she was five years old, Elizabeth's parents took her for a boat ride on the Black Warrior River near Tuscaloosa. Every year a wealthy banker named Sam Alston used his 30-foot-long motor yacht to take boys and girls for pleasure rides on the river. The boat was called the Mary Francis and she could hold 30 passengers.

The previous year, Elizabeth's parents had told her she had to wear Sunday-best clothes, to show respect for the banker. This year, they allowed her to wear everyday clothes so that she could play afterward for the rest of the day. The family arrived early so that Elizabeth could be in the first group of excited, happy passengers. Her father said, "Too bad there's no room for an old man like me!" He liked to say things like that because it made Elizabeth giggle and say, "Oh, Daddy, you're not old!"

On that beautiful Saturday in June, Elizabeth walked the decks, inspected the inside cabin and waved to people as the boat passed. The boat went to the point where the Black Warrior River joined the North River and turned back. Afterward, Elizabeth and her family watched as the boat left again and came back, then as it made a third trip.

Finally it was time for the fourth and final trip. As the last group of children and some of the mothers prepared to board the boat, the banker and his captain counted the waiting people and realized there were far more than the stated capacity of 30. The banker announced he would count two children as one adult and he allowed everyone to board.

The crew cast off, heading upstream, with the banker aboard and his captain at the helm. On shore, Elizabeth listened to the excited sounds of those on the boat. Then someone yelled, "Look over there!" People on the boat moved quickly from the far side over to the side facing the shore.



Just then the captain made a quick turn, causing the crowd to be thrown onto the rail. The boat began to roll over. When the deck hit the water the boat capsized completely. People on the deck fell into the river. Those inside the cabin were trapped.

Bystanders quickly became rescuers, swimming to those who struggled, grasping at those with life jackets, trying to

reach those clinging to the hull. Small boats rushed out, and then a motor boat towed the hull to shore. Men brought axes and picks, trying to chop holes to rescue the people trapped inside. One man carried a small girl the same size as Elizabeth out of the water and put her down on the ground. The girl looked at Elizabeth and cried, "My mama will be so vexed! I got my new dress all wet!"

On that midsummer day, 27 passengers drowned. Most were children. Most were buried in Greenwood Cemetery in Tuscaloosa. It was said that the banker paid for all of the funerals.



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IT WAS THE LAW

*from The Weekly
Democrat, 1880*



- No fireworks were allowed in the city in 1860 without the consent of the mayor, who specified when and where they were to be exhibited.

- A person was permitted to burn out a stove pipe or chimney flue only when the roof was wet from rain or covered with snow.

- A fine of from \$10 to \$50 was assessed upon any individual who carried an unguarded

candle or lamp into a stable, or who kept ashes in barrels, boxes or wooden vessels of any kind.

- All persons attending a fire, and not a member of any company, were required to assist the firemen, if called upon, or pay a fine of \$10.

- All businesses except hotels, boarding houses and apothecaries were required to close on Sundays. Barbers could keep their shop open until noon.

- A fine of \$1 was assessed upon any person who bought goods or commodities of any sort on Sunday. An exception was made in the case of sickness or necessity.

- No sports, public exercises, exhibition or game was allowed on Sunday. Violators were subject to a \$5 fine. A similar penalty was required of any person who loaded or unloaded a wagon, or drove horses, cattle, sheep or swine through the streets, except in case of necessity, on that day.

- If a person erected a frame building on the Public Square, or within 300 feet of its boundaries, he was fined \$50 for each day the structure was allowed to stand, either in process or after completed.

- A tax of \$1 per head was levied for each hog more than six months old and for each litter of pigs found at large in the city limits.

- A tax of .50 cents per head was levied annually on dogs.

- Kite-flying was banned as a misdemeanor.

- Bathing in the Big Spring branch within less than 300 yards below the dam, between the hours of 4 a.m. and 10 p.m., constituted another misdemeanor.

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Around Alabama - 1911

Girl 5 years old Chews Tobacco in Court - Birmingham

Grace Murphy, a five year old child, while sitting on the lap of her father in the criminal court, where he is on trial for the killing of J.T. Myrick in the western part of the county several months ago, startled spectators by taking a big chew of tabacco, which was offered her by her parents.

The mother of the child, who was sitting just to the rear of the husband and father in the courtroom, with all five children of the pair, admitted that her little daughter was used to chewing tobacco and did not think anything of it. The little girl herself laughed when she heard inquiry being made about her chewing.

The father took the big chunk of tabacco out of his pocket and deliberately handed it to the little girl, who bit off a piece and began chewing on it.

The Death of Col. Cyrus F. Sugg - Huntsville

This community was shocked when it read in Sunday's issue of the Daily Times that Col. Cyrus Sugg had dropped dead at his home on West Clinton Street. In the death of this splendid man Huntsville, in fact the whole state, has lost one of its foremost citizens and a business man and financier of recognized ability.

Sugg was an honest man, a good man, and was known for his square dealings with his fellow man and a business sagacity that was appreciated by all. His death is a distinct blow to our beautiful city but lessons we learned from his progressive efforts will aid in future growth. To the good wife, who is bowed in sorrow, we extend heartfelt sympathy.

Says His Friends Drugged his Liquor

W. F. Canterbury who claims to be here from Memphis, and who came here yesterday and registered at the men's boarding house on East Clinton Street, complained to the police that he had been robbed of \$200. He claimed that he went out early in the evening with a party of friends and alleges knockout drops were administered to him.

When he awoke, he found himself in his room at the boarding house and his roll of money missing. Bloodhounds trailed the supposed robbers from the boarding house to the railroad yards and it is thought the thieves have gone to Atlanta.



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Why do people keep running over a string with their vacuum cleaner, then pick it up, examine it, and put it back down to try it one more time?

Fooling the Revenuers

by Jim Harris

We lived in a little house on the Cabiness Farm on Harrison Cove Road about a half mile or so from the intersection of Gurlley Pike, or if you were going the other way, Maysville Road. There was a little church building next door and a cemetery across the road. We lived there two years.

Every weekend during the two summers we lived there, an older couple passed by on their way into Harrison Cove to their "country cottage" which was located at the upper end of the Grove and about a quarter mile up the side of the mountain.

The place was a small farm that had been reclaimed by the mountain long before this couple came to possess it. One of them had inherited it, and they were determined to reclaim it. I visited the place several times when we lived on the Houk Farm a mile or so further up in the Cove.

It had a fenced garden. The fence was overgrown with honeysuckle, but you could still tell the fence was there. The orchard still had a few fruit trees standing. There were several springs that ran year round near the house.

The house was originally a one-room log house, but had a room built on some time later. The addition had no floor, though. The road to the farm,

overgrown with vegetation, still had visible ruts. It appeared to have been heavily used at one time.

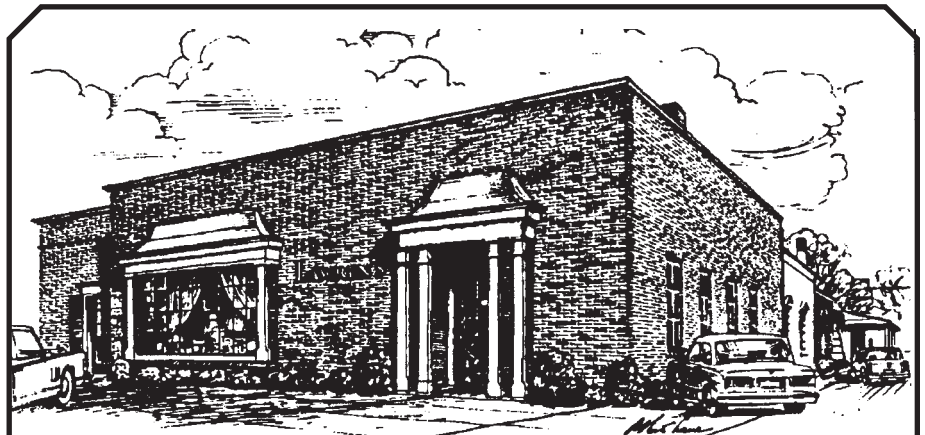
Late in the second summer the couple stopped by to rest; it was a good two mile walk from their place to our home. This became a weekly ritual and, evidently, we had gained their trust, for this visit was a shade different. After a few minutes the man pulled a pint jar from his pocket and offered my Dad a drink. He refused it but the man told this story about the contents of the jar.

He had put a floor in the side room of his cabin to make it a kitchen with an old cast iron cook stove. Now the kitchen was on the downhill side of the house and the floor was elevated up off the ground. He built a still under the kitchen

floor with the flue running up through the floor and into the flue of the cook stove.

Revenuers came calling one day trying to find his still. Earlier that day, he had killed a copperhead snake and thrown it across the garden fence - remember that the fence was overgrown with honeysuckle vines. The Government men had sticks they used to separate and lift vegetation so they could see the ground. When they stumbled across the snake they began shouting and hitting at it with their sticks - they just about beat that fence to death before they left.

They never found his still nor his supply of moonshine. All the time he had his liquor in Mason jars in the honeysuckle vines directly beneath that snake.



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Mary Casen, Florence



As I stood on Calhoun Street in Old Town last week watching the historic Kelly home burn up, my heart sank, thinking of all the memories going up in flames that can't be replaced, especially the family pictures and heirlooms. Tears rolled down my cheeks. It was a relief knowing no one lost their lives and two of their dogs were saved.

It reminded me to get out my camera and take pictures of all four rooms and closets. Put them in my safety deposit box. Some things can be replaced, and some can't. I would hate to lose my wedding pictures, pictures of my father coming home from World War II. Or lose all the love letters he wrote to my mother telling her of the horrors of the war and fighting with General Patton and saving his candy bars to give to the children in Paris.

I know how important planning can be, since a few years back at 12:35 AM, our house caught fire from lightning.

“Let’s face it, traveling just isn’t that much fun anymore when all the historical sites are younger than you are.”

Bobbie Peterson, Madison

Even though we were taught in school and our children were taught as well, when smoke detectors start blaring, and the upstairs has that orange glow, and smoke fills the air, panic can set in really fast especially just after midnight, screaming and telling everyone to get up, where is my purse with the keys and where are the pets.

Finally, even with my mouth covered with the upper part of my nightgown and crouched low to the ground all that was important. All that came to my mind was GET OUT - GET OUT.

Very important that you have fire extinguishers and know how to use them and where they are. The next day we realized there was a fire extinguisher next to the door where the fire started. In our panicked state, we failed to even notice it. Most people WILL panic when this happens.

What saved us from having a total loss when our phone system was knocked out was when we moved into our home I insisted on an excellent security system. When the smoke detectors went off, the Fire Department was called immediately. They were at our house before I could run across the street and back. The fire was extinguished quickly.

Every minute counts when trying to get family and pets out of the house, so please talk to your family about what to do in case of a fire and make an escape plan - it could very well save your lives.

So make that your New Year’s resolution. I know I will, better to be prepared than sorry.

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The Cat - A Minor Miracle

by Ted Roberts



She had definitely lost her shape. Sagging, bulging, her career as a model was doomed to dreamland. So was her career as a tree climber. I made this observation as I noticed that her social life, which centered around a large Sycamore, had kicked up a notch or two. Our formally deserted backyard was now a playground for two black felines, a ragged black and white fellow who needed a trim, and another long-haired black playboy - the kind everybody names "Midnight". The poodle next door tried to be a voyeur, but they ran him off.

I refer to our cat - her social life. It was soon after those backyard romps that her tummy sagged and her saddlebag sides ballooned. Clearly, she was on the verge of increasing the world's cat population by one.

I locked the back door and grounded the cat. Seems like a couple of months after - after the gradual ballooning - that I was sitting on the couch and there she was proudly staring at me, demanding my attention. She had deflated.

With the help of my wife and my deep knowledge of mammalian sexual behavior, I solved the problem. Somewhere in the disorderly, 3-bathroom shack in which we live was the litter of fetal felines that had puffed the cat's belly. But where? They definitely were not on tables, chairs, or mantelpiece. They weren't even hiding in the heaps of dirty clothes that quaintly decorated the den and each of the bedrooms.

Without running amuck through the house, I put myself in the cat's brain. Hmmm, cats are not domesticated creatures. A streak of the wild still flows in their bloodstream. They worry

about predators. For all they knew, our supper plates were loaded with kitten in Marengo Sauce. Words like hidden, dark and concealed leaped into my mind.

Bam - in the bedroom closet, buried among the castoffs on the floor (nah, a blue shirt Won't work with red pants) was a living, breathing, lump of furry things. They evidently loved my wardrobe. As the eye analyzed the lump, it detected sixteen feet, four heads, and four tails totaling twenty-four kitten parts, which divided by the right numbers equals four kittens. Is there some mysterious kinship between cats and dirty clothes?

Then Mama, who was taking a break, strolled back into the nursery. She looked up at me as if to say, "how'd you find 'em?" She didn't seem to mind my presence as long as I kept my hands in my pockets and didn't have a Pit Bull at my side.

She lay down beside the four fur balls in such an exposed position such that each milkmaid or milkman (who could tell the difference) had access to a spigot. Now the fur ball was four separate creatures. They went for it like the guys at the corner bar went for draught beer. And

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I heard squeaky, little sounds like; "I saw it first" - "that one's mine" - "you're squashing my leg".

Mama tried to help by nudging this one or that one with her head. For the first time in her life she had an assignment, responsibility, unrelated to her personal survival.

She must have wondered why none of her backyard pals mentioned this result of her backyard carousing. Some invisible switch called motherhood, deep within her, turned itself on. She seemed resigned to her maternal destiny though she'd sneak away, I noticed, every time they dozed off - usually to load up on water and cat food, which somehow was converted - we don't know the precise mechanics - into milk for her new dependents. Some for her, some for them. Oh, a scientist who studies feline physiology - even your neighborhood vet - can deliver a thirty minute speech on the transformation of cat food and water into milk for kittens and its partitioned allotment between mother and child, but words often mask our lack of understanding. And we can't do it in the lab any better than the chemical processes that function in the body of the cat. Just another one of nature's miracles.

Anyhow, I hear no complaints from the four boarders about meals, so they must be happy.

The miracle of replenishing the world of cats continues. Surely, there's room for four more.

"When you are young, women will tell you 'Look but don't touch.' As you get older, you hear just the opposite."

Bob Manfield, Arab



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Grave Surprises

by Anna (Gene) Clift Chesnut

When my mother died in April of 1987 I made several trips back to Huntsville from Seattle to settle her estate. Being an only child the responsibility fell solely on me. On this particular trip I stayed for about six weeks, as I had to decide what I wanted to keep and send back to Seattle from her home on Eustis Avenue and what I wanted to either sell or give away. Before I made any rash decisions, however, I called a moving company to assess the situation, as moving a big load from Huntsville to Seattle was very expensive. The estimator looked at the hundreds of books my mother had collected over the years and said "Do you really want to send all these books? That will be a definite added expense to the furniture you have decided to take with you". "Oh, dear!" I thought, "Maybe I do not need all those books."

So I started the process of "cleaning out the attic" so to speak for my garage/estate sale. I say garage sale because I, literally, cleaned out of the garage hundreds of old Life magazines. I went through each one looking for ones that might have Shirley Jones or Debbie Reynolds on the covers as my husband was having an Osteoporosis Symposium in Seattle in the near future and one or the other of those two ladies was to be the invited guest speaker.

Sure enough, I found one with Shirley Jones on a carousel (she having sung the main female part, Julie Jordan, in the movie "Carousel") and another of Debbie Reynolds in a ticker tape parade in NYC. I would be prepared with autograph material! (In fact, Shirley Jones did come and I presented her with the magazine to sign. She said "Where in the world did you get this?" with surprise on her face. "Cleaning out my mother's garage after she died" I replied. I did not tell her how many magazines I had to go through to find that particular one!

As well, in the evening at my mother's, I would cull through her extensive library deciding what books I wanted to keep. One book that came to my immediate attention was a biography of F. Scott Fitzgerald called *Invented Lives* by James R. Mellow published in 1985. I thought that would be in-

teresting to read since Fitzgerald went to Princeton and married Zelda Sayre, a Montgomery, Alabama girl, and my husband went to Princeton and married me, a Huntsville, Alabama girl. So each night I went to bed reading this book,

I had no idea that Fitzgerald had a passionate love for Ginevra King, whom he met in 1915, and for whom he pined for many years. In fact, he saw her years later in Hollywood when he was script writing, according to James Mellow. She was from a wealthy Chicago family and was probably the inspiration for Daisy in Fitzgerald's book, "The Great Gatsby".

Ginevra broke up with him in 1917 and became involved with another man, William Mitchell, whom she married. In August 1916, Fitzgerald wrote in his

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journal something probably said to him by Ginevra's father: "Poor boys shouldn't think of marrying rich girls" and Ginevra's family looked on Fitzgerald as being a poor boy. William Mitchell was from a wealthy Chicago family. "Ginevra is arguably the most important romance Fitzgerald ever experienced, more than Zelda" (his wife) said James L W. West III, a professor of English at Penn State University and editor (1994-2019) of the ongoing edition of Fitzgerald's works published by Cambridge University Press. "He lost her, but his ideal of her remained throughout his life."

Fitzgerald married Zelda in 1920 after the success of his first book "This Side of Paradise". She refused his first proposal of marriage due to his inferior social standing as she, also, came from a wealthy family. He obviously did not take seriously Ginevra's father's advice about a poor boy marrying a rich girl and he portrayed this dilemma in "This Side of Paradise", in spades. His life with Zelda was tempestuous, fraught with alcoholism and violence and somewhat sad at times due to their constant need for more and more money to live the life-style that Zelda wanted.

Years later in 2003, back in Ellensburg, Washington at our farm, I had a phone call from our neighbor, asking "Do you take the NY Times"? "No, why?" I asked.

"There is an article in it about my Aunt Ginny and F. Scott Fitzgerald" he said. "Who was your Aunt Ginny?" I asked to which he replied "Ginevra King." "Oh my goodness," I said. "I know all about Ginevra King. She was your aunt?" "Yes" my neighbor said. "She was married to Uncle Bill, my mother's brother."

I did not even have to ask who Uncle Bill was. Of course, it was William Mitchell!

One never knows what surprises will arise from the grave with regard to future experiences from just simply "cleaning out the attic".



My Unpredictable Cat

by Norma McNeal, Wildwood, FL


Hello to all Cat lovers. I want to introduce you to Missy, a beautiful gray tuxedo cat that I rescued two years ago.

I had a beautiful long haired orange tabby for 17 years. He was the love of my life, but then he crossed the Rainbow Bridge.

In February I had a 90th birthday and received a new TV for my bedroom. Missy had been sleeping with me, but once she saw the new TV she wouldn't even come into the bedroom.

However, a few weeks ago I put a new quilt on the bed. She tiptoed in and carefully inspected the quilt. She proceeded to lie down on it and has slept with me ever since. She even watches TV with me now. Who knew that cats are so unpredictable? We know we'll never understand them but we love them just the same!

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Heard On the Street

by **Cathey Carney**



Did you find the hidden candle from the December issue? I put it on p. 43 in the Huntsville High Class of '66 birthday wish to **Oscar Llerena**, left hand border. Many people called but the first was **Allison Click** of Huntsville. Allison is from a family of 8 children and she is the only girl! Her proud parents are **MD and Judy Smith**. Allison is a realtor for Leading Edge and loves to teach painting. She is married to the handsome **Michael Potter**. Congratulations to Allison.

The Photo of the Month from December was **Joy McKee** of the City of Huntsville Green Team. She has done so much in cleaning up this city and making it beautiful. Our first caller to guess the picture was **Jan Wil-**

liams of Brownsboro. Congratulations to you Jan!

One of my favorite customer care reps at BB&T bank on Church Street is **Ianthia Bridges**, a beautiful lady inside and out. She has her 50th birthday on Jan.10th and we wish her a happy happy birthday. It's really not possible because she looks 30! **Adriana Lane** works there as well and I love catching up with her, she has a wedding anniversary (16th) with husband **James Lane** on Jan. 20. It's amazing how fast 20 years can go by, I was married to **Tom** for 23 years and it seems so short a time in many ways. Congratulations to **Adriana and James!**

Remember that the **American Legion Posts** in Madison County will be hosting the 83rd Annual High School Oratorical Contest in the City Hall on Jan. 25 at 10am. Public is invited and it's a free event. Huntsville's Post 237 will be represented as well.

I was talking with an 14 year old young man recently and he was telling me how many of his friends were just sad all the time and had little energy to get up and move. He said his mom decided one day to take him to a local nursing home and just visit with some of the residents there. Some of them could speak with him and told him of their memories, others couldn't. Most all of them had smiles on their faces when he spoke to them. He said

it made him feel good to think he was bringing some happiness to the people and hearing what they had to say. As a result, he felt good about himself.

Not all young kids would want to do this, but it made me think of so many other agencies in town who could sure use some help. Another good example is the **North Alabama Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Asso.** who go monthly to the **Downtown Rescue Mission** to help serve food to the people who live there. I think we get so wrapped up in ourselves and our troubles we don't realize there are people out there who have it a lot worse than we do. Anytime you help someone else, it gives you a boost as well.

If you have any ideas of taking some sort of action to make yourself feel better and helping others at the same time, send them to us here at Old Huntsville. Volunteer work is great but you may have an idea we haven't thought about!

If you'd like to read more about **Mollie Teal** and her importance to Huntsville, there's a great book written by local au-

Photo of The Month

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thor **Catherine Knowles** called "White Dove, Adventures of Mollie Teal." I've heard it's really fascinating!

Jean Ayers was the smiling lady you'd always see when you went into Ayers Farmers Market, for over 50 years. She always asked how you were doing, and told you to be sure and come back. It was with sadness that we learned she had passed away on Nov. 21 at her home in New Market. There are some people who are just so well known and loved in ur city and she was one of them. Jean Ayers is survived by her daughter **Susan Ayers Kelley**, her son **Jason** and his wife **Christa Kelley**, grandson **Jessy** and wife **Melanie Kelley**, two great grandchildren **Leighton** and **Livia Kelley** and Goddaughter **Debora Lepley**. There is no doubt this sweet lady will be missed always.

I have hidden a pencil in this issue, because when you make your New Year's resolutions you might want to erase them right? If you find the **tiny pencil** and are first to call, you win a year's subscription to the magazine! See if you can find it and call me.

Susan Coulter wanted to wish her sweet daughter Happy Birthday on Jan. 16th. **Brie Coul-**

ter Clark of Muscle Shoals is mom to three feisty boys so we know there'll be a party somewhere!

Do you like on-line auctions? I recently heard of a good one that is based out of Fayetteville, TN. You register online at www.vanmassey.com and may just discover a treasure.

Many will be surprised to know that **Tallulah Bankhead** was born here in Huntsville on Jan. 31st in 1902. She lived at the historic Schiffman building on East Side Square downtown. She went on to become an international film and stage star. She was a quirky, intelligent, outspoken and beautiful lady.

Be sure and read the story in this issue by **Lee Burkett** about the Huntsville eating establishments he remembers from many years ago, there are hundreds of them! So many of you will remember if you're an oldtimer in Huntsville.

Lots of people, young and old, are feeling the pains of arthritis and there have got to be some good tips out there that we need to publish. I know we have featured lots of remedies as this affliction has been with us for as long as people have been on earth. If you have tried something that really helped you we

need to share that. Please send your ideas to the magazine for us to publish for our readers. All contact info is on page 3 of each magazine.

The American Legion Post 237 in Huntsville was honored to have **Mike Vaccaro** serve as bugler in the Honor Guard for the past 20 years. Col. Vaccaro passed away at 92 years old on Nov. 5. He served our country in the Air Force, working closely with Apollo astronauts. In addition to being a lifelong Legion member he was so proud of his time as Vice President of the Rescue Me Volunteer Group, whose mission is to unite rescued shelter animals with veterans suffering with PTSD, TBI and other conditions. **John Carson** will be writing a story about his dear friend. Mike leaves sons **Paul Vaccaro** and **Mark Vaccaro**, daughter **Michelle Kinsella**, four grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren.

After the holidays it seems the event calendars slow down but be sure and check the following websites to get info on upcoming happenings:

www.huntsville.org

www.ourvalleyevents.com

www.rocketcitymom.com

Wishing you a Happy New Year and adventures to come!

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New Year Recipes

Hot Sugar/Cinnamon Muffins

- 1-1/2 c. all-purpose flour
- 1/2 c. sugar
- 1/4 t. salt
- 2-1/4 t. baking powder
- 1/4 t. nutmeg
- 5 T. butter
- 1 large egg, beaten
- 1/2 c. milk
- Sugar & Cinnamon

Mix your dry ingredients in a large bowl, then add the butter, egg and milk. Mix well and bake in small greased muffin tins for 12 to 15 minutes at 450 degrees. Remove from oven, while still warm roll in melted butter, then in a mixture of 1/2 cup sugar and 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon. Wonderful on those cold mornings!

Spinach Artichoke Dip

- 2 - 8 oz. packages cream cheese, softened
- 1 - 10 oz. package frozen chopped spinach, thawed and drained

- 3 T. butter, melted
 - 1 - 14 oz. can artichoke hearts, quartered
 - 1 t. garlic powder
 - 1/2 t. pepper
 - 1 - 6 oz. can water chestnuts, diced
- Combine all ingredients in a medium baking dish. Bake at 325 degrees for 20 minutes. Serve with tortilla chips.

Hot Brown Rice

- 3 green onions, chopped
 - 1 stick butter, melted
 - 1 c. rice
 - 1 small can mushrooms
 - 1 can beef consomme (or beef broth)
 - 1 can water
 - 1/2 t. each oregano, thyme and garlic powder
 - Salt and pepper to taste
- Preheat your oven to 325 degrees. Spray a 2 quart baking dish with cooking spray. Add all ingredients and bake for an hour. Stir after 30 minutes, cover for the balance of the baking time.

Chicken Supreme

- 3 chicken breasts, cooked
 - 1 can Cream of Mushroom soup
 - 1 can Cream of Chicken soup
 - 1 can Cream of Celery soup
 - 1 c. sour cream
 - 8 oz. pkg. Pepperidge Farm Herb dressing
- Cut the cooked chicken in chunks. Mix with soups and sour cream. Place in a baking dish and prepare the dressing as directed on the package. Put the dressing on top of the chicken mixture and bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes or until brown and bubbly.

Barley & Mushroom Casserole

- 5 T. butter
- 2 onions, diced
- 4-1/2 c. sliced fresh mushrooms
- 1-1/2 c. barley
- 1 t. dried thyme
- 1/2 t. salt
- Black pepper to taste

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4-1/2 c. vegetable stock, boiling

Preheat your oven to 350 degrees and melt the butter in a large skillet over medium heat.

Add all ingredients except the vegetable stock. Stir and saute til the mushrooms begin to brown, about 10 minutes.

Scrape mixture into a deep 2-quart casserole dish, pour in the stock. Cover and bake for 70 minutes, and all liquid is absorbed. Barley should be slightly crunchy - if too hard and liquid absorbed, add a bit of water and cook 10 minutes longer.

Chicken Chalupas

- 12 small flour tortillas
 - 4 large boness chicken breasts, cooked and cubed
 - 2 cans cream of chicken soup
 - 2 cans chopped green chiles
 - 1 pt. sour cream
 - 1/4 lb. Jack cheese, grated
 - 3/4 lb. Cheddar cheese, Sharp, shredded
 - Green onion tops, diced
 - 1 can sliced black olives
 - 1 small onion, diced fine
 - 1 T. garlic powder
 - Paprika
- Combine the soup, chiles, diced onions, some of the green onion, garlic powder, sour cream, olives and half each of the cheeses.

Set aside about 2 cups of this mixture. Add chicken to the rest of it. Place about 3 heaping tablespoons of the chicken mixture on a flour tortilla and roll up. Secure with a toothpick and repeat with remaining chicken mixture.

Place these rolls on a shallow greased 9x13-inch baking dish. Pour remaining sauce over the top and sprinkle with remaining cheese, green onion and paprika. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes.

Walnut Pudding

- 2 eggs
 - 1 c. powdered sugar
 - 1 T. all-purpose flour
 - 1 t. baking powder
 - 1 c. broken walnuts
 - 1 c. dates, pitted
- Beat your eggs, sugar, flour and baking powder together, thoroughly. Stir in the walnuts and dates. Pour this batter into a buttered baking dish and set in a pan of boiling water. Bake for 30 minutes at 350 degrees. Let chill, serve with whipped cream.

Brown Bread Pudding

- 1 c. brown bread pieces
- 2 c. milk
- 3 eggs
- 2 T. maple sugar

2 egg whites

1 T. sugar

2 T. whipping cream

Soak bread pieces in half a cup of the milk for about 20 minutes, then make a custard of the rest of the milk, eggs, and maple sugar by just cooking them together over medium heat til thickened.

Pour it hot over the bread. Beat egg whites with a tablespoon of the sugar and the cream. Fold into the custard, bake at 350 for 30 minutes.

Chocolate Gravy

1 c. sugar

3 T. cocoa

1 c. milk

1/2 to 1 stick butter

Mix the sugar and cocoa together. Then add milk; mix well. Put in a deep pan and bring to a boil.

Add butter; boil until it gets as thick as you want. Great over biscuits!



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GOOD INTENTIONS

by Al Dean

The road to you know where is paved with you know what. This is especially true of my attempts to keep New Year's resolutions. So, this year, in accordance with guidelines issued by the Director of Domestic Tranquility, overseer of family resolutions, and in the spirit of scaling Domestic Tranquility's summit, I took the road less traveled.

My hope was that in 2020 I would follow through on one or two. With cautious optimism I submitted the following for her approval.

I, Al Dean, husband, father, grandfather, great grandfather, being of sound mind and body (this one she took exception to immediately) do hereby resolve:

1. *In 2020 I will not take up skydiving.*
2. *In 2020 I will give up broccoli.*
3. *In 2020 I will invest only in fishing lures that attract fish instead of fishermen.*
4. *In 2020 I will change my pipe tobacco to a blend that smells like chocolate chip cookies (instead of what the Director refers to as smoldering rubber).*
5. *In 2020 I will renew my library card and make a sincere effort to stay out of used book stores.*

The Director of Domestic Tranquility's response is hereby entered into the public record.

Number 1: You weren't going to do that anyway. You won't go higher than two floors in an elevator.

Number 2: You don't like broccoli.

Number 3: You've already invested too much in fishing tackle and didn't eat either of the fish you caught last year.

Number 4: You really ought to stop smoking that silly pipe. You look like Popeye.

Number 5: You could stay out of used book stores if you just read the free books on my Kindle.

In response to her dissatisfaction in what she deduced was a frivolous approach to self-improvement and disregard for Domestic Tranquility, I protested, "Pshaw!" It was, however, her decision that in 2020 we would resolve to lose weight.

I winced.

Having suffered through the burdens of youthful peer pressure and the desire to wrap a belt around my waist that wasn't ten inches longer than my inseam, I now preferred to relax with a box of cookies or a bag of M & M's while lying supine in a recliner



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Smitty Jones, Arab

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watching reruns of Andy Griffith and Matlock.

With a vote of one to nothing, the Director's resolution was unanimously adopted. It was decided that following our traditional Christmas Eve banquet we would record our current poundage and weight loss goals on the thermometer-like chart covering the refrigerator door.

I reminisced.

The Christmas Eve banquet was one of two culinary spectaculars of the year. Spiral sliced baked ham, meatballs and little sausages in a thick spicy sauce, sweet potato casserole, corn casserole, hot rolls and butter, cheeses and pickles. Of course there were sugar cookies, cinnamon cookies, chocolate chip cookies with pecans, macaroons, and the Director's annual fruit cake, fruity and moist, soaked for several weeks in a secret elixir concocted from ingredients purchased from a store she patronized only once a year.

A decree to diet would not only spoil the Christmas Eve spectacular, but the entire year. For a year, I thought, no cakes, no pies, no juicy hamburgers, no potatoes, no pasta; no nacho supremes for late night snacks.

"But sweetie," I implored. "Couldn't we resolve to work at a soup kitchen, teach adults to read, volunteer with Heroes on the Water, or lead an effort to protect the endangered Cotton-top Tamarin in Costa Rica?"

"I'm sorry," she said. "The wheels are already in motion. This is for your own good. Perhaps if you lose the weight you'll be in better shape to do some volunteer work."

There it was, "*This is for your own good.*"

I wept.

In a dream the DDT bent over me as I lay sleeping, her silver hair curling from beneath a peaked and visored black leather officer's cap, on the front of which was a medallion depicting an eagle clutching a Swastika. Her matching black leather trench coat was belted tightly around her. Highly polished black boots protruded from beneath

the long coat.

She cracked a wicked riding crop across the palm of her black gloved hand, whispering in my ear, "You vill lose da veight. You vill lose da veight. You vill lose..." There flashed before my eyes a road, rock strewn and pock marked, the trees and brush on the shoulders seared by quivering waves of heat. On the distant horizon the road terminated at the precipice of a fiery crevasse. I saw where the road paved with good intentions ended.

I screamed.

To really organize your office do the following: Throw away rough drafts of anything; back issues of your favorite magazines that you swear you WILL read again one day, and tacky or negative mementos such as souvenirs from your last 12 sales meetings.

Keep anything financial; warranties and manuals for any appliance you currently own; tax material; ideas that you've written down, etc. (in one notebook).



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Lincoln School Memories

by Charita Smith Avery

As a resident of Lincoln Mill Village, I attended Lincoln School. Before entering first grade, my mother took me to the Grand Theater building on Jefferson Street to get my vaccination. I don't know why they were giving vaccinations there, but she led me to believe we were going to the movies so I would stay calm and cooperative. I remember always becoming quite upset being around the doctor, especially if he had a needle in his hand.

In those early years, Lincoln School was a high school. As a matter of fact, my sister, Mildred Smith Hastings, who is sixteen years older than I, graduated from Lincoln High School in 1944. She and my brother, Charles Edward Smith, who actually quit school when given the choice of a paddling by Principal Edward Anderson or leaving, were both out of school before I began first grade in Ms. Larkin's room. Rumor had it that Principal Anderson had an electric paddle. I just knew someday one of my friends would be sent to the office and we would discover the truth. I was never one to get in trouble, but the talk of an electric paddle remained in my mind and may have helped keep me in line.

Around the third grade Patricia Pip-pin, Jimmy Caldwell and I were invited to participate in the King and Queen Court for the senior class. I have a nice picture as evidence of this, where we were all three dressed "fit for a king's court." I can still remember several of the seniors, one being Ernestine Lehman, whose mother cared for me before I started to school.

During my early school days, there was a tall chainlink fence around Lincoln School. Our rival, Rison School, referred to Lincoln as a prison because of the fence. Even as a child, I understood the fence was for our protection, so what they inferred never bothered me. In those early days, all females, teachers and students alike, wore dresses; and, we always began the day with the pledge of allegiance to the American flag, Bible reading and a prayer.

Each year, we would gather by class,

including our teacher, on the front school steps to pose for a picture. I have several of these class pictures and today regret that I did not write the names of each child on the back of the picture. I thought I would never forget any of them, but time has a way of robbing us of our precious memories. At that time, there were heavy silver chains draped from post to post across the front of the school where we sometime sat and talked at recess. Other times, we went to the playground north of the school to play.

Next door to the school was the Union Grocery Store (so named because it was operated by the textile union). We could stop there for snacks after school. Across the street was Condra's Ice Cream Shop and next door to that was McClure's Grocery Store. Condra's had the best popsicles. They were the size of a coffee-size styro-foam cup and contained a very smooth ice cream. Mother could call McClure's Grocery, give them her grocery list, and a delivery boy would bring the groceries to our back door and place them on our kitchen table. It appears there were some conveniences back then which we do not enjoy today.

One of my favorite teachers was Ms. Sammons in second grade. She was very young, pretty and such a sweet loving person. I recall her bringing to my attention my fingernails with the polish partially worn off and saying how much better they would look if left unpolished. Even as a child, I felt embarrassed the way they looked after she called it to my attention. Ms. Sammons left Huntsville at the end of that school year to get married, and I remember how sad I felt and how it affected her to leave us. She seemed to truly love us. Before leaving, she recorded each of us, one after the other, speaking our names into her recorder. She certainly made an impression on me at that young age and I'll never forget her. I can still picture her in my mind—a pretty blond with shoulder length wavy hair, wearing a light beige suit.

For me, the third grade with Ms. Collier was the hardest I dreaded every day because each morning we had to write the multiplication tables; and, even worse, sometimes we had to stand and say them aloud. Math was never my favorite subject and, I have to think that is why. Another favorite teacher was my fifth grade teacher, Mrs. Nelson (mother of Benny Nelson, who went on to play football for Alabama). She had auburn hair, and she wore the prettiest matching shade of nail polish. I remember feeling loved

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by her and missing her so much when I was promoted to the next grade. I gave her a ceramic smoking pipe planter with a green vine. Why a pipe? you might ask. Well, I chose it because I thought it was pretty and, to me, it was a special gift, so I felt she would like it and would remember me when she looked at it.

Ms. Parks was my sixth grade teacher. This is the year I remember head lice affected some in our class—thankfully not me. A phase that year was bringing lemon slices to eat, until I learned it was bad for your teeth. Just as I was completing sixth grade, I was diagnosed with Rheumatic Fever and had to miss the seventh grade of school. I had heard that the seventh grade teacher, Ms. Margaret Chapman, was a “mean,” very strict teacher, so I was hoping I would not be in her class when I returned to school.

Ms. Chapman had organized the Sarah Pittman Sunshine Club and, while I was bedridden, the members of her class, and thereby members of this club, brought me enough gifts to open one per week for several weeks. I still have at least one of these gifts (a purple orchid pin) which I still wear. When I returned to school, to my surprise, I was assigned to Ms. Chapman. Well, she turned out to be nothing like what I feared. Yes, she was strict, but I had no problem following her rules and I learned more from her than any other teacher I ever had.

From that experience, I learned you can’t go by someone else’s assessment of another person. I believe it has a lot to do with our personalities. Ms. Chapman lived on Lee High Drive and walked to Lincoln School every day. She didn’t have a car and, the way I heard it, she didn’t like to ride with others.

In the eighth grade, the new Lee High School was completed enough for us, along with Rison’s eighth grade class, to move into the partially finished school. So, two rival schools moved into Lee, with Lincoln students on one side of the hall and Rison students on the other side. As I recall, there were no fights between the rival students.

Actually, the only mischievous thing I remember in all my early school days was some boy riding other students bikes into the side of the concrete build-

ing during recess at Lincoln. I’m glad I don’t remember who that boy was. We attended the ninth grade at Lee and then transferred to Butler High School.

Living in the city limits, we had no school bus, so we walked to school, rain or shine. Walking to Lincoln was a fairly smooth walk, but to get to Lee without walking a great distance we went from Levert Street, through yards on Davidson Street, across the railroad tracks, through yards on Lee High Drive to Lee High School. After transferring to Butler High School, we could ride the city bus for twenty-five cents each way. This was convenient because we caught the bus at the end of our street and it dropped us off in front of the school. The bus was used by many back then.

We did not have a car when I was growing up, so we rode the bus to town most of the time. In nice weather, we would walk to town. On Sunday, some of us kids would use the bus as a form of entertainment since we could ride all the way around Huntsville, the complete bus route, and back to our bus stop for twenty-five cents. I’ve been known to go two rounds when it wasn’t that busy and the driver didn’t make us get off.

Lincoln School looks much the same as it always has, minus the tall fence. It presently is home to Lincoln Academy. I was privileged to attend their grand opening and dedication ceremony, which was held in the same auditorium where we had chapel, choir and plays all those years ago. I could picture Ms. Georgette Graham, the music teacher, sitting at the piano on that old stage with the blue velvet curtains. I visited my former class rooms and the cafeteria and an excitement came over me just thinking of those days gone by when I was “enjoying” my school days but didn’t really realize how much.

I hope reading about my school memories will bring to mind some of your school memories and brighten your day.

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The Pouting Parlor

by *Betty Hallmark Atkinson*

Some of my fondest or should I say, exciting memories when growing up, would be made when spending time with my Grandparents, (Johnny Hopwood & Willie Mae Hallmark).

My Pawpaw had a room added to the outside of what people used to call the pump house, where the water pump was kept. That added room is what today is referred to as a "Man Cave". Pawpaw's "Pouting Parlor", as he called it, was a place to get away from Grandma, when things got too heated up in the kitchen.

The pouting parlor had a sloped ceiling, like a lean-to, with a roll-a-bed, a couch, and a wood burning stove. It was built with cinder blocks, tin roof and no insulation.

On this particular weekend, because my Mom was staying over, Grandma and I decided to go out and sleep in the "Pouting Parlor". During the night, the temperature dropped, and being that the pouting parlor was made of cinder blocks, it was cold.

So as the morning sun began to rise, Pawpaw decided to build a fire in the stove, so when Grandma and I got up it would be warm and toasty.

As I lay snuggled in grandma's arms, I heard Pawpaw enter and began filling the stove with

wood. All of a sudden, "BAM"! The stove eyes blew off hitting the ceiling, I jumped up, Grandma raised up, banging her head on the sloped ceiling, yelling, "Hop, what hell are you doing?" Pawpaw, laying on the floor with the long stove pipe across him and black soot all over us, didn't utter a word.

Pawpaw slowly got up, and without speaking, went out the door and into the kitchen where my Mom was making breakfast. He reached up into the cabinet where he kept his Nitroglycerin tablets for his heart. My Mom

asked what was going on, and was he all right, and he replied, "I just blew up my pouting parlor." When Mom heard that, she ran out to find Grandma and me, covered in the black soot also, but thankfully uninjured.

Later on, Pawpaw discovered that instead of grabbing the can of kerosene to light that fire, he had poured turpentine, thus causing the explosion.

To this day, I don't seem to recall Pawpaw ever attempting to start a fire in that old wood burning stove again.

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*Sherry Taylor,
Hampton Cove*

A January Incident

by Elizabeth Wharry

January 1, 1977 will always stand out in my memory. Winter had come early, and it was a bitter one. Lake Erie had frozen over, but the Coast Guard was warning people to stay off the ice as it wasn't stable.

John and his friend Art were both blind. Art was visiting from Cleveland and I lived fairly close to John. He and I had met in our senior year of high school and had become best friends. We were too young to have partied the night before and we were tired of being cooped up all day.

John's mom had fixed a wonderful dinner of ribs, cole slaw, baked beans and German potato salad. After we kids cleaned up the kitchen, boredom set in. With it being New Year's day, nothing was open. The roads weren't in the best condition, either.

I'm not too sure which one of us had the bright idea to go ice walking. It was a crisp clear moonlit night, (really cold!) John's street ended in a local beach. We all walked down to the beach. Everything was still and quiet. I could tell John and Art were listening closely. Finally, we stepped out on the lake! (cue heavenly music). The ice seemed solid enough, so we kept walking.

Each step took us further from safety.

We were out about 25 yards or so when I turned to look back. All I could see were the tops of the streetlights. Everything else was a dark shadow. I started to speak, but before I could say anything, we heard the ice groan and crack! We backed away slowly, each of us swallowing our panic and fear.

As we slowly turned and eased forward, that ominous cracking followed. Keep in mind, we had no safety equipment. John was on one side, hanging on to my arm and Art was hanging on the other arm! I'm not exactly sure how we made it back to solid ground. It is said that God protects fools and children. That night, He worked overtime!

Over the years, I lost contact with John and Art. Wherever they are, I hope life has been as good to them as it has been to me.

Happy New Year to all!

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Steve Jordan, Athens**



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Remembering Rex

by Austin Miller

In 1947 Mrs. Cora Shepard was our neighbor; her son E.W. loved dogs and always had about a dozen. He had moved from home but left a dog he had recently acquired with his mother. This upset Mama and Daddy because they knew he would run unattended on our property and be a pest; but more than that, they considered him dangerous.

He was an Army trained dog that had been used to guard German prisoners held at Redstone Arsenal during the war. When Daddy talked to E.W. he said don't worry, he won't bother anybody. Daddy was not convinced and made up his mind to shoot the dog if he caused any trouble.

His name was Rex. I can't remember what Rex looked like except he was bigger than I was. Rex showed no affection to people, never barked, wagged his tail, chased cars or ran with other dogs. You knew that the only way to stop this dog if he attacked was by extreme force. Many people affectionately add the adjective "Old" to their dog's name but somehow this didn't fit Rex. He was not a warm, friendly, fuzzy feeling dog.

One morning when I was in the first grade, I walked out the front door and there stood Rex. He was standing a few feet from the porch between me and the way to the school bus. I didn't know what to do because I had been warned that he was dangerous and to never get close to him. He was standing there perfectly still without making a sound.

I had always heard that a dog wagging his tail was a friendly dog and not a threat. Rex was not wagging his tail. I called to Mama but she didn't hear me. Finally I took a step backward toward the porch, he didn't move. I backed up slowly to the porch steps. When I turned to go up the steps, he bounded past me and was standing on the porch at the top of the steps behind me. Since my path was blocked, all I could do was walk away from the porch back into the yard. At that point, he jumped down from the porch and fell in beside me. I didn't panic and I don't remember being scared. I think maybe at six years old I could sense that he was not a danger. He walked with me to the road and waited until the bus came, he was never more than a few

inches away. When I got on I saw him trotting back home. That afternoon he was waiting at the road and walked me home. He took every detour that I took and stayed with me until I got home. When I got to the front porch, he trotted back to Mrs. Shepard's house.

After that, he followed the same routine everyday. Until this day, I don't know how he knew what time to meet the bus and not to come on Saturday and Sunday. Soon the other kids on the bus took notice and would yell and call to him when I got off the bus. The only time he came to our house was when he walked me to and from the bus. But any time I was in the yard playing or working, he was always in sight. If I got out of his line of vision, he would move to where he could see me. Soon he became an unobtrusive part of my life and I seldom noticed that he was around even when he walked with me to — and from the bus.

One Sunday we went to visit my grandparents. When we returned the Shepards were all gathered on the front porch with a sad look on their faces; they said that Rex had been run over and killed by a car. They said the car came up the road, way up into the churchyard and purposely ran over him. E.W. said he thought he knew who did it but he never gave a name.

Rex was not a pet or a dog that could be owned by anyone. E.W. claimed him but he didn't belong to anybody, he lived off sparse table scraps but didn't bother the chickens, roam the community, bark at night, fight other dogs, chase the cows or bother people coming to our house. But as docile and unthreatening as he appeared, Rex was trained to kill and would have attacked anybody who messed with me.

We had come to love Rex and were all very sad when he died, even Mama and Daddy.

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- Some thief stole J.J. Parton's pocketbook - a large one - from his coat pocket as it hung in his shop, Monday last. It contained only about \$1.30 in currency, but several notes and other valuable papers were in there. Some of the notes were payable to Halsey & Parton, and others to Parton himself. He warns persons not to trade for such notes. He will give a liberal reward for the return of the papers.

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- Wanted - to rent a good piano by a lady who will use it but seldom and with care. Address Dr. Dickson, Huntsville, Ala.

- Burned - John Portlock's gun-smith shop was burned at Florence last week. Luckily he was insured.

- For Sale - all the lands belonging to the Estate of George Jude, deceased. 600 acres in three tracts, lying at the base of a small mountain, finely watered with springs and wells on every tract, just 4 miles north of Huntsville. Contact John Weaver.

- Death - We were sorry to learn that our old friend Henderson Ketchum, who was stabbed by Frank Gable some time ago in Blountsville, died at 6 o'clock last night from the effect of the wound. He was one of the first settlers of Blount County, was about 70 years of age and will be greatly missed by his family and friends.

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Isaac Cruse, Arab

- Wanted - a house suitable for small family, convenient to the business part of town. Please apply to this office.

- For sale - the best plow in the country is at Van Valkenberg's, where the justly celebrated and popular Shepherd's plow is on display. It has recently been demonstrated at the Fair.

- Information wanted - Mrs. Mary Cole of New Market is very anxious to get information as to the whereabouts of her son George David Cole, who left his mother's home the latter part of last May. He is about fifteen years of age. Any information as to the absent boy will be gladly received by the mother. He suffers with depression and she is desperate. Address Mrs. Mary Cole, New Market, Ala.

- Mrs. Phillips, of Athens, made her lazy husband move a little faster the other night. She placed a stiff hairbrush in a shaded spot in the bedroom so that he stepped on it with his bare feet. She said he has never moved so fast.

- Drowned - on Thursday last, while three young men were returning from hunting on an island near Florence, the boat capsized and one of them, William Moss, was drowned. He was the son of a widow lady of Florence, and was 15 years old.



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The Souvenir

by M.D. Smith, IV



In 1951 it was rarely talked about at all, ever. Whenever mentioned, it was called The Big-D, and everyone knew what it meant. It was certainly rare in those days compared to present times.

I clearly remember having a girlfriend in the fifth grade, and I could sense my mother's disapproval, mostly from what she didn't say compared to previous girlfriends. What my mother said was, "Too bad, she's from a broken home". That's what a single mother raising a child was referred to as having a "broken home." Indeed, divorce was a blight we kids didn't discuss.

My buddies and I knew of one friend whose parents didn't live together. The father had left and the kids didn't hang around with us. Their parents had been members of my parents "Supper Club". We'd have great times when all the parents and children would get together in a nearby park with small pavilions equipped with a fireplace, chimney and nearby bar-b-que grill. The cookouts were fun, with marshmallow roasts later and a few ghost stories, with my father being the chief storyteller. They never came again after the Big-D. I felt sorry for my friend.

Soon after, my parents began whispering around the house, which made me all the more interested. I picked up bits and pieces that didn't mean much. I did hear

my mother on the phone talking about her. I didn't know who it was, but they weren't kind things said.

I finally pieced enough of the puzzle together to know there was another woman and my mother was mad at my father, real mad. My grandmother on my mother's side took me under her wing and said, "Don't worry, grandson." I didn't worry much until then. I could tell by the way she said it, that I did need to worry, and I knew what to fear. It was stressful. Would my father be leaving the house? Would the good times with my father in his metalworking shop come to an end? Making things on his metal lathe? The days we went squirrel hunting together? The cookouts at the park

and other fun family activities end?

And then I thought about her, the woman I found out I had met at his work when I visited once. His secretary. It appeared she had caused the strife that was going on.

I waited for the day I'd be told the bad news. The day my father would leave our home and not come back. The Legal Papers became the most fearsome and least often heard term of those days.

Time doesn't move fast for a 10-year-old, but even slower when doom hangs over your head. But an odd thing happened. I don't

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know if it was weeks or the months it felt like, but nothing happened. Eventually, my parents were jovial again. The tense voices mellowed once again, I never completely relaxed until a year later, but it was good. His secretary didn't do that job anymore but still worked at the business.

Fast forward a half-century. My parents are both dead, and I have grandchildren of my own. That younger secretary looked me up one day. She told me she had a souvenir for me from my father, as she extracted a brass and steel letter opener from her purse.

"It belonged to your Grandmother, and when she stopped working, your father got it back from her office. He made it himself in his shop. He gave it to me, and I have owned it ever since." Even in her old age, she was attractive, I observed. I had mixed emotions about her, but since things had worked out with my folks, I didn't have the negative feelings I might have. "My father sure did make it," I said, as I examined the solid brass handle and blade lovingly. "He machined it on his lathe, and the blade carefully ground from the remaining slim rod left and all polished on his electric buffing wheel. I helped."

It was like yesterday, we had touched it together as he made it for his mother, my grandmother, for her birthday. And here it was again.

"Well, I wanted you to have it," she said. "I hate to part with it. I've had it for so long, and it's my only tangible memory of your dad."

I still do not know to this day if she ever thought that I knew about the problems our family faced with her in the middle of it, back in 1951. Perhaps not.

"So you take this," she continued. "I won't be around much longer, and it should stay in your family. No one in my family would understand how special this souvenir of your dad is to me. Now it's yours."

She left, and I never heard from her again. That was some years ago. The letter opener lovingly hand-made by my father sits on my desk today. Some day this souvenir will rest with one of my children. They'll have this story as a history of the one-of-a-kind letter opener.



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Old Memories of Huntsville - Part 2

by Lee W. Burkett

When I wrote Part 1, half of my ideas revolved around food, so this is some of my food obsession memories. How many of these do you remember? Did you serve coffee and tea while eating at Aunt Eunice's? Did your bill come out even like mine? Country Ham with red eye gravy was ummm good for seven dollars. Did you eat at the Bon Aire and remember the neon lighting on the ceiling? How bout the Ritz downtown? Remember the cigarette collection? His meatloaf was a combination of beef and pork.

What about Dells on South Parkway where Wendy's and McDonalds are now? I have a cousin who, when he was very young, went to the restroom by himself. When he returned to the table, the family asked how he knew which one was which. He said one started with a G so he went in the other one. Only problem was they were marked Guys and Dolls.

Remember Fox Cafe? I drank coffee there with my uncle and he leveled his sugar for his coffee with his knife for a level teaspoon. How bout Steadman's Bar B Que? It has been lots of different places since then. Many will remember Beauregards being there.

What about the Russel Erskine? My grandparents had a special waiter that they always requested. Remember old Central Cafe on Clinton with the watermelon in the window? Remember the Carriage House on University and their five dollar ribeyes?

Who can forget the Dwarf near the corner of Governor's and the Parkway and their ham steaks? The Little Farm Grille by the Hospital was very good and convenient but I had to stop going there after firing the waiter's son. He worked for us while we were working in the Hospital District.

Another good one was Mr. Steak on South Parkway which also had good food. What about Irelands on Airport? They had a great Steak and Biscuit.

Did you eat at Gibson's before they moved north into their "new" location? Remember Mr. Hampton sitting on the high chair there? Across the road you had the Michael's where they had lamb with mint jelly. I took my wife there on a date 50 years ago.

Who can forget Big Spring Cafe? Very few remember the original location but many ate at #2. #3 is nice. Get a Greaser and say I sent you!

We always liked the Islander and ordered the Pu Pu Platter. The Rib Cellar at the Airport was expensive but good. I went there on a busi-



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ness dinner and it was 20 dollars a head in 1975. What about all the Shoney's especially the breakfast and seafood bars?

The recently closed El Palacio was a favorite with the buffet and sopapillas. I ate a giant four-item dinner there one night and lived to regret it. Mullins Drive-in was a good restaurant with the quintessential liar's table. Zestos where the dip dogs were a treat.

Boots was a popular place and a favorite of many of the "in crowd". The Dog House was a small local place we frequented nearly 50 years ago. We could load the dryers at the laundromat and go eat pancakes there while waiting on the clothes to dry. Later on Bob Wallace was Mr. C's in the former Burger Chef. It had a good reasonable lunch.

Remember Twickenham Station restaurant in the train cars down near where the Naval Reserve was located by Big

Spring Park?

Just realized I haven't even mentioned pizza. We still miss Godfather's Pizza at the old Hills Shopping center and playing on the Pole Position game and eating the sausage pizza. Cork and Cleaver was a good one too. Steaks there were great. Steak and Ale on University was good also.

First salad bar? Black Eyed Pea also on University wasn't bad but didn't last long. How about Britlings' Buffet? You just had to eat the Mayor's banana pudding - that was a given.

White Castle on the Square was a cheap place to eat and the burgers were pretty good. My grandmother took me there. The Mill was good lunch destination at both locations and the pastries were outstanding.

Ann's Spaghetti on Patton Road had some of the best sauce we ever had. El Mexicano right at Ann's was a favorite destination for Mexican food.

Landry's was very nice. We loved the crayfish appetizer when it was in season. Do you remember the three hours wait to get in there when it opened? We waited months before going for the first time.

Sno White was a stopping for dessert off Whitesburg Drive.

Steak and other types of places coming to mind are Quincy's, Sizzler, Bonanza, Fogcutter, Elegant, Chi Chi's, Green Hills Grille, Broiler, Duffey's and Beefy's to name a few. Elegant was the last place I ever put sugar in my coffee.

I know there are many more but these are some of our favorites from the past.

"Is it wrong that only one company makes the game Monopoly?"

Veronica Storey, Gurley



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CBD Oil - My Personal Experience

by Barry Key

I have very poor sleeping habits and essential tremors. Essential tremors is a neurological disease that affects your hands, arms, head, mouth, vocal cords and sometimes your legs. It is a genetic disease that passes from parent to off springs. My grandfather, my father, me and now our oldest son. There are different levels from an annoying shaking of the fingers to violent shaking of the hands when you are trying to do something simple, e.g., eating or writing.

My symptoms started when I was in my mid-40s and has progressed to a major problem eating and impossible to write (thank goodness for the computer). There are prescription drugs that will control the shaking in some people. Our family doctor prescribed several different drugs for me but none worked, plus I contracted just about every side effect listed for each drug; nausea, dizziness, vision, and muscle aches and pains.

Our family doctor referred me to a neurologist in Huntsville. He prescribed different drugs with the same results, all negative, plus major side effects. After about a year of trying different doses and combination of drugs, he referred me to a neurologist at UAB in Birmingham for consultation.

After reviewing my case he told me there were no other drugs on the market approved for essential tremors. The final

option was "Deep Brain Stimulation". Deep brain stimulation is a procedure where they drill a hole in your skull and implant an electrical probe in your brain. They run a wire under your skin, down your neck to the front of your chest. The wire connects to a controller device implanted in your chest similar to a pace maker. The device then sends electrical impulses to the probe in the brain. I decided against the procedure.

That was approximately three years ago. Since then there has been a lot of talk about an oil called Cannabidiol (CBD) and how it was a cure-all for just about every ailment known to man. Several people, including my wife, had suggested that I try CBD, but I had resisted because it was an extraction from the marijuana plant. After researching CBD, I found that you could buy CBD

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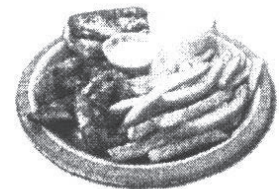
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free of the mind altering chemical found in marijuana, THC.

February 8, 2019 I purchased my first 2 ounce bottle of CBD oil. The oil I was recommended by the store for neurological purposes was HEMP OIL, containing 300mg of CBD. Putting the cart in front of the horse, I did additional research after buying. According to the internet, some of the Hemp oil is from the plant's seeds and is primarily used as cooking oil and in perfumes, lotions and soaps. The CBD oil made from the plant's flowers and leaves is the oil recommended for medical uses. I wasn't sure which I was taking.

I took the CBD Hemp oil for 3 months with no noticeable difference in my tremors. However, I have arthritis in my lower right back and right hip. After I started taking the oil, I have not had a flare up since February 8th, 2019. Because I had started taking the CBD oil for essential tremors with no reduction in the shaking, I discontinued the oil because of the cost.

I hate any type of yard work and have always dreaded summer coming. During the physical activity of mowing, weed eating, pruning shrubs and the cleanup, is when I would have my worst arthritis attacks....ended up in the emergency room a couple of times. As of this writing, November 4th, 2019 and after 9 months of yard work, although I had discontinued the oil in early May, I still have not experienced an arthritis attack.

I don't know if the absence of arthritis attacks are due to the CBD oil, or just a coincidence but I will tell you if they ever flare up again, don't be between me and the nutrition store.

As the title of my story states "MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE". Just as the CBD oil did not have a positive effect on my tremors nor my poor sleeping habits, the oil may not have a positive effect on anyone else's arthritis but it helped me.



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THE SQUATTER'S CHURCH

by Berns Miller

Prior to the land sale of 1809, Madison County was occupied by intruders or more commonly referred to as squatters. Squatters with their cabins and land improvements occupied Madison County by 1804.

One of those squatters was Richard Crowson. His improvements as registered on January 30, 1809 by Thomas Freeman were in the NW quarter of section 24. Richard and his wife had five sons and six daughters and two slaves. These pioneers bravely advanced into the unknown wilderness seeking land and their fortunes but the roots of their civilization were never far behind.

Before government, the Church was the first institution to arrive on the frontier. Shiloh Methodist Church was established in 1808 for organized services and preaching for the squatters in the vicinity of Richard Crowson's home. Some of Crowson's neighbors living on other improvements in the area were David Lindsey Sr., David Lindsey Jr., Thomas Lindsey, John Rodgers, Benjamin Wilson, David Harless, John Helms, James Christian, Thomas McBroom and Thomas Hewlett. David Lindsey Sr. was Richard Crowson's father-in-law and both families were Methodist.

The Shiloh Methodist Church was a creation of the Western Conference held October 17, 1808 in Williamson County, Tennessee. Shiloh was organized two months before Madison became a

county in the Mississippi Territory and eleven years before Alabama became a state in 1819. The first preacher at Shiloh was James Gwinn who served the Flint River Circuit. The first church meetings were held in brush arbors and cabins. Later, a permanent structure was built on the Crowson land.

Richard Crowson's wife, Hulda Lindsey, died in 1812 and was apparently buried in the Ryland Cemetery. The Crowson and Lindsey families came to Madison County together and left together in 1816 for Shelby County, Alabama. The US victory at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend opened the Creek Indian lands for settlement and the Crowsons and Lindseys moved to the new frontier.

Richard Crowson and David Lindsey died in Shelby County and made local his-

tory as early pioneers. The local Shelby County chapter of the DAR in Shelby County is named David Lindsey. Lindsey was a Revolutionary war veteran. Richard Crowson's grave is located behind his remodeled log cabin at Montevallo.

Richard Crowson sold his Madison County land in 1816 to Nathan Green and wife Jenny. Churches were allowed to own property in 1819 and as a result Nathan and Jenny sold the half acre known as "Shiloh" to the church trustees. Records indicate the half acre was deeded in 1820 to trustees David Thompson, John W. Hewlett, Thomas King, Augustine Hewlett and Joel Tatum.

The deed description was 13 poles west of the Fleming Jordan line and 6-1/4 poles south, west and then north to the point of beginning. In 1876 the church moved about fifty yards across Ryland Pike to the

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current location.

In 1876, one year prior to the official end of Reconstruction and Yankee occupation, Elizabeth J. Kelly Karsner and her husband Benjamin Karsner deeded the southeast corner of the southwest quarter of section 13 (contiguous to Jordan Cemetery) to the Shiloh Methodist Church South. Mrs. Karsner was the daughter of Russell J. Kelly, a planter who once owned large tracts of land around Ryland.

The church deed was witnessed by Russell's son, Fleming Jordan Kelly. The deed had a stipulated purpose of building a church and school house. The Kellys were Methodist.

Shiloh Methodist Church is still holding services and celebrates their 211th anniversary in 2019. Shiloh has witnessed many changes since its origins with the squatters.

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Valhermoso Hotel

by Carol Wells Barnette



young. The hotel was also known as the Valhermoso Hotel. Her Uncle and his girlfriend would take her with them. She didn't dance but she liked to watch. There was a bar on one wall, but she didn't drink either.

"Oh my gosh, the hotel was so big it would probably take an hour to go through the whole thing. It was two or three stories." It would accommodate several hundred people.

The hotel was originally built by William R. Chunn in 1823 along with several cabins. He had discovered 7 springs that after testing showed they contained white sulfur and other minerals. The Indians knew it for the medicinal

properties for skin, kidneys, stomach and liver ailments. The hotel sold several times and was known nationally for the mineral springs. When Mr. Mannings owned it was known for the gambling. This beautiful hotel was catered to by President Zachary Taylor, Governor Bibb, and Jesse James, the famous outlaw, among other prominent people.

Miss Edna, along with several from her church would go to the springs about every other Sunday for picnics. It was known as White Sulphur Springs Hotel at one time, but she always called it Giers Hotel. It was so beautiful in that area.

Professor Jean J. Giers bought the hotel in 1855 from James Manning. Miss Edna said, the Giers she thought were German as she had a hard time understanding them, but Mrs. Giers was real nice.

In 1932 when the tornado took the Baptist Church, Presbyterian Church and the Methodist Church, the hotel had damage but didn't get destroyed by a tornado until 1950 according to a news article, although some say it burnt down. Edna Mae said she didn't remember.

Edna Mae Lipscomb Peck likes to tell about the things she remembers growing up. She tells about going to the dances at the Giers Hotel when she was real

nal properties for skin, kidneys, stomach and liver ailments. The hotel sold several times and was known nationally for the mineral springs. When Mr. Mannings



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PET TIPS FROM ANGEL

Your Stressed-Out Cat



It is important that you manage and reduce stress in your cat as much as you can because if your cat is stressed, she can become both emotionally and physically unwell and may develop physical illnesses as well as display problem behavior. Often owners may only notice something is not quite right with their cats when they have already been stressed for some time. Cats may lose their appetite or be sick occasionally or behave in a way that owners have never seen before, such as spraying urine against the wall indoors or behaving aggressively.

The sooner you realize that your cat could be experiencing stress, the sooner you can resolve the problem.

What to look out for:

- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Coughing
- Large bald patches or sores on the coat caused by over-grooming
- Runny nose and eyes
- Symptoms get worse in cats with chronic health conditions or recovery from illness is slow (stress can affect a cat's immune system and ability to fight disease)
- Eating non-food items such as plastic or wool
- Poor appetite or eating less than normal
- Acting lethargic and sleeping more than usual
- Excessive eating and/or drinking
- Sudden weight loss or weight gain
- A poor coat condition
- Not going to the toilet as often as usual (feces and/or urine).
- Frequent squatting, painful urination with blood in it.

Behavioral Symptoms

- Any noticeable change in your cat's usual patterns of behavior and

routines

- Toileting outside of the litter box (e.g. behind the sofa, under the bed, on the bed etc.)
- Spraying urine on furniture and other items around the home
- Aggressive behavior directed towards you, your family or visitors
- Aggressive behavior directed towards other pets in the home
- Excessive meowing
- An increased dependency on you or your family, constantly wanting to

interact

- Withdrawal from you and the family, no longer interested in interacting with you
- Unresponsiveness to things going on around her (she doesn't jump or get startled by loud noises or quick movements)
- Constant vigilance and jumps at every sudden sound or movement
- Frequent hiding when in the home (e.g. under a sofa or bed, on top of a wardrobe)
- Reluctance to play - having previously been very playful
- Reluctance to come into the home
- Reluctance to go outside
- Excessive grooming
- Repeated pacing when in the home, often accompanied by loud meowing

Other Signs of a Stressed Cat:

- You may notice your cat sits differently, her facial expression changes or she does odd little things
- Often crouching and looking tense indoors
 - Ears rotate backwards frequently or flatten downward
 - Wide open eyes with very dilated pupils which makes her eyes look black

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From the Desk of Tom Carney

A LOVE STORY

"April 11, 1862: On the morning of April 11 General Mitchel's division took possession of Huntsville. There was no opposition, only a few sick and wounded Confederates in town. They entered at daybreak, first taking possession of the railroad. The Southern was just coming in, having on board 150 Confederate soldiers, some wounded, going home on leave. The train endeavored to make its escape but was fired on by two cannons. All aboard were taken prisoner. The well soldiers were confined to the depot house and the wounded remained in the railroad cars."

This is how Jane Chadwick, writing in her diary, described the events of that day, thus marking the beginning of one of the strangest legends in Huntsville's history.

Emily McClung was at the depot that morning when the cannons opened fire on the train. Her fiance had been wounded at the battle of Vicksburg and was coming home to recuperate when the train was captured that morning. She watched with terror as the blue-coated invaders herded John and the other prisoners to the depot at the points of bayonets.

John and Emily had been childhood sweethearts for as long as anyone could remember. When the war began John enlisted into the Confederate Army, postponing their plans for marriage. When Emily received word that John had been wounded and was coming home, she immediately started making plans for their wedding.

Years later, people would talk about how sad it was to watch Emily standing off at a distance, staring at the depot with tears in her eyes while John would stand in the window helplessly looking back at his love.

The other prisoners, upon learning of John and Emily's plight, began conspiring to help John escape.

Word was passed to Emily that she should be waiting across the road from the depot at the stroke of midnight.

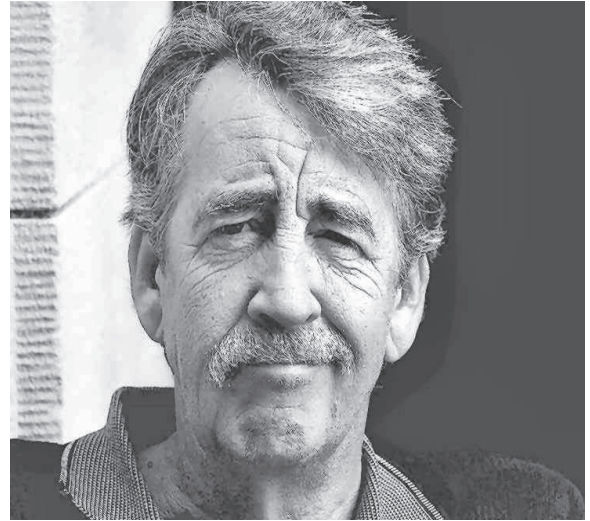
Late that night, John put on a Yankee officer's uniform and while the other prisoners created a loud commotion he walked boldly out the front door. Walking slowly he made his way across the road.

But upon seeing Emily waiting for him, John, unable to wait any longer, began running toward her, with his arms spread. A Union guard, seeing what he thought was a fleeing prisoner, ordered John to halt. When John continued to run, the guard opened fire. After firing the first round, the guard noticed another figure across the road. The gun roared again, leaving both Emily and John lying in the road, dead.

The Union soldiers placed their bodies in an empty railroad car until they could make arrangements to bury them. The next morning, a burial detail went to remove the bodies, but they were gone. A guard had been posted all night and it would have been impossible for anyone to approach the railroad car unseen.

An alert was sounded, but the bodies were never found.

1884 - People waiting to buy tickets at the depot saw a couple in

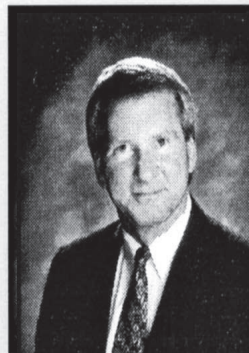


old fashioned clothing. When the couple were approached, they disappeared,

1890 - A man by the name of Dilworth buys the property and builds a lumber supply store. While building the store he experiences problems with his horses. Regardless of how well they are fenced in, the horses refuse to spend the night on the property. Every morning, upon arriving at work he would find the fences torn down with the horses standing across the road trembling as if in terror.

1909 - Police are called to the lumber yard. Neighbors had called and complained of a loud party, with people dressed in Confederate uniforms. One man was supposed to have been dressed in blue, escorting a beautiful young lady.

No one has ever been able to offer an explanation for the curious events surrounding this legend. Maybe there is no answer.



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Slow Learner

by Judy C. Smith



I guess I have finally learned my lesson about walking after dark. However, I hate to give up the habit when I enjoy the quiet sounds, so relaxing.

A few months ago, while walking I saw what I thought to be a German Shepherd in the middle of the road a couple hundred feet from me. My four and a half pound Shih Tzu was on her leash, which was extended out as far as it would go. Suddenly I realized it wasn't a dog but a coyote. I began pulling the leash in as fast as I could and running to the neighbors front porch and screaming just as the coyote ran down their side yard.

The neighbor was so kind and

insisted Shoes and I get in her car, then she drove us home.

Well, that caused me to curtail my walking for a couple of weeks and I started out again. I had walked past a couple of houses when Shoes froze facing the vacant lot. I had to pull her away. We walked to the middle of the road past the next house when I looked back, there in the way stood a coyote.

I pulled Shoes toward me, wrapped her in the jacket and ran as fast as I could to get home.

Fast forward to the Fall, seems like time has a way of playing tricks on one's memory but still deciding that maybe I would just walk Shoes on my patio tonight like I have started doing due to the two coyote scares. It's fenced in on three sides and I stand in Shoes' way so she can't run down the steps into the carport and down the driveway.

Again tonight, I open the door and jump into a pair of flip flops, throw a shawl around me and out the door we go.

I had only walked a few feet when I froze and started screaming at the top of my lungs. "Shoes, stop - stop!" There I was three feet, nose to nose from a "German Shepherd". There was no collar, black coal eyes staring at me less than two feet away. Another coyote encounter again. I grabbed Shoes, while I continued to scream. As I made my way inside, I saw him run down my side yard.

It may take a couple of hours for my blood pressure medicine to kick in, hopefully soon as my head is about to come off, but I'm so thankful my "puppy" and I didn't get attacked by the coyote.

Shoes and I are now cuddled up on the couch and she doesn't want to go outside anymore tonight, and neither do I.

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Law of Close Encounters:

The probability of meeting someone you know increases dramatically when you are with someone you don't want to be seen with.

She's Alive!

by Belinda Talley



Artwork by Connie Lougheed

Knowing the risks, we ducked under the "No Trespassing" sign and negotiated our way through the brittle-barbed wire. We were warned not to go back to the grave. "Let the dead, be dead," they said. But to us, it was like a rite of passage. We had to prove that we were brave enough not to chicken out.

In 1837 Sally Carter died at the age of fifteen, nearly our age. They say that her ghost haunts the grounds around the homeplace. She supposedly hates cigarettes and if you hold a lit cigarette over her grave, it will mysteriously go out.

All of the kids from Huntsville High hung out at the south Shoney's. (There was no Grissom yet). We were a car full of gutsy girls and ready to accept the dare. Oh, we had been to the grave before, many times; but never at night.

Several carloads of kids left Shoney's and headed to the church parking lot. It backed up to the woods leading to the grave.

My heart pounded, twigs cracked, briars grabbed me and the scent of musty wood allowed my imagination to run wild. Keep moving, focus, you can do this, settle down, I told myself. Looking back, I realized that our group was all girls. We were told to walk to the grave and light a cigarette. Then wait.

How hard can that be? There's several of us. What could possibly happen?

We made it to the grave and someone lit the cigarette. We were watching for the smoke to go out when we heard the scream.

"SHE'S ALIVE," stabbed into our silent night. Jerking our heads upward, we saw her! She whizzed right past us. No denying it now, she is real for sure. We scatter-ran in every direction; every direction away from that grave, that is.

Reaching the No Trespassing sign, I thought I was safe. Until I saw the backside of the sign, someone had scrawled, "You're Next!"

Lunging toward my car, I jumped inside, revved up the engine and took off. It didn't matter who came with me; if you jumped in, you got away. We still have scars from Sally Carter. Scars on our brain and our legs. Were the scars caused from briars or from Sally?

About a week later we discovered that some of the football players had visited the grave earlier that afternoon. They had tied down a sapling and attached a white tee shirt to the top. The lit cigarette over the grave was their cue. One boy screamed, "She's Alive," while another cut the rope. That white shirt ghost shot straight up and so did we!

I've lived in Huntsville, Alabama nearly all of my life, but that particular night I should have renamed it Hauntsville, Alabama.



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1966**

Discovering Chess Pie

by L. D. Rogers

I didn't get to know about chess pie until I was in the 11th grade at Dorian's High School. It was a private school that you could go to half a day and then work in the afternoons. I had lost two years of school because of sickness and then found out that I could go to this school and earn my high school diploma which had started to become important back in the 50s.

I talked mother and daddy into letting me go there and they were all for it. It was a school that taught the three Rs - Reading, Riting and Rithmetic. They also taught bookkeeping and typing. I learned more at that school the two years I went there than all the other times I had gone to school.

Let's get back to the pie. The school was located in downtown Paducah, KY and was a block and a half from the Greyhound Bus Station. Back then they had restaurants in the bus stations. We got a break in our school work every day at 10am and sometimes we would go to the bus station and have a snack.

Other times our teacher, Miss Mary, would let us go to her house and she would entertain us on her grand piano. When she found out that I played I ended up with that job.

But most of the time we would rather go to the bus station and that's where I found out about chess pie. I would get a slice of pie and a cup of hot chocolate and to me that was heaven on earth.

My mother was a wonderful cook but somehow chess pie had missed her recipes and she had never made one. I was very grateful for my education and I sure was glad to find chess pie. We have been friends for a long time now.

Mama's Chess Pie

3/4 stick butter
3 eggs
1 cup sugar
1/4 cup milk
1/2 t. salt
1 tablespoon corn meal
1 teaspoon white vinegar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Cream butter and sugar. Add eggs, mix well and add other ingredients.

Pour mixture into unbaked pie shell. Bake at 350 degrees for 40-45 minutes until knife inserted and comes out clean.

"Today after my 72-hour shift at the fire station, a woman ran up to me at the grocery store and gave me a hug. When I tensed up, she realized I didn't recognize her. She said with tears in her eyes, 'On 9/11/2001 you carried me out of the World Trade Center.'"

A New York Fireman

VERY OLD EGGNOG RECIPE

2 eggs
1 can Eagle Brand Milk
1 t. vanilla extract
1/4t. salt
1 qt. milk
1/2 pt. heavy cream, whipped
Nutmeg to taste
Cinnamon to taste

Combine the well beaten eggs, Eagle Brand milk, vanilla and salt. Gradually beat in milk til well blended. Gently fold in the whipped cream. Sprinkle with nutmeg & cinnamon and serve.

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A Raccoon Story

by M.D. Smith, IV



(This story inspired by a real event witnessed by Cathy Carney, Publisher)

The cold barren night of winter had not proved fruitful for the Raccoon family. Just before daylight, Mamma Raccoon, her three babies close beside her, rummaged back porches of homes nearby the woods where they lived. Nothing compared to the fall when her kits first went on trips with her. It would have to be the last trash sack to rummage before heading home for the day.

"Kits, we'll have to make do with the little bit we found earlier, it's about time to head home." No sooner said to her kits, when a large barking dog emerged from nowhere and was snarling with teeth bared.

"Run, kits, hide quickly, and I'll make the dog chase me. I'll find you later. Hide, now!"

Sister and two brothers scurried behind lattice work and house underpinning as mom distracted the dog and ran away, with the dog zig-zagging behind her.

When all was quiet. "What will be do?" Brother One said.

"We should stay here until Mamma comes back," replied Sister.

"I think we should go back to the woods. We know the way,"

Brother Two said.

"It's dangerous for us to be alone, and crossing the road without Mamma to watch.. well we shouldn't," Sister replied.

She was out-voted by her brothers and rather than remain alone, she reluctantly tagged along.

Presently they came to the edge of the four-lane road. It was late morning and the cars were whizzing past in groups.

"Look at those cars," she said, "Mamma warned us about them." Brother One responded, "We have to get home. We've come this far and look, every so often the cars stop going by and we can cross without worry if we hurry."

Her pointed nose was shaking back and forth and she was squinting her masked eyes. "No, this is a terrible idea. I don't even think Mamma would cross here and she is wiser than the three of us together."

"Sister, I think Brother is right," said Brother Two, "soon as the cars stop again, we need to scurry across the road and go home."

"No, please. I wish you wouldn't. I'm going back to where we were and wait for Mamma. I'll stay all night if

I have to. If she has not come back, then I might consider crossing before the sun comes up, and there are no cars here."

"You are a scaredy kit," Brother Two said.

"Yeah, we got to go now. Look the cars have stopped," Brother One replied.

It was true, at the moment, there were no cars. Although they paused with thought of what Sister said, Brother One began to scurry across the road, followed closely by Brother Two.

They were not even past a full lane when Sister saw the cars returning, two lead cars nearly side by side. She turned away as the distance shortened quickly between the cars and her brothers. She jumped as the sound of screeching tires, the terrible sounds that followed, and then the cars speeding on to their destinations. She was terrified and didn't want to look. But she had to. Her worst of fears realized. Both bothers now lying in the road, on their backs, feet in the air, and not moving. She knew they were gone.

Sister returned to the place she last saw her mother. When Mamma showed up, as she hoped Mamma would, Sister had a wrenching tale to tell.

Someday when Sister became a mother, she'd never let her kits get near the road any other time than just before sunrise.



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A Country Boy's Dream

by Hugh Michaels

You can take a boy from the country, but you can't take the country from the boy.

I was raised on a farm. My dad was a carpenter. He worked at odd jobs. The farming was left to my two sisters, a brother and myself. A bachelor uncle was supposed to supervise. He was not a good supervisor. The siblings helped each other. I was the younger of the group. Because I was the younger, I caught a lot of the "flack". They thought I got the easiest work assignments. That was not true.

I hated to see cotton being planted. We raised chickens, pigs and other animals. I did not like to pick cotton. Once you got to the end of a row, you had to turn around and go back over the territory of cotton.

I did not see any future for me in doing farm work. I dreamed of having a desk job. I knew that I needed some education in order for this dream to become a reality. The first step was to graduate

from high school - which I did. The next step was college. However, the end of World War II and the beginning of the Korean Conflict caused a delay in my plans.

Lot of boys my age were being drafted. I did not want any part of the Army. I beat the draft by two weeks.

I was already in the Air Force and serving my time. I was stationed at Lackland Air Force in San Antonio. I served four years in various Air Force bases. While in the Air Force, I was promoted to Staff Sergeant. I was very proud of my achievement.

My dream of having a desk job was still very much in my plans. After serving my time, I had to make a decision. Do I stay in the Air Force or do I go to college? Do I return to pushing a "pick sack"? OH, NO PLEASE! Don't go back to the cotton fields. I hated the thought of going back to the farm. Please give me a better choice.

I made a great decision. I went to college and I graduated from Jacksonville State College in three years. The government was good to me - I was able to take advantage of the GI Bill. The bill made it possible for me to make, perhaps, the best decision of my life.

After graduating, I taught school. I coached basketball and taught civics. School teaching was not for me. I taught two years and six weeks.

I accepted a job on Redstone Arsenal. I did this in order to get into the civil service. It was a low-paying job (clerk general - GS 4). My acceptance of the job enabled me to have a great opportunity and man, did I take advantage of my decision! I was making progress on my plans - I wanted a desk job.

Time passed, and I was very happy working for the civil service. Eventually, I was promoted to Contracting Officer - GS 14. My task was negotiating contracts with the private industry and the government in support of the Hawk and Patriot Missile systems. It was a demanding job. It was a job that made you proud that you were helping the nation grow stronger.

I worked 37 years. I had many heartaches. I had to buckle down many times. I did just that and came away with many rewards.

Through all the many jobs I had the aid of my Maker - the Lord Jesus Christ. God helped me through many problems. Thank the Lord for helping me reach my goal.

I am now retired and enjoying my five precious granddaughters.

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A BIRD DOG AND OATMEAL

by Derek T. Robertson

I couldn't sleep last night. All I could think about was seeing Whitey on point and with a quick kick in the grass with my foot the quail would flush. The familiar sweet smell of gunpowder and a kick in the shoulder would be most welcomed after I squeezed the trigger of my shotgun. Maybe if I turned my pillow to the cool side it would have helped me fall asleep.

I guess I need to tell you who Whitey is and why I couldn't sleep last night, or this story doesn't make any sense. Whitey is a beautiful Llewelyn Setter and he belongs to my friend and hunting guide Danny. Whitey happens to be the best bird dog I ever had the pleasure to hunt with. Today I met up with them to do a little quail hunting. When I woke up, (I guess I could sleep after all) I did my normal routine before my hunt with them as I always do. I made a pot of coffee. Strong and lots of it. While it brewed, I took two shotguns and put them in their respective cases. I took a box of shotgun shells and dumped them in my ammo bag.

"Mmmmmm, not the greatest shot. Better dump another one in there for good measure," I thought. I'm getting pretty excited now. I load the rest of my gear in my truck. It is nippy this morning, so I start the engine and let the cab warm up a bit before I head to northeast Alabama. The two women that live with me - my wife and daughter, are up before the crack of noon - surprisingly. After our morning greetings they began to tell me of their plans for the day. Uh huh, yep, I figured it would be "too cold" outside for you to do the chores in the flower beds. Their plans, coincidentally, changed suddenly. Today is going to be a shopping day instead they sang with glee. "Mmmmmm, I wonder how much this is gonna cost me."

I poured my coffee in my cup and the rest in my thermos. A quick kiss on the cheeks of my girls and I'm off to the field to meet Whitey and Danny. I didn't have any breakfast. I need to lose a little weight but as I drive, I'm really think-

ing about that sausage and egg McMuffin at McDonald's. I loathe McDonald's and I apologize to the franchise owners, employees and folks that love their food. It's just that...well, I hate their food. It's not that their food is not right, but rather because it is all wrong. All except their McMuffins. There is just something about them that tastes so good with a strong black cup of coffee. Especially on a cool morning involving a quail hunt. Gonna be a lot of walking, I said to myself. Lots of calories are going to burn I continue convincing myself. So the next thing I know I pull into Mickey D's and order two of those sausage and egg McMuffins. One should be enough, but I remembered what I just said to myself - "there would be a lot of walking."

Now it may seem like the only thing I was thinking about the night before and today was the hunt. The good Lord gave me the gift of being able to think of two things at once. Most of the time the one thing I am pondering is something I enjoy and the other is a regular life problem. Lately my troubles have been with the young women in my life. My daughters. They are beautiful and have wonderful hearts but some of their thinking, well let's just say doesn't agree with me and what the Good Book says about being honest.

Believe it or it I can think about these two things at the same time all of which is going on under my thinking cap while I'm next in line to place my order with the McDonald's crew leader that just wiped her nose on the sleeve of her uniform.

Just before I place my order, this lady who

**The doctor called Mrs. Cohen saying, "Mrs. Cohen, your check came back."
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is dressed way too young for her age cuts in line in front of me. Her actual age is showing through the several coats of makeup she sprayed on with a Black and Decker Power Sprayer. You ain't hiding anything girl! Goldie Locks feels like she can just cut in line and order something else because "she forgot something!" Somehow the rule of waiting your turn is not in effect and apparently if you forgot something, it is perfectly fine to disregard the person next in line. I think I'm going to change my last name to "Next." That way I will never have to wait in line at any restaurant ever again.

As I am waiting for my order number to be called, I notice a family sitting nearby where I was standing. Goldie Locks just cut in line again in front of the next customer. Maybe she forgot jelly this time, or maybe she likes grape instead of strawberry.

There appears to be a mother and a father in their fifties, I decipher their ages in my head. Next to the mother is an elderly woman, maybe her mother or the mother-in-law. I suspect mother-in-law because she was sitting next to the woman and not the man. Their backs were for the most part turned toward me. But I notice next to the table is a young lady sitting in a wheel chair and facing me. Southern manners were instilled in me from the time I could walk, and I was taught not to stare. But I was not staring. Instead I was looking.

For some reason she caught my attention. She was expressionless. Even the blink of her eyes was slower than most people's blink. The mother gently spoons oatmeal in her mouth. The young lady is 100% paralyzed all but her eyes and mouth. I give up an uncomfortable smile at her hoping I get one in return. But she stares right through me. Mom spoons another bite and she slowly swallows the oatmeal. Although she will never know it, this young lady was my special blessing for today.

I thought how blessed I am to have healthy sons, daughters and a grandson. How blessed am I not to have to experience the pain and struggles this mother and father had to endure, yet their love for her is as strong as any other good parents.

Mama had her dressed warm in a colorful fluffy snowflake pattern covered sweater and fuzzy fur boots with the balls dangling on the end of the strings. Dad's with daughters know the kind of boots I am talking about. I guess her age could have been anywhere from 16 to 20 years old. I thought for a moment. This young lady not only will be limited in her movement and thought but she will never be able to argue with her dad about her dress being too short. She will not cry over a heartache about a boyfriend. She will not fight with her mother about her clothes and the latest styles. She will not be able to clean up after dinner or even make dinner for her family. She will never be untruthful for she cannot speak. Grades will not matter nor will there be arguments over the college she wishes to attend. Dad will not have a broken heart because she will never marry.

She doesn't know how much she is showing love to me in our brief encounter.

If only some people would look at her and smile an uncomfortable smile and wait for one to be returned, would they experience true blessings and understand what it truly means

to be thankful for our undeserved Godsend. Though many may feel there is little she can offer. But for me, she was my special blessing. She will always be a good girl.

"I hope you are at least enjoying your warm oatmeal," the McDonald's crew leader yells!

My order is ready. Off to the field to meet Whitey.

With me comes that young lady's special blessing she gave to me and the craving for a bowl of oatmeal.

Nearly 80% of previously arrested burglars surveyed said information from social media helps them plan robberies.

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