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Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

ALABAMA FOOTBALL AND THE BEAR



Also in this issue: Booker T. Washington Travels Through Alabama; Unusual Superstitions; JFK Remembers a Huntsville Soldier; Cat Heroes; City News from 1911; Growing up in Huntsville; 1925 Recipes and Much More!

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1946
From Right: J.M. Lewter, G. Gideon,
C. Giles, H. Brock, J. Fogg

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Doris Lewter

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Alabama Football and the Bear

M.D. Smith, IV

I transferred from the University of Virginia, where the football team never won a game the two seasons of 1959 and 1960, to the University of Alabama. The two football seasons ('61 and '62) while I was at Alabama, the Bear and the Crimson Tide only lost one game. They won the '62 Sugar Bowl and the '63 Orange Bowl. Two terrific seasons of football.

The "Bear" was a legend while I was there. He became more, being the winningest coach in college football with 323 wins. The record only lasted a few years after his death.

The TV Playbacks

If you ever missed a game, or just wanted to revel in some outstanding plays made in the game, then you watched TV on Sunday afternoon. Every

A rubber-band pistol was confiscated from an algebra class because it was a weapon of math disruption."

city in Alabama and many in other states carried this replay summary and narration.

Coke and Golden Flake Potato Chips sponsored Paul William "Bear" Bryant's TV replays. It was a one-hour condensation of the entire game including ALL the Alabama plays and usually all of the opponent's offensive plays. The TV and media money was over half Bryant's salary, so he hardily endorsed and consumed his sponsor's products as he and a narrator replayed the game, trimmed to fit in an hour. Various sponsorships like this contributed to over half of Bryant's income and was encouraged by the University.

Half Time Comebacks

Alabama under The Bear often was behind the other team, but after half-time would go on to win. People ask why. So did I, and after digging it was several things; fitness of the players, depth of the bench strength and motivation. What did he say at these half time meetings that so motivated his players to come back sometimes from three touchdowns behind and win? There is no question the players wanted to win and succeed for Bear. But particularly at half-time, Bryant would inspire them to make their mommas



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I had a recent conversation with Benny Nelson, a running back who played with Joe Namath in the '61 through '63 seasons. He told me he remembered "Coach" saying, "OK, boys, we got them right where we want them." Benny chuckled and I asked him was it a joke. He said, "Maybe both a joke and something serious."

"Well, the first thing we did was take off our Jersey's and pads to get cool. Then we'd often hear from the coaches in the observation booth about what were good plays and bad on both team's parts."

When I asked about motivation, he remembered. "Yes, Coach did often wind up when we were behind reminding the players their mommas and daddies were out there watching and he knew we didn't want to let them down. We didn't want to let Coach Bryant down either."

Sometimes Bama could come out overconfident at the start of the game. Make some

fumbles, interceptions and missed tackles, and the opposing team would spring ahead by a touchdown. If it became two, that's a kind of positive momentum for the other side and a "downer" for Bama.

Going into half-time, the other team might now be overconfident and Bama could shift the momentum in the second half and go on to win.


The other factor in winning in the last quarter was "bench-strength." That means he had a second and third-string that was almost as good as the first. He'd substitute early and often in the game. By the third quarter and indeed the fourth, Bear had nearly fresh players to continue rotating in and out, with the competition's first-string worn out, and it showed. Their second and thirds were weak. Thus Bama could run up the score in the final quarter, making it a blowout from a half time deficit.

Bryant didn't lose many football games, but here's

what he said when he did. "It's awfully important to win with humility. It's also important to lose. I hate to lose worse than anyone, but if you never lose you won't know how to act. If you lose with humility, then you can come back."

And come back he did. Everyone hated to be the team that Bama played after they lost the previous Saturday. The Bama players and coaches wanted to redeem themselves with a vengeance. They almost always did.

Of winning, Coach Bryant said, "Winning isn't everything, but it beats anything that comes in second." There have been many books written about Paul "Bear" Bry-



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ant. Another title for sale is, "I Ain't Never Been Nothing but a Winner", written by Creed & Heidi Tyline King.

Bryant's winning attitude goes back to his hard farm days in Moro Bottoms, Arkansas. Author Don Keith, in his book, "Bear, The Legendary Life of Coach Paul "Bear" Bryant", tells of those childhood days. A boy called him and his family "dirty pig farmers who were nothing but losers." That boy got a tomato against his head. That night when Bryant told his family at the table, he said they might be poor, but they weren't losers. The next day he won a "five-mile in less than thirty minutes" timed running event and a \$2.00 bet. He won it to prove he was a winner and the losing boy paid him two silver dollars.

Motivation

Ingrained in Paul "Bear" Bryant's soul from those early days in Arkansas was the desire to work hard to win. It motivated him and he knew if he could pass that attitude along to his players, they'd win too. He taught his players to "focus." Distractions only made it more difficult. That's the reason he insisted all his players live in a separate dorm from the bulk of the student body. They ate, worked, practiced and slept together. Sure, they had to pass school classes, but football was the prime subject to earn an "A."

"A gun is alot like a parachute. If you need one, and don't have one, you'll probably never need one again."

Ken Owens

In Bear Bryant's autobiography, "Bear: The Hard Life and Good Times of Alabama's Coach Bryant", as told to John Underwood author, you'll find a great deal more about what motivated the man and how he tried to motivate his players. He also talks about the players I knew when I was there in the early 60s: Joe Namath, Benny Nelson (RB) and Billy Neighbors who played Offensive Line. The last two players are from Huntsville. Bryant said that Billy struggled with classes and keeping his grade up was hard for him. On the other hand, Joe was brilliant. It came easy for him so he barely worked, took easy courses and mostly coasted through school. On the field, they all worked, though and Bryant said Joe was gifted, with moves that came naturally.

I took one easy class with Joe and six of the other players, along with Benny Nelson, called "History of the Christian Church." I took it the fall of my last year, 1962. I needed it

because other senior classes were hard. No one made less than a "B." I did study and there were tests with facts and dates. I still remember in AC 1517, the small-town monk Martin Luther marched up to the castle church in Wittenberg and nailed his 95 Theses to the door. (Note: I did have to look up the year again.)

Death of The Bear

Somewhere in the middle of his Alabama career, Bryant said, "I plan on staying at Alabama for the rest of my career. I guarantee that I'll be here for you through it all, regardless of what happens." He meant what he said.

Once a reporter was talking to him about his fame, and the Bear said, "I'll be forgotten as soon as they lay me to rest." It's been thirty-seven years since he died and he's nowhere near being forgotten.

In the 70s, Bryant increased his smoking and drinking. That and his age began to

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take a toll on him. By the 80s, it was apparent that not only was his health declining, but so was the Tide's win-loss record.

In '80 and '81 the Bear lost two games and his last season of '82 lost four games. He decided to retire at the end of the 1982 season before the final Bowl game. Alabama did win the Wednesday, December 29th Liberty Bowl in Memphis that year against Illinois by a score of 21 to 15 with Bryant coaching his last game. Alabama lost the previous three games. I believe the players were determined to win that career-ending one for the Bear. It was a tough game, even with the Tide making seven interceptions.

Earlier in his career, he was asked about retiring. His response, "Quit coaching? I'd croak in a week."

He was off by three weeks. Four weeks after the Liberty Bowl, he checked into Druid City Hospital in Tuscaloosa, following some chest pain. He died of a heart attack the next day on Wednesday, January 26, 1983. The 69-year-old Bryant was a man who dedicated the last 25 years of his life to the University of Alabama. He won a national title as a player in 1934 and six more as a coach at his alma mater. Tide football was his life. He gave the game and his beloved Alabama literally all he had and nearly his dying breath.

The whole state of Alabama remembered "9-11" as the Bear's Birthday until a later event in New York eclipsed that day in 2001.

From a service in Tuscaloosa, the motorcade stretching for three miles headed to Birmingham. More than 5,000 people attended his funeral at Elmwood Cemetery. Some said as many as 8,000 tried to jam in to get a glimpse of lowering his coffin into the ground. Here are some other famous Bear quotes:

"Don't give up at half-time. Concentrate on winning the second half."

"No coach has ever won a game by

what he knows; it's what his players know that counts."

"There's a lot of blood, sweat and guts between dreams and success."

"Never be too proud to get down on your knees and pray."

"A good, quick, small team can beat a big, slow team any time."

The following is an excerpt from Bryant's story, "It Don't Cost Nuthin' To Be Nice:"

"I had just been named the new head coach at Alabama and was off in my old car down in South Alabama, recruiting a prospect who was supposed to have been a pretty good player, and I was having trouble finding the place. Getting hungry, I spied an old cinder block building with a small sign out front that simply said "Restaurant."

I pull up, go in and every head in the place turns to stare at me. Seems I'm the only white fella in the place. But the food smelled good, so I skip a table and go up to a cement bar and sit. A big ole man in a tee shirt and cap comes over and says, "What do you need?"

I told him I needed lunch and what did they have today?

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"It may take a village to raise a child but I swear it's going to take a vineyard to home school one."

Judy Jamison, Gurley

He says, "You probably won't like it here. Today we're having chitlins, collard greens and black-eyed peas with cornbread. I'll bet you don't even know what chitlins are, do you?"

I looked him square in the eye and said, "I'm from Arkansas, and I've probably eaten a mile of them. Sounds like I'm in the right place."

They all smiled as he left to serve me up a big plate. When he comes back he says, "You ain't from around here then?" I explain I'm the new football coach up in Tuscaloosa at the University and I'm here to find whatever that boy's name was, and he says, "Yeah I've heard of him, he's supposed to be pretty good." And he gives me directions to the school so I can meet him and his coach.

As I'm paying up to leave, I remember my manners and leave a tip, not too big to be flashy, but a good one, and he told me lunch was on him, but I told him for a lunch that good, I felt I should pay. The big man asked me if I had a photograph or something he could hang up to show I'd been there. I was so new that I didn't have any yet. It really wasn't that


big a thing back then to be asked for, but I took a napkin and wrote his name and address on it and told him I'd get him one.

I met the kid I was looking for later that afternoon and I don't remember his name, but do remember I didn't think much of him when I met him. I had wasted a day, or so I thought. When I got back to Tuscaloosa late that night, I took that napkin from my shirt pocket and put it under my keys so I wouldn't forget it. Back then I was excited that anybody would want a picture of me. The next day we found a picture, and I wrote on it, "Thanks for the best lunch I've ever had."

Now let's go a whole buncha years down the road. Now we have black players at Alabama, and I'm back down in that part of the country scouting an offensive lineman we sure needed. Y'all remember, (and I forget the name, but it's not important to

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the story), well anyway, he's got two friends going to Auburn, and he tells me he's got his heart set on Auburn too, so I leave empty handed and go on to see some others while I'm down there.

Two days later, I'm in my office in Tuscaloosa and the phone rings and it's this kid who just turned me down, and he says, "Coach, do you still want me at Alabama?"

And I said, "Yes, I sure do." And he says OK, he'll come.

And I say, "Well son, what changed your mind?" And he said, "When my grandpa found out that I had a chance to play for you and said no, he pitched a fit and told me I wasn't going nowhere but Alabama, and I wasn't playing for nobody but you. He thinks a lot of you and has ever since y'all met."

Well, I didn't know his granddad from Adam's housecat, so I asked him who his granddaddy was and he said, "You probably don't remember him, but you ate in his restaurant your first year at Alabama, and you sent him a picture that he's had hung in that place ever since. That picture's his pride and joy, and he still tells everybody about the day that Bear Bryant came in and had chitlins with him..."

"My grandpa said that when you left there, he never expected you to remember him or to send him that picture, but you kept your word to him and to Grandpa, that's everything. He said you could teach me more than football and I had to play for a man like you, so I guess I'm going to."

I was floored. But I learned that the lessons my mama taught me were always right. It don't cost nuthin' to be nice. It don't cost nuthin' to do the right thing most of the time, and it costs a lot to lose your good name by breaking your word to someone.



When I went back to sign that boy, I looked up his Grandpa and he's still running that place, but it looks a lot better now. And he didn't have chitlins that day, but he had some ribs that would make Dreamland proud. I made sure I posed for a lot of pictures; and don't think I didn't leave some new ones for him, too, along with a signed football."

The Bear did teach his football players a lot more than football. He was a moral and spiritual leader who expected his players to follow the straight path. Today many still recall his guidance and they will tell you it helped them become better men.

In conclusion, during my recent talk with Benny Nelson, I asked him if he had one outstanding memory of his three seasons playing Alabama football.

There was a pause on the phone, and then he said, "I sure do. We were going for the winning game touchdown, Joe Namath handed me the ball, and I was going for the goal. I was tackled hard, went down, and lost the ball on the three-yard line. We lost the game. I'll never forget that one."



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"I Do?"

by *Betty Hallmark Atkinson*

On the day I was getting married, there were so many signs that I should have seen as warnings, but I was a young girl of just 15 years old. The guy I was marrying was 19 years old and we had plans to drive to Iuka, Mississippi to get married.

I had just taken a bath in preparing for the wedding, when my brother called with car trouble, so I threw on an old house coat, bare footed. My Mother and I took off in Daddy's old pick-up truck.

When we got to the place where my brother said he was, he was no longer there, so we turned around and headed back home, when we ran out of gas. Is this a sign?

I told Mother that we were going to have to walk, she said she couldn't because as it turned

out she was bare-footed too. So I got out of the truck, luckily a car was coming down the road, so I flagged it down. A man and his wife took me to a store, to get gas, but I didn't have a can. The man had a gas can and went into the store with me.

I told the store keeper to charge the gas to my Daddy. He asked who my Daddy was, when I told him his name, he said, "Honey I don't know him!"

Well the man who had given me the ride said he would pay for the gas. But how was I going to walk all the way back to our truck, not thinking about him probably wanting his gas can back. Not only did that stranger and his wife take me back to the truck, but they took the time to make sure that it started again.

Finally I got home, got dressed and was headed to Iuka to get married. We got to Sheffield, Alabama, wouldn't you know it, we came to a railroad crossing, had to wait for the longest train to pass. Was this another sign?

We finally got to the courthouse in Iuka, to get the marriage licence, then we had to go to a Minister's home for the marriage ceremony.

My knees were unsteady, and we had said our vows, my ring had just been placed on my finger, when the Minister asked me if there was another ring. Dumb me, I held up the finger with the engagement ring and the wedding band, and I said, "No Sir, I've got them both right here"! The Minister meant, was there a ring for my husband. Signs?

God was showing me all kinds of signs that day, to prevent that marriage, but I was just too young and stupid to see them. (The marriage did last for seventeen years before ending in divorce).

There were so many signs that day why I shouldn't get married, but as it turns out, God also has his reasons for what is put in our life, as I was blessed with three beautiful daughters from the marriage.

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Travels Through Alabama

by Booker T. Washington

Originally published in OHM 1999

Born a slave, Booker T. Washington became the greatest leader of the Negro race in America. Trained at Hampton Institute he early became convinced that his race must achieve economic independence before he could attain political equality. Idolized by his own people, he was trusted too by the whites, and the great Kentucky editor, Henry Watterson, said of him that "no man, since the war of sections, has exercised such influence and done such real good for the country - especially to the South."

He talked of his travels throughout Alabama.

"I REACHED Tuskegee, as I have said, early in June, 1888. The first month I spent in handing accommodations for the school and in traveling through Alabama, examining into the actual life of the people, especially in the country districts, and in getting the school advertised among the class of people that I wanted to have attend it. The most of my traveling was done over the country roads with a mule and a cart or a mule and a buggy wagon for conveyance.

I ate and slept with the people in their little cabins. I saw their farms, their schools, their churches. Since in the case of the most of these visits there had been no notice given in advance that a stranger was expected, I had the advantage of seeing the real, everyday life of the people.

In the plantation districts I found that as a rule the whole family slept in one room and that in addition to the immediate family there sometimes were relatives, or others not related to the family, who slept in the same room. On more than one occasion I went outside the house to get ready for bed or to wait until the family had gone to bed. They usually contrived some kind of place for me to sleep, either on the floor or in a special part of another's bed.

Rarely was there any place provided in the cabin where one could bathe even the face and hands, but usually some provision was made for this outside the house, in the yard.

The common diet of the people was fat pork and corn bread. At times I have eaten in cabins where they had only corn bread and black-eye peas cooked in plain water. The people seemed to have no other idea than to live on this fat meat and corn bread, the meat and the meal of which the bread was made having been bought at a high price at a store in town. The land all about the cabin homes could easily have been made to produce nearly every kind of garden vegetable that is raised anywhere in the country.

Their one object seemed to be to plant nothing but cotton and in many cases cotton was



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state had not been able to build schoolhouses in the country districts, and as a rule the schools were taught in churches or in log cabins.

More than once while on my journeys I found that there was no provision made in the house used for school purposes for heating the building during the winter. Consequently a fire had to be built in the yard and teacher and pupils passed in and out of the house as they got cold or warm.

With few exceptions I found the teachers in these country schools to be miserably poor in preparation for their work and poor in moral character. The schools were in session from

three to five months. There was practically no apparatus in the schoolhouses except that occasionally there was a rough blackboard.

I recall that one day I went into a schoolhouse - or rather into an abandoned log cabin that was being used as a schoolhouse - and found five pupils who were studying a lesson from one book. Two of these, on the front seat, were using the book between them; behind these were two others peeping over the shoulders of the first two. Behind the four was a fifth little fellow who was peeping over the shoulders of all four.

What I have said concerning the character of the schoolhouses and teachers will also apply quite accurately as a description of the church buildings and the ministers."

planted up to the very door of the cabin.

In these cabin homes I often found sewing machines which had been bought, or were being bought, on installments, frequently at a cost of as much as sixty dollars, or showy clocks for which the occupants of the cabins had paid twelve or fourteen dollars.

I remember that on one occasion when I went into one of these cabins for dinner, when I sat down to the table for a meal with the four members of the family, I noticed that, while there were five of us at the table, there was but one fork for the five of us to use. Naturally there was an awkward pause on my part. In the opposite corner of that same cabin was an organ for which the people told me they were paying sixty dollars in monthly installments. One fork and a sixty-dollar organ!

With a few exceptions I found that the crops were mortgaged in the counties where I went and that the most of the colored farmers were in debt. The



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**"The cure for boredom
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Dorothy Parker



Same song, second verse, school has started and fall is just around the corner. Folks, listen up. The weather will get bad; some of you will lose power. A few have generators. If you plan to use a generator, get it checked out before you are ready to use it.

It must be twenty feet from your house along with the fuel. Don't do like we did on that icy morning in 1996 when the power went out. The generator was in the garage with the garage door shut to keep out the cold. That is a "no-no." After running for twelve hours and some carbon monoxide seeping into the house, a more significant problem developed. We had the garage-to-house door cracked a tad for the AC cord, so some seeped in that way.

What was the disaster was when the AC power came back on, the garage was filled with carbon monoxide, and the gas was literally "sucked" inside by the cold air return just inside that same door. It distributed it to every room, including the bedroom where my husband was re-

covering from a hip replacement surgery. Moreover, he didn't think to get anyone to shut off the generator when power was restored.

A son found me in the hall unconscious and both my husband and I were rushed to the hospital. The doctor who tested our blood said we might not have lived to the next day if we didn't get in the hyperbaric chamber.

After what seemed hours in the chambers, our blood levels were back to normal. Carbon monoxide is odorless and colorless. It will also make you sleepy and dizzy if you are standing. Have CO detectors in your house.

Many of you called in the last several weeks to check how I'm doing after a late June knee replacement. Well, let me tell you, it is no walk in the park. Anyone facing the surgery, plan on having plenty of help and do the therapy. It certainly isn't for sissies. I'm now at the point of taking baby steps (in early August). I keep saying, "This too will pass," and trying to keep smiling.

The crazy virus isn't helping at all. At last report, deaths keep going up rapidly. I'll remind y'all again and again to "Mask-up," wash your hands and stay six to eight feet apart. Better still, stay home. Read back issues of Old Huntsville Magazine.

Gotta run to another therapy visit. Check on your friends, call them often and brighten their day.

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JFK Remembers a Huntsville Soldier and His Family

by Bobby Hayden as told to Steve Gierhart

Bill Cosby said "My children love my mother. I tell them that is not the same woman I grew up with...That's an old woman trying to get into heaven."

My mom, Fannie Battle Hayden, was a little like that, but also like that benevolent emperor, Augustus Caesar. She knew when to be kind but also when to cut a head off. Momma often said "This is not a democracy; this is a dictatorship."

I guess in the long run, she knew best. I've had a remarkable life. Luck certainly entered into it, but I know she helped me get there.

Back before many of my color were given the same opportunities as others, I was an angry young man, but Fannie helped guide that constructively. I was drafted into the United States Army on January 2, 1961. I was student teaching at the time and about to graduate from Alabama A&M. My mom worked in the cafeteria there, so I had to be on my best behavior. Couldn't get away from her, even by going to college, college being a rare feat for black men of my time. Thought my future was in the classroom, not in the White House with JFK where I ended up in June, 1962. I was one of the first group of black men in the Army's Old Guard, the 3rd Regiment out of Ft. Myers, Virginia.

That's a long story, too much for this little flashback, so I want to tell about an event that involved my momma, one after my assignment to the Honor Guard for President John F. Kennedy, and one that shows how that fine president watched over those who watched over him.

I had been with the Old Guard for a few months and knew the routine. I had gotten here by a circuitous route and an impossible set of odds, but when my mom found out about my new assignment, she quickly told me "Do your job and keep your mouth shut!" That was good advice for someone like me. After all, it was my firecracker emotion that could have gotten me a lot worse and sometimes did. It was also the reason I was with the Old Guard, though not before a lot of pushups handed out by my superiors at Ft. Chaffee where I was assigned before the White House.

On May 17, 1963 I was shining my ten pairs of shoes that matched my ten uniforms, something that had to be done every day if I was

to pass inspection. I was actually much happier here than at Ft Chaffee. I had taken momma's advice and worked hard to prove her right although I also admit to a desire to prove those wrong that thought I would never make it in Washington. I was interrupted by Sgt. Eldridge Johnson, my white staff sergeant, who had a note from the President's office. I was to report the next morning to Andrews AFB for duty aboard Air Force One.

Sgt. Johnson, who called me "Bama", did not know the reason, but I was excited regardless. I discovered that none of my African-American buddies in our Magnificent Seven, the seven first black initiates into the Presidential Honor Guard, were assigned to the trip. So I did not find out until the morning that I was to go to Huntsville where the President was giving an Armed Forces Day speech at Redstone Arsenal. I thought to myself, "Wow, if I can only call momma while I'm there!"

It was peculiar, but I did not have to report in my dress blues, my normal uniform for White House duty, but I had brought them for a quick change as necessary. The informality of the assignment was also odd. I was not a friend of the President or anything. Wasn't my job. The flight was uneventful if not fulfilling. I arrived jittery with excitement. Of course, I did not disembark with the Presidential party, but after the pomp and circumstance had fled the scene, I deplaned to find a staff car and driver had been assigned to me personally. And the driver was told to take me to Alabama A&M where I was to visit with momma!



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I arrived at A&M and went directly to the cafeteria. I managed to sneak in and walked up behind Fannie without her noticing me. I put my hands around her eyes and asked her to "guess who." Of course, she knew, but her expression was one I will never forget. She brightened up like the sun shining off of a field of daisies, because she and I both knew her hard work and perseverance had paid off. She turned around and we hugged for what seemed like an eternity, but in a serene way, happiness that was to be savored for more than a moment. Then the party started.

The word spread around campus. Even A&M Vice President Leander Patton heard about the commotion. He let out classes and before momma and I knew it, we were surrounded by friends and students. Mr. Patton, who headed up business and finance for the university and for whom I had worked as a student, came up to me and shook my hand, but with a huge smile asked "Why are you goofing off and are you AWOL?"

I took it all in stride, but I was very happy, especially for momma who, though well-respected in the university community, enjoyed the extra attention brought on by her son's assignment to such a prestigious position, one which also demonstrated the kindness and attention to detail that the President had for the members of his honor guard.

I spent about four hours at A&M while the President gave his speech, but I knew that while John Fitzgerald Kennedy had already earned my respect, he now won my heart along with my allegiance. I had been made to feel special by a special President. It was a day neither my mom or I would ever forget.

A friend never defends a husband who gets his wife a toilet plunger for her birthday.

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Local City News - 1911

- **C. S. Griswell**, a one-armed man of this city, this morning sent a load of bird shot into his left breast by pulling the trigger of a gun with his toe. Family troubles are said to have been the cause of his suicide.

- **Lost** - one gold watch fob with name of Johnny Jacobs on back. Finder please return to this office and receive reward.

- **Mr. J. M. Oldfield** and his daughter Miss Ora were thrown from their buggy while enroute to the Mill neighborhood yesterday afternoon. Mr. Oldfield was injured about the shoulders, while his daughter escaped being hurt. The animal was frightened at something in the road and ran up the side of the embankment.

- **The Old Huntsville Hotel** walls will be torn down. The walls left standing as the result of the burning of the Huntsville Hotel recently will be torn down, and men were seen today putting up scaffolds to do the work.

- **For Rent** - a new 4 room cottage at the corner of Pratt Avenue and 6th street for rent cheap - apply to J. E. Pierce

- **Young boy** dead on Walker Street - John F. Childers, Jr., the three and a half year old son of Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Childers, Sr. died at 5:30 o'clock at their home on Walker Street after an illness of several days. The remains were carried to Gurley this afternoon, where interment will be made in the family burying ground.

- **For Rent** - a good small farm, three miles from Huntsville. Has a good house and splendid barn. The right party can get a bargain. See Dr. I. P. Wyatt

- **Fred Peeden** is very ill of consumption at the home of his parents on Holmes Street.

- **Lost** - an amethyst ring, on Randolph Street, between Butler's school and Grahams Pharmacy. Finder return to this office and receive reward.

- **Miss Daisy Ducks** is dead. She was aged 17 years and died at the home of her uncle, Mr. J. N. Bogett, this morning at 2:15 at the Abingdon Mill Village. Funeral services will be conducted from the residence by Rev. M.

Marlow with interment in Maple Hill cemetery.

- **Many friends of Lena Baites** will learn with regret that she is sick at her home on Walker Street.

- **Chimney blown down last night.**

During the early hours of last night, while the rain and windstorm was at its worst, the north chimney of the residence of Mrs. C. C. Dement on West Holmes street was blown down. The occupants of the house and nearby neighbors were greatly frightened at the noise, but no one was hurt.

- **Cave in of Dirt at the Residence of Mr. Newt White Last Night**

What was said to be one of the old time ice houses, which were usually built under ground, caved in last night at the residence of Mr. Newt White on Adams Avenue. The cave in was on Locust street and to a depth of about ten feet.

- **For Rent** - one 7-room house with all modern conveniences. Walker Street. Apply to J. N. Mazza

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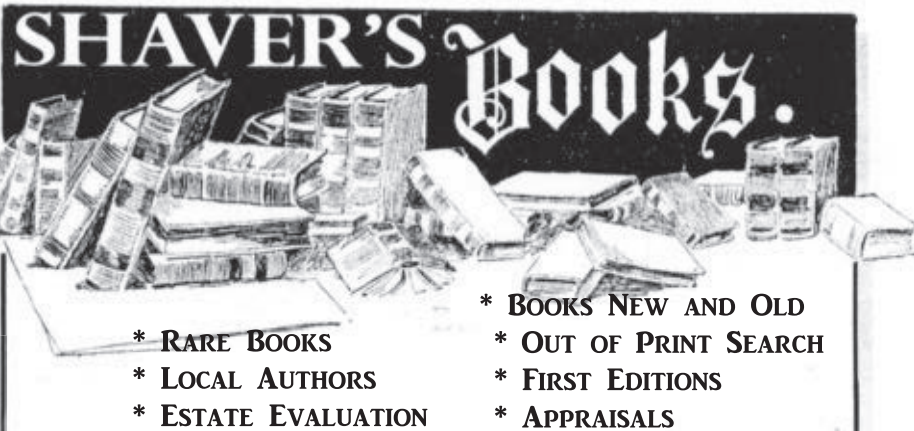
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A FAMILY HISTORIAN

by Barry Key

Reading "Lifelong Regrets That You Will Never Forget", August 2020, OHM, by Jean Brewer McCrady brought back guilty feelings that I had after the deaths of my mother and father. I would say that my family was as close as any family could be, but part of my grief following my mother's, then my father's, deaths was I had not talked to them more about their childhoods and how they met and married.

I promised myself (after mother's death) that I was going to spend more time talking with my father about his childhood days, but things (to my regret) kept being pushed to the back burner. Before I realized what was happening, he was diagnosed with dementia which lead to Alzheimer's.

I agree whole heartedly with Ms. McCrady, before it's too late, sit down with your grandparents, parents, aunts, uncles, siblings and friends and talk about their life's experiences. Take notes, record their voices, take their picture... it may seem callow and frivolous, but eventually it will be your most prized possession.

Which brings me to the subject of my story, Theresa Key McBride, my first cousin that I so admire for her diligent work in preserving our Key and Smith family history.

Theresa is the historian of the Key and Smith families and is a ge-

nius at historical research. She has more initiative, energy and patience than any person I have ever known. Theresa has written, and self published, at least 6 books related to our Key/Smith families.

Her first book was (and you ladies probably guessed it) a Key Family Cook Book. She contacted all the members of the Key family and asked that they send in one or two of their all time favorite recipes. Mingled throughout the book with the recipes are individual and family photos of the Key family members dating back to the 1940s.


Another book that coincides with Ms. McCrady's story. Theresa met with most of our older relatives and encouraged them to talk about their life growing up and raising a family. She recorded their conversations, edited and compiled their memories into a book along with their pictures.

Four books starting with our great, great, grandparents, the Keys and the Smiths, includes all our ancestry down to "my grandchildren". The books include birthdays, obituaries, wedding dates, stories, newspaper articles and numerous pictures of our family members dating back to the 1800s.

Our great grandfather, Tom Key, around 1903, donated land as a cemetery for family and friends living on Grassy Mountain. Theresa is one of the trustees for the Panquin Cemetery. There are now over 600 marked graves. She took pictures of the tombstones and through friends, relatives and various newspaper articles, she was able to compile a book with pictures of the deceased, their tombstone, his/her obituary and other related stories.

Another project was to collect a military picture of her uncles and cousins in uniform. She transferred those pictures to cloth and sewed the pictures into a quilt. It is a very nostalgic quilt for me because it has pictures of my dad and my two boys. Three wars are exhibited on the quilt, WWII, Korea and Viet Nam.

Except for the blanket, Theresa created and published the 6 books while employed full time. And now you see why I say she is the most active, energetic and patient person I know (her projects took years to create).



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Heard On the Street

by *Cathey Carney*



We had tons of calls identifying the sweet little girl in last month's Photo of the Month. Of course it was **Jackie Reed** who always tells it like it is and keeps her eye on all things city government. The first caller to ID her was **Ann Hancock**, of Huntsville, who said she has lots of respect for Jackie. Ann is retired, loves her family and working in the yard when it's not too hot. She hopes the Braves keep winning!

I didn't have that many who found the tiny hidden bottle of whiskey but let me tell you where it was. Look on page 29 of the Aug issue, see that graphic top of page? Look on the lower left side of that. See it? Well **Bruce Nelson** spot-

ted it and he is our winner of a \$40 annual subscription. He just retired from PPG after 46+ years. He's also celebrating a sweet 47th wedding anniversary with his love, **Michelle Nelson**. Lots of good things happening to you Bruce!

Be on the lookout for vintage copies of Old Huntsville for sale in many of our **Walmart** locations. They are \$1 just like the current issue, and will be on the bottom rack of where you find the magazines!

A sweet lady who loved history and lived to be 101 passed away on July 26th She was a descendent of some of Jackson County's earliest settlers. During the war years she worked at City Cafe that was owned by her brother **Mose Swaim**.

Earlene Swaim Storey loved all flowers and at age 99 still had a huge yard full of flowers that she cared for. She was most proud of her irises and day-lilies and at 100 years old she received recognition from The Alabama Nursery and Landscape Association and Horticultural Research Institute for her contributions to the field of horticulture and its healthful benefits, as well as sharing her gardening knowledge. She loved her family fiercely and will always be missed. She is survived by her children, **Robert Storey (Joyce)**, **Richard Storey (Deborah)** and **Marga-**

ret (Storey) Ireland (Trey); five grandchildren, **Robert Storey II**, **Bryan Storey (Emma)**, **James Storey**, **Jennifer Ireland Adams (Lance)** and **John Ireland (Emily)**; three great-grandchildren, **Logan Storey**, **Hudson Storey** and **Kennedie Storey** and many special nieces and nephews.

Kathleen Vaughn of Harvest, AL had an 83rd birthday recently on July 19, and is such an optimistic person. She says "No matter what happens or how bad it seems today, life goes on and it will get better - I promise!" I believe that too.

A special hello to our reader **Ann Lawler** who loves reading about our area's history. She is 75 and is a native of Madison County so she remembers much of what we write about!

OK see the **football** below? Well I have hidden one in this issue but that's NOT the one! Somewhere in these 48 pages is a tiny tiny football picture that no one will find. I have to admit I'm getting better at this hiding thing.

Have you noticed that the mosquitoes are terrible? They

Photo of The Month

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

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bite all day long now if you're out, and they're tiny! A while back we put the anti-bug tip in Old Huntsville that you can rub a sheet of Bounce or other anti static sheet on your skin and it repels mosquitoes. That works pretty well but one reader who works at Hudson Alpha, **Brandon Owens**, called to let us know he tried rubbing a dry bar of soap on his arms and it worked pretty well. Nothing probably is as good as bug spray but that just makes your skin feel weird. So try the soap! Thanks, Brandon.

Oscar Llerena of Miami graduated from Huntsville High in 1966 and he loves coming back for visits. He told us that his beautiful daughter **Maria** just had her 2nd baby girl, named **Isabella** and she joins sister **Gabriella**. The baby will meet cousins **Logan, Daniella and Valentina**. Are those not the most romantic names?? Oscar and his wife have a daughter and son, and all live in Florida. Sweet, sweet family.

I know local brick and tile sidewalks and driveways have grass/weeds growing up through the cracks. Mine, too. I've tried pulling, poisoning,

vinegar - all worked OK but not for long. Well this year I just poured plain old salt into the cracks and guess what - no weeds in about 6 months! I make sure to keep away from any garden areas because salt will kill that too. But an inexpensive and easy solution that really works!

Juanita Adcock will be 78 on September 4. She called tho to send wishes to her dear friend **Connie Golden**, who will have a 73rd birthday on September 6. Happy Birthday to both you beautiful ladies and be sure to party like you deserve!

Remember if you have a subscription and are moving, a Change of Address will not include your magazines, they will not forward. So if you're moving Please call us with your change of address, so you don't miss a single issue.

Now that we're all wearing masks and this may go on for a while, how many of you have lost them in the wash? I started using those small laundry bags (like for bras, etc) and put the used masks in there, NO more lost masks!

Did you read about the **mama duck and her babies**

who were rescued by Huntsville Police Department last month? Somehow a mama and 6 babies got on Memorial Parkway and were huddled by the center cement divider, during daytime traffic, when **Officers Bruce Jansen, Cantrell and Jones** saw them. Somehow they got traffic stopped, and loaded them up to return to Big Spring Park. The pictures would just break your heart, they looked so scared til HPD found them. It could have turned out very bad for them. This reported by **Officer Michael T. Johnson**, who is Communications Officer. Thank you to our officers for ALL you do.

There are lots of important dates for a lady who works at BB&T Bank on Church Street. She is **Adriana Lane** and has a birthday on Sep. 20th. Then her husband **Jim** has one Sep. 6th. Her daughter **Alyssandra** has one on Sep. 2nd and other daughter **Kaitlyn** has a Sep. 8th birthday. September is a very good month for this sweet family! In addition, Adriana told us that she was just promoted to work at the Westbury location - congratulations to you!

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1925 Huntsville Favorites

These recipes are taken from the Missionary Society Holmes Street M.E. Church, Huntsville, Al. Thank you to Mr. Newman Ward.

Mom Ward's Best Apple Pie

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

Pastry

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

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

For pastry mix 1/2 cup brown sugar, 1 cup flour and 1/2 cup butter, cut in with pastry blender. Sprinkle this mixture over the top of the apples,

bake at 350 degrees until apples are tender and top is browned.

English Walnut Candy

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

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

Maple Mousse

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

Chocolate Pie

Mix together 1 cup sugar, 1 cup hot water, 5 tablespoons cornstarch and boil in double

boiler until thickened, stirring constantly. Add 1 tablespoon butter, remove from fire and add 2 egg yolks well beaten, and one-half cup grated chocolate. Bake in crust 25 minutes and top with meringue made with two egg whites.

Colonial Chess Pie

- 1-1/2 c. sugar
- 1/2 c. butter
- 1 c. light brown sugar
- 4 eggs
- 2 t. vanilla extract
- 1/2 t. salt
- 1/2 c. milk
- 1/4 c. sifted flour

Heat one cup of the white sugar, all the brown sugar, milk, flour and butter over medium heat to dissolve. Cool. Beat 3 egg yolks (save the whites) and 1 whole egg. Add 1 teaspoonful vanilla, salt and mix well with the cooled mixture.

Pour in an unbaked pie shell. Bake 35 to 40 minutes in

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350 degree oven first, then lower temperature to 250 to finish baking, about 10 minutes. Pie will puff across the top when done. Beat the 3 saved egg whites for topping, add 1/2 cup leftover granulated sugar and 1 teaspoonful vanilla. Beat until the topping stands up in peaks. Cover pie with mixture. Return to oven til topping is brown.

Chocolate Gravy

(Great for breakfast, over your biscuits)

- 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.

Louisiana Pineapple Rice

- 1 c. uncooked rice
- 1 can crushed pineapple with juice
- 1-1/2 c. sugar
- 3/4 stick butter

Cook rice and drain. Make syrup as follows: pour pineapple, juice, sugar and butter into a saucepan and stir well.

Place over heat and bring to a boil. Simmer for 10 minutes. Mix with cooked rice and place in a buttered casserole dish. Bake 45 minutes to an hour at 400 degrees. Good served hot or cold. Excellent with ham.

Cherry Cheese Crunch

- 2 c. flour
 - 1 c. pecans, chopped
 - 1 stick butter, softened
 - 6 oz. cream cheese
 - 1 box confectioners sugar
 - 1 large can cherries
 - 1 container Cool Whip
- Mix first 3 ingredients and press in baking dish. Bake at 350 degrees until brown. Let cool. Combine cream cheese and confectioners sugar. Cream together. Fold in Cool Whip. Pour cherries on top. Keep in refrigerator until ready to serve.

Impossible Pie

- 4 eggs
 - 6 T. butter
 - 1/2 t. salt
 - 1 t. vanilla
 - 1/2 c. flour
 - 1 c. sugar
 - 1 c. coconut
 - 2 c. milk
- Blend all ingredients in a blender, turning off and on 3-4 times, about 2 seconds each

time. Pour into a greased 9" square pan and bake 40 to 50 minutes at 350 degrees until brown on top and knife comes out clean.

Allie's Date and Nut Candy


- 3 c. sugar
- 1 c. milk
- 1 box pitted dates, chopped
- 1 t. vanilla extract
- 1 c. chopped pecans

Boil sugar and milk together til soft ball forms when a drop of the liquid is put into cold water.

Add the date pieces and stir til they are softened.

Remove from fire, add vanilla extract and beat til nearly thick enough to pour out.

Add the broken nuts and beat til thick enough to pour so it will spread out well. Pour into a buttered dish and cut into squares when cool.



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“WHAT WAS SHE THINKING?”

by Patty Trigg



Never question a woman's logic...

I love to travel and check out new places. My favorite places are anywhere near a body of water, especially the ocean. Love those negative ions. So, in the chill of the winter's day, Sunday, December 8th, the urge to go South was strong. Not one to ignore that inner voice that has as much to say as I do, 'we' decided a trip to South Carolina was the ticket to ride.

When traveling it is wise to have a good companion that you get along well with. In my case that would be Cleo, my 60 plus pound Great Pyrenees dog. It is pretty much a one-sided conversation until it is time to take a necessary walk or eat.

It is well known that cats are not good travelers. With this thought in mind, up until this outing, I have never thought about taking Lewis on any of my travel adventures. My neighbor loves Lewis and sees that his food dish is full, and his litter box is empty.

Feeling somewhat guilty about always leaving Lewis at home, I decided to take him on his first holiday. I packed his favorite napping bed, a small sand box, a few toys, plenty of food and water and purchased a travel seat that fits over the passenger side seat that would offer a window view for my feline traveler. For safety purposes I also purchased a cat harness and an extra-long leash for an easy grab on outside activities. What more could you ask for?

Take note, if there is a space, no matter how small, in which to hide-a-way be assured a cat will find it every time. Traveling in a van you would be amazed at the nooks and crannies that are available. Lewis started out in the travel seat and after the first few miles he hunkered down flat and was no longer visible until we came to our first stop, a rest area. I took Cleo for a walk and when I returned Lewis was nowhere in sight. I guess the scenery was flying by too fast for him. Lewis took the opportunity of my absence with Cleo to find a better viewing location that was more to his liking. Remember, that optimal statement of the perfect spot, location, location, location? After a cautious search starting on the passenger side and moving door to door around the van, I finally located him under the back seat behind the driver's side. Decided it would be best to leave him to it and let him venture out on his own good time.

Upon reaching our destination, The Oceanfront Litchfield Inn,



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Pawley Island, South Carolina, I checked in and then parked the van under a grove of palm trees. We were just a few steps away from the Atlantic Ocean and the most incredible white sandy beaches. The sun was just beginning to settle so I decided a walk on the beach to watch the sun set would be the perfect ending to the day. Cleo was ready to go but Lewis was determined to hold down his new nesting spot. All is well and as it should be.

Woke just as the sun's rays were beginning to peek on the horizon. Having prepared the in-room coffee maker the night before, I flicked the on switch and headed to the glass sliding door that led out on the balcony. A comfortable temperature in the mid 60s, the sound of the rolling waves, a beautiful clear sky and the freshness of soft breezes. I was in heaven.

Retreated to the room to pour a cup of coffee and head back out to my 6th floor balcony ocean view to watch as the sun began to fill the sky with the morning shades of gold, blue and pink. To watch in awe and glory at this beautiful sky as the clouds lightly floated by. Here I was bringing in this new morning and enjoying the beginning of a most magnificent day. All I can say is, there are no words that can adequately describe this experience that delights the soul on a cellular level. God is good. Time to share this euphoria with my traveling companions. What better way than breakfast and a short walk on the beach. Cleo was gung-ho. However, Lewis was okay with breakfast but leaving the van was not an option which he declared both physically and vocally. Lewis is a good traveler but not real sure about his first adventure traveling. No problem, we have plenty of time to open to this new experience.

After enjoying the continental breakfast offered by the Litchfield Inn, took Cleo for a long invigorating hour plus walk on the beach. Then it was off to explore Pawley Island and the surrounding area.

I have always wanted to visit the Carolinas, something mystical in my mind about the history along with a 'feeling' that tugged at my gypsy heart. Looking over the map there were two areas that pulled me North from Pawley Island, Cape Fear and Kitty Hawk. I marveled at the Wright Broth-

ers tenacity to follow their dream to fly and I enjoyed the history of and the movie Cape Fear. Cape Fear was closer, a little over two-hour drive. Kitty Hawk would have to be put on the back burner as it would have to be an overnight trip. Think I will wait and make that an adventure on its own.

Took the costal route to Cape Fear with a few stops here and there to walk on the beach and to check out historical highlights mentioned on the road signs. Was disappointed with our visit to Cape Fear as it was mostly an industrial setting. Looked like oil refinery was the

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primary business. I was unable to unearth a quaint little town with historical focal points.

Time to head back to home base and find a seafood restaurant for an early dinner. Murrells Inlet was a perfect haven for a most delightful dinner at Drunken Jack's. The Grouper Royale was magnificent! No way you can do better than fresh caught, local Grouper...amazingly delicious. Even Lewis responded with a demure meow and did not leave a crumb in his dish. After the morning ritual of enjoying a steaming cup of coffee as the sun ushers in the new day I collected Cleo and we went for our morning walk on the beach. Lewis was no longer in hiding, however, he let it be known that there was no way he was venturing beyond the environs of the van.

The must try for breakfast in Pawley Island is the Applewood House of Pancakes. We had the house pancake special and it was scrumptious! Paws up by both Cleo and Lewis, especially for the hickory smoked bacon. This became part of our morning ritual.

After breakfast checked out the Brookgreen Gardens, a National Historic Landmark. This was followed up by a visit to Apache Pier and Island Art. A most enjoyable morning.

Back to home base and the big event for the day was introducing Lewis to the great South Carolina outdoors. Gathering Lewis up in my arms, I gently set him down on the lush green grass just a couple of feet from the open door of the van. Cleo was in the back of the van looking over the seat, tail wagging and nose sniffing. Lewis has a soft voice and shows his dislike by producing a long meow that sounds like a machine gun rat-a-tatting. Meee-ow-ow-ow-ow.

The stately gentleman that he is, Lewis did not disappoint. When I set him down, he got his body as close to the ground as possible, looked me in the eye, turned looked at the nearby shrubbery then followed the trunk line up to the first fronds of the closest Palm tree and then let out a mourn-

ful Meee-ow-ow-ow-ow. As there were too many options of catastrophe, I picked Lewis up and moved him to a more open spot. Every time I would lift him to a standing position to walk around, he would immediately plop down as flat as possible.

Enough was enough, I picked my baby boy up and told him I would not force him to get out of the van again. It would be his choice from here on out. I did have one last request and told him I wanted to take a selfie of the two of us to capture in posterity this momentous moment. With his ears laid out flat, a serious look in his eyes and just a tiny twitch in his whiskers I knew I was pushing my luck and better snap a selfie quick. You could almost read his mind, this is crazy, get me out of here. I then set Lewis down on the car seat and in a flash, he disappeared into the dark recesses of the van. Not a happy traveler.

It was time for our stroll on the beach, Cleo's favorite part of the day. After our two-hour walk, I settled Cleo in the van and it was off to get dinner. Learned that a favorite of the locals was Pawley Island Raw Bar which soon became our favorite. Great selection of fresh seafood dishes.

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Good morning, this was our last day to explore and play. With rituals in place our adventures took us to High Country Olive Oil, closed for the season. Thought about taking surf lessons but too cold and windy however, there were lots of young people on skateboards and Cleo enjoyed all the attention. Checked out the Atalaya Castle and the Cheryl Newby Gallery.

Before closing out the day with dinner at Pawley Island Raw Bar, checked out a few local hot spots for gifts to take home for family and friends. Back at home base in time to take Cleo for our evening walk as the sun was setting. A perfect ending to another perfectly wonderful beautiful day.

This is not the end of the story. As Paul Harvey would announce, "Now, for the rest of the story."

With a final morning coffee salute to a new day from my balcony, a final morning walk on the beach with Cleo and a scrumptious breakfast at Applewood Pancake House, it was time to load up and head North and West to home.

You could almost, literally, hear a sigh of relief from Lewis when we pulled the van into the driveway of home. After remotely opening the garage door, I removed Lewis' halter, opened the door and stepped out of the van. Moving back a few paces, I gave Lewis room to venture out. Once his feet touched the ground, he became a blur as he disappeared into the shadows of the garage and into the house.

Having reached a point in my life where I have plenty of free time, I was planning to do more traveling and wanted to include Lewis. Overall, Lewis is a good traveler and he gets along well with Cleo.

I decided it was time to get outside help. I know and have worked with a lady in Huntsville who is a real-life animal whisperer. On more than one occasion she has helped me locate a missing pet. Each pet is able to mentally communicate with Lynda and then she describes in detail the surroundings and any buildings or landmarks where I can find my lost pet. Truly an amazing woman.

Setting aside the time, I gave Lynda a call and told her of my travels with Lewis. Would she please talk to Lewis and find out if he would like to travel? Yes, she would communicate with Lewis and get back to me.

Upon answering the phone Lynda informed me how delightful Cleo and Lewis were. Cleo loved to travel and even enjoyed

the short trips to pick up the mail and such. She said that Lewis was quiet at first and wouldn't talk much however, when she asked him if he would like to go on more road trips, he became quite animated and responded immediately with, "What was she thinking?"

Tears came to my eyes and I nearly dropped the phone from laughing so hard at Lewis' response. Lynda said that he let her know under no uncertain terms that he did not wish to travel. He was quite content lounging around the house. Sandie, the neighbor, was family and did an excellent job of keeping his dish full and his litter box clean. He enjoyed the freedom to roam around the neighborhood and was quite content to be in the house on his own. Enough said. I will let sleeping house cats lie.

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The Attractive Bridesmaid

by Bill Wright

I was 21 years old and had recently been released from the Army after serving for two years. I was single and bought a new car with money saved while in the Army. I should have been a prime candidate for dating but was not due to re-adjusting to civilian life after nine months serving in the Korean War.

My friend Johnny invited me to his birthday party. Attending would be his relatives and several friends. We were seated at a long table. I noticed at the other end was a very attractive young lady. She appeared to be in her early twenties. I had never seen her before, therefore knew nothing about her. As I looked at her, suddenly it was like a silent voice spoke to me and said, "she will become an important part of your life". I learned later she was Johnny's youngest sister.

About two months later, Johnny told me he was getting married and asked if I would be a Groomsman. He said I would be escorting his youngest sister, who would be a Maid of Honor. I told Johnny I would do it. During the wedding events I noticed Johnny's sister had a pleasant personality that matched her good looks. Because I was dating someone, I kept my interest low-key. A few months later my girlfriend and I had a friendly and mutual agreement to stop dating

Home School Day 1:
"I'm trying to figure out how to get this kid transferred out of my class."

Libby Gentle, Arab

Tips You'll Use



- * Surround yourself with people who make you feel good about yourself, not the ones who insult you.
- * NEVER believe that guy with the heavy accent who calls and says he's from Microsoft and he can fix your computerright over the phone. It's a scam,
- * If you're lonely, go out and find someone you can help. It'll take your mind off yourself, instantly.
- * NEVER give out financial info over the phone - banking, credit or debit card numbers, etc.
- * Stay on your feet at all costs. No falling is allowed.
- * When you have a very important decision to make, choose the one that gives you the most peace.
- * Get caller ID and use it - if you don't recognize the number of the caller don't answer. If it's important they'll leave a message.
- * Clean out one closet or drawer at a time -not the whole house.
- * Get out and walk if you can - even if it's half a block - every day.
- * Treat yourself to a good night's sleep. And try to do that every night.
- * NEVER answer the door after dark unless you know who it is.
- * Watch out for your neighbors, they may be in worse shape than you.
- * If you don't feel good and can stay at home, don't drive. It's not worth getting into a bad accident.

Want to be happy?

- Be in control of your life - don't let someone control you or what you do.
- Do something good for yourself every day
- Do something good for another every day
- Make your bed every day no matter how you feel.
- Each night before you go to bed think of all the good things that happened, what you accomplished.

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each other. I was determined not to date anyone for a while and concentrate on my studies at college night classes. Also, I would focus on becoming a better weekend softball player. However, I kept thinking about the young attractive Bridesmaid. I knew very little about her or how to contact her. Meanwhile, Johnny had moved to another town 60 miles away. I decided to make a 120 miles round trip under the pretense of just saying hello to Johnny and his wife. Actually, I wanted to know more about his youngest sister. Johnny told me he did not believe his sister had a boyfriend and provided me with her telephone number.

A few days later I telephoned her and invited her to have lunch with me. She accepted my invite. Because she recently had surgery on her right hand, she was unable to cut the meat on her plate so I cut it for her. My act of kindness must have impressed her because she would later agree to more dates with me. We attended lot of movies, beach outings and dances. We dated for over a year and on September 14, 1957 in presence before family members and friends we exchanged marital vows. The silent voice had been correct; she would be an important part of my life.

Soon after our marriage she encouraged me to quit my job and enroll as a full-time college student. She said she would work to help pay expenses. I accepted her recommendation and entered the University of Alabama under the GI School Bill. She would work 6 days a week for \$50 a week. I graduated in two years. When we left the University of Alabama

there were now three of us. Our daughter was born three weeks before graduation. In later years we would have two sons, nine grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Today, we reside in an Assisted Living Facility. Because of different health problems we are located on different floors of the building. I take some comfort in knowing we are in the same building. As a result of Virus concerns, I can only visit with her every 3-4 weeks and 10-15 minutes each visit. Every visit I still see the same glow and beauty I first experienced so many years ago. She has been an important part of my life.

Today, the advice I would give to any young man beginning to date would be this: If you attend an event and see an attractive young lady seated at the opposite end of the table, speak to her, smile and be polite. In other words, turn on the charm. She might someday be your wife.

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Chinese Elms and Playgrounds in the Yards

by Gary Gee, Sr.

Each lot, with one exception, in Huntsville's Mayfair neighborhood came with two Chinese Elm trees in the front yard. This made the kids happy, because this was their playground, when going to the Mayfair playground was too far for the parents. The gang liked to climb these trees and hang out there. They were great trees with only one drawback that I recall for the parents, in addition to worrying about their kids falling or jumping out to the ground - like paratroopers without a parachute.

One summer Saturday morning, Ollie was already up in the third Elm tree in his front yard waiting for Hank to arrive to plan for their next adventure. Ollie was about ten feet up in the tree, and well-hidden when Hank arrived just about ten minutes late. Hank was looking all about, wondering why Ollie was not on time. Ollie waited another ten minutes, until he sensed that his intended invader was becoming impatient; and then he did jump out of that tree like he was bailing out of a C-47 airplane. He jumped right on to Hank's back being careful that he only grabbed his target by the shoulders - sort of sliding down Hank's back - and dropping him to the ground. Ollie made sure that he directed Hank into a roll as he fell.

Ollie scared the living daylight out of him. Hank let out cries of fright that everyone in Mayfair could hear and he frantically fled for home not bothering to ascertain the source of the attack. He ran for safety in a panic, yelling and screaming for mama. It took a couple of weeks before Hank could see the humor in this adventure where he seemed to be the enemy. I mean, the tree was in Ollie's yard.

Well Hank had a bad habit of biting when he got into a scuffle in the neighborhood and it was not long before he locked his teeth on the arm of Ollie's brother, Jack. However, this time Jack was ready for Hank; he knew that revenge was in the air. Jack pulled out his trusty "Double Cola" bottle (a twelve-ouncer) in response to Hank's fangs. He crashed that glass club onto Hank's head. (Everyone always said that "Hank's head was hard as a rock".)

So, once again, Hank was off and running like someone had fired a starter pistol at the track; but this runner was screaming, waving his arms and

yelling for mama.

Ah, "those were the good old days." I mean, I guess we should have been looking to do something indoors like listening to programs such as "The Lone Ranger" or "The Fat Man" on the radio. Luckily, television was on the way. Ollie's dad was into all entertaining hobbies like showing movies in the country schools; and entertaining the neighbors who came to see picture shows in the backyard. Everyone brought folding chairs, popcorn and candy. But TV was waiting in the wings.

So, it was predictable that Ollie's family would have one of the first television sets in Huntsville (with a spectacular 10-inch screen, Wow!). And it had to have a high antenna to pick up the signals from the station in Birmingham. This antenna was on a two-piece wooden pole that pivoted at the center. It was in the backyard. It was Ollie's job to raise it with a rope in the morning, lower it at night and to bring it to the ground when stormy weather threatened Mayfair. Sometimes the TV picture was "full of snow" and you had to strain the eyes to see cowboy stars like Johnny Mack Brown or Hopalong Cassidy.

The backyard was Ollie's dad's playground. But the kids played in the Chinese Elms. The main drawback to these trees was that the roots of the Elms liked to get into the septic sewer pipes underground, which often made for some real excitement.

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- Don't throw your hair clippings out of an open window. That will bring very bad luck to the thrower.
- If you kill frogs, your cows will "go dry".
- Tickling a baby will cause it to stutter.
- To thank a person for combing your hair is bad luck.
- It is believed that if a cat adopts you, it will stay with you forever, even after death.
- To allow a child to look into a mirror before it is a month old will cause it trouble in teething.
- A child will have the nature and disposition similar to that of the person who first takes it out of doors.
- If a person comes into your presence while you are saying bad things about him and he puts his hands anywhere on you, you will die.
- Plant all seeds, make soap and kill meat on the increase of the moon. If done on the decrease, the seeds will not grow, the soap will not lather and the meat will shrink.
- If on a cloudy morning blue sky is seen sufficient to

mend a pair of pants, the sun will come out.

- Wasps coming out thick in the fall is a sign that winter is about to set in.
- Misfortune will come to you if you sell or pawn a wedding gift. Above all, never hock your wedding ring.
- Folklore has it that if a witch becomes human, her black cat will no longer reside in her house.
- If you work on the day of your wedding you will have to work always.
- It is very bad luck to sweep your house on Friday night.
- If rats cut your clothes, do not allow your kinfolks to mend them.
- When you hear the first dove of the spring, take off your right shoe and you will find a strand of the man's hair you are to marry.
- In Japan, it is believed that somewhere on the tail of a cat there is a single hair that will restore life to a dying person.

- If you hear a screech owl it means instant bad luck - to prevent their cry, turn your pockets inside out and set your shoe soles upward.
- If you dream of a live snake, beware of enemies out to get you. If in the dream the snake is dead, your enemies are powerless.
- If you dream of a tortoiseshell cat, you will be lucky in love.
- To see the new moon through clouds or treetops means trouble; if the moon is clear, good luck; if seen over the right shoulder, joy; if over the left, anger and disappointment.
- No person who touches a dead body will be haunted by its spirit.
- When your cat runs about the house and plays, that is a sign that there is a strong wind coming.
- Three successive cloudy mornings, it will rain on the third.

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Two Out of Three Ain't Bad

By Jane Tippett

My mother always said she wanted her 3 children to grow up and become a preacher, postman and a nurse. I've always thought if one of your 5 senses (sight, smell, touch, taste and hearing) was affected, the individual would have a predominate sense of intuition.

My mother has had a hearing problem since birth. She was born in 1920. She was the youngest of 5 children which consisted of 2 boys and 3 girls. The house the family lived in was a large 8 room house in a small town; a bathroom was added on the back of the house in the 1930s.

When she was 10 years of age her father died and it was my understanding that she was the apple of his eye.

My mother's grandfather committed suicide in that house in 1937 during the "Great Depression." There was a large hole in the ceiling where the shot was fired and never repaired. No one ever discussed as to why my great grandfather committed suicide. As a child, I was always amazed when I looked up at that huge hole in the ceiling.



Anyway, back to the responsibility of raising 5 children alone, having a hearing problem herself and having a child with hearing difficulties. Grandmother's hearing aid was a transistor type of hearing aid which she wore on the lapel of her dress. Grandmother took my mother to a hearing specialist when she could afford to,

which wasn't very often. Mother learned to read lips very well since she did not have a hearing aid.

Even with her deafness, my mother was able to graduate from high school. She always said if her friends and older siblings had not helped with studies she would have never graduated from school. My parents married in September 1939. When I was in the 5th grade, my parents divorced and my mother, two brothers and I moved in with my grandmother Bailes.

There were only a few times I can remember that I saw my father again. He had left without a forwarding address so mother never received child support. I never heard from him until we received a telegram from our grandmother Agnew in August 1957 that he had just passed away the day before. My grandmother Bailes had passed away and still in shock over that, I heard about my father.

My mother remarried and we had to move to a new city far away from the little town in North Carolina that had been our home for so many years. Be-

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ginning the school year with no friends was quite heart-breaking at the time. I also really wanted to go to the funeral where my father lived in West Virginia but with no money or transportation, this was out of the question. My sweet husband did take me to my father's grave site several years ago.

After graduating from high school, I applied to a nursing program in North Carolina that was offered at the same hospital I was born in. To my great surprise, I was accepted! Mother had saved her money from grandmother's estate to pay for my college tuition. It was a Catholic school so prayers always began my day. The nuns were in full attire in those days and very strict. Learning anatomy and physiology was quite a challenge for me. The human body is so unique; everything works so well together.

When we began the task of making up a story from the 10 new words our teacher gave us each week, my class mates dwindled down from 36 to 20 in numbers. Sometimes I wonder how I made it through...and passed state boards. My first job as a Registered Nurse was at Huntsville Hospital where I met my husband Louie. His mother was a patient in the hospital at the time. We have been married 56 years this October.

My older brother Billy got a job at the Post Office as a postal carrier when we moved to Huntsville. Let me back up to the little church we went to in North Carolina. We lived one block from the church, and my grandmother Bailes made sure we attended every time the doors were open. The pastor of the church always took my brother under his wing and was planning to send him to seminary school when he gradu-

ated from high school. With the move to Huntsville, this did not happen since Billy didn't have the money to go.

Billy worked at the Post Office as a city carrier for 5 years. He then resigned and went to college full time to get a degree in business. He graduated with honors and worked in the business industry with my cousin.

My younger brother, L.B. (Lewis) was still in high school when I went off to nursing school. When he graduated from school he went to work at the Post Office downtown as a postal clerk. He received his draft notice for the Army but decided he would be of more service by going into the Air Force instead of the Army. He served in the U.S. Air Force in postal operations his 4 years of service. Two years were spent in Vietnam. When he returned home, he got 2 weeks off and returned to the postal clerk position as if he'd not been away for 4 years. He finally retired in 2002.

Despite her handicap, my mother did a great job guiding us. Cherish your time with your mother for you never know when you will not be able to hear her sweet voice again.

"Tomorrow is for what you didn't get done yesterday. So what you need to do today is due tomorrow which was yesterday so it can wait til tomorrow"

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Draggin'

by M.D. Smith, IV



"Three, two, one, go!" My girlfriend shouted as she stood between the front fender of my '57 Ford Fairlane and the '57 Chevy beside me.

I popped the clutch out with my engine screaming at nearly red-line. The lurch forward and the sound of screeching rear tires brought a smile to my face. I had a determination that I was going to beat the overconfident guy I'd just met cruising at Aerial's Drug store fifteen minutes earlier.

My new car was barely a month old, and I'd just paid for some modifications at the local speed shop. I had a four-barrel Holley carb added in place of the factory two, added dual exhaust and glass packed mufflers to lower back pressure, thus increasing horsepower. My standard 312 cubic inch engine needed all I could give it, besides the cool "Thunderbird V-8" logo on the engine block. The glass pack rumble made the exhaust sound mean and powerful.

I managed to jump out in front of the '57 Chevy and I had the lead. I kept my foot on the gas pedal pressed to the floor. As soon as I hit maximum RPM, as indicated on my outboard tachometer, I

did a "speed-shift" into second. I'd practiced my quick-shifting, depressing the clutch, switching the gear lever we called Three on a Tree, in a blink of an eye, and then releasing the clutch many times. I glance in my side-view mirror and he's catching up with me. I watched the miles-long lonely paved two-lane road while my peripheral vision saw him pull alongside my car and ease past.

As I shifted into third and neared a hundred miles an hour, I realized I'd lost the race and I started applying the brakes. Devastation. Worse than the "Heart-break of Psoriasis," as the TV commercials proclaimed was the worse shame of all. I collected my girlfriend and allowed the other guy with his girl who rode in his car to lead the way back to Aerial's Drug Store. I veered off and went to an ice cream parlor for a treat for the two of us. I could never show my face again cruising at Aerial's Drug Store.

That shame wore off. The next weekend, I was back again, and this time I picked on another unmodified '57 Ford. I won, almost effortlessly, having gained skills from the defeat. It helped to race a similar car without the few extra horsepower.

Smiles with confidence restored, I enjoyed some status as an admired driver with a good car among



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"I saw that show, '50 Things to Do Before you Die'. I would have thought the obvious one was: "Shout for help!"

Mark Watson

the neighborhood guys. When I dropped my girlfriend off, I loved to get out on the road in front of her house and as she watched, lay a patch of rubber on her street and hope her parents weren't watching. Popping the clutch and 'laying rubber' became a habit, until that fateful day.

That was the day I was going up a steep hill and my car gradually stopped moving forward. The motor was fine, but the clutch was slipping so badly, it just barely made it up the hill. It got worse. My buddies told me I'd worn the clutch plate out with all the drag racing. I didn't know that could happen.

When I explained my problem to my father, he was not happy. I said I was told clutches did wear out. He said, "Well, not at 5,000 miles on a new car." I just shrugged. I didn't know what to say. I was not about to tell him it was from drag racing and "laying rubber." But somehow, I just knew, he knew.

He reluctantly agreed to

pay for a new clutch plate. I left my car at the dealership. When the shop finished, they called my father to tell him I could get the car. I was in the next room, happy to overhear I'd get my car back with a tight clutch. I wouldn't tear it up, because the next time, the cost was on me to fix it.

Just then, I heard my father exclaim with great surprise to the guy on the phone, "The rear tires are slick after how many miles?"

I just slunk away like a scolded puppy and went for a walk in the neighborhood.

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Will Rogers

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All About Football

by Charlie Lyle, Jan. 2014 OHM

I was asked to write something about football. At first, I thought I couldn't do it but I did. So far I have had some information from Bobby Wilson, Huntsville 1947/48. Most of my help came from my very good friend, Larry Buck Hughes who played fullback for Alabama. Bear Bryant was playing on one end and All American Don Hudson on the other. This was around 1927.

Bryant, after he became coach at Texas A&M, was extremely tough. They said that many players fled and jumped over a chain link fence because of fear. Two buses of players went in the enclosed football field area and one came out.

There were many stories I have been told and all I can do is to name a few. As a friend said, they can write many volumes and books about what I don't know about football.

Huntsville High had a player named Billy Joe Rowan. He was thought of as a triple threat. He could excel in running, passing and kicking. This goes back to the late 1930s.

Another football player from Huntsville High, Bobby Luna, was an exceptional player. As well as Billy Neighbors, who had a real close football family. This family could be compared to the Manning Family.

One of the great players, (and there are many), was Harry Gilmer. Harry was diminutive in size, which explains that as a quarterback he had to jump up in the air before he could throw a pass.

One thing that I could never understand was the way Bill Curry was treated. I was there at the acceptance speech that he gave and how dedicated he promised to be even though he was not from Alabama. That probably explains why he was not accepted.

Just a little footnote I experienced by the Alumni was when one of them looked at me and said "you are a little small to be a quarterback" and this surely made my day. I explained that I was Buck's chauffeur. Another thing that made my day was when Buck introduced me to Mai Moore.

I was elated when Alabama was asked to play in the Rose Bowl game. Well the people there in California were saying that we were a bunch of hicks and didn't know a thing about football. Teams really didn't travel that much in those days

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especially that far away. They did play some of the Eastern teams like Fordham, Sewanee, Princeton, Yale, etc. The old traditional teams like Georgia Tech, Tennessee, Arkansas, Ole Miss, Auburn and of course Alabama and many more.

The rules of football have really changed. For instance, there was no such thing necessary as offense and defense. Alabama went to California to play in 1927. As one might guess we beat them. It was either UCLA or Southern Cal.

You may wonder why I don't have more information about Auburn. The reason was because I was a close friend of Coach Hughes and got so much information from him. There were a few people like myself who rooted for both teams. When Alabama and Auburn played each other, I had a problem.

These were exciting times for the Alabama team going to Hollywood probably seeing movie stars, etc. By the wildest of dreams a movie scout spotted Johnny Mack Brown. Johnny was then put into many episodes of cowboy western movies.

No one is infallible no matter who you are, not even Bear Bryant. This is a story that came from Buck Hughes who was a close friend of Bryant. Bear came from a small town in Arkansas, Fordyce. His family evidently was working in produce.

When Bear said it was hard work, it had to be. Bear would work day and into the night. It seems as though Bear had a chance to go to Tuscaloosa and play football. He started with the team when they were working out for early fall practice. He worked out for a couple of days and took off back to Fordyce his home. His family was really put out with him and worked him harder than ever.

He decided to go back to Tuscaloosa if they would have him.

He exclaimed "hell if I worked this hard I may as well have the glory that goes with it."

Alabama can be proud of their football tradition. Alabama is a well-kept secret to the United States and Huntsville is a well-kept secret. To the South you have the most beautiful beaches and to the North Cloudmont Ski Resort.

I am very proud of our football teams - both Alabama and Auburn.

"Some fish are really dangerous. Jellyfish can sting, bad. Electric eels can give you a shock. They have to live in caves under the sea where I think they plug themselves into chargers."

Johnny, age 7, on virtual school science test



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Two Easters

by Anna Lee

Once Easter was over, we did it again! Two Easters. Two Christmases. Every year. That's the way it was when we were growing up.

My father's church followed the old Julian calendar that was established in 46 BC. We would first have Easter on the date set for that year, using the current Gregorian calendar. Then, along would come a second Easter from my father's church, 2 weeks later.

On the Saturday before, every family in my father's church prepared a basket of food. The basket was covered with a pretty, hand-embroidered cloth. It contained samples of special foods, each having a symbolic meaning:

- Sausage (for generosity),
- Salt (for prosperity),
- Butter in the shape of a little lamb (for goodness),
- Horseradish (for passion),
- Homemade cheese (for moderation).

Every member of the family had to take at least a taste of each food. My father would then put a touch of honey on our foreheads, for sweetness.

My father's sisters showed my mother how to make the homemade cheese: cook eggs with milk, salt and sugar; place the mixture in a cheesecloth; hang it outside to dry; then bake it. The final form was round and bland, but delicious.

My father's own contribution was decorating the hard-cooked eggs. He would create an intricate pattern by putting on dabs of colors with a wooden clothes pin that had a straight pin stuck in the top. He put wax in some areas and applied colors around it; later he would put a warm rag

on the wax to make it melt away and then put colors in those areas.

One year the Easter Bunny must have gone to bed very tired on Saturday night. When my three little sisters and I went downstairs to check our baskets, all we saw was the green straw. No candy, no eggs, no treats. Mother and Daddy pulled me aside and whispered to take the girls to the back yard. "Maybe the Easter Bunny hid your candy outside," they told us. No luck there.

When we came back in, Mother told us to check the baskets again. There we found the treats, hidden under the straw. "That funny Easter bunny played a trick on you!" she said. We all laughed and started enjoying our treats!

The Easter bunny never forgot again, at either of our Easters.

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THE FRUGAL READER

- Shop the baby aisle for inexpensive skin care products for yourself. Baby lotion is great for the face and the shampoo is very mild.

- Office paper is expensive. When you use a stack of paper that you would normally throw out, just flip it over and use it again. It will go through your printer and you get twice the use out of it.

- Take cash with you to the grocery store instead of checks or credit card - you'll spend less.

- Have a clothing swap with friends once a season. Everyone brings clothes they no longer wear and make an evening of it - whatever's left goes to charity.

- Host a "plant exchange" where friends bring dug-up perennial plants from their gardens - everyone gets a new plant!

- To save money on magazine subscriptions, exchange magazines you've read with friends. You each get to read the latest and only pay for one.

- If you unwrap your new bars of soap and allow them to sit opened in your linen closet, they will harden and not turn to mush in the soap dish. Also, the linens will smell great!

- For an inexpensive facial exfoliator, sprinkle a little baking soda onto your hand and mix with your normal facial cleanser or soap. The soda will gently scrub off the dead skin.

- Buy large packages of meat on sale, and separate them into small portions. Put them into

zipper bags with a marinade and freeze. When you thaw -already seasoned and delicious!

- Fill up your car with gas in the morning rather than late in the day and you'll get about 1 free gallon. The reason is, the gas expands in the tanks at the gas station during the heat of the day, especially in hot months. You get less for your money later in the day. A free gallon adds up at today's prices!

- Save money on groceries by shopping your pantry and freezer first. Make a meal schedule a week ahead and only buy the items you need.

- Use coupons for groceries. Most stores now will double up to \$.50, and that will add up in a hurry. Be careful not to buy something you don't really need, just because you have a coupon for it. It's a store trick!

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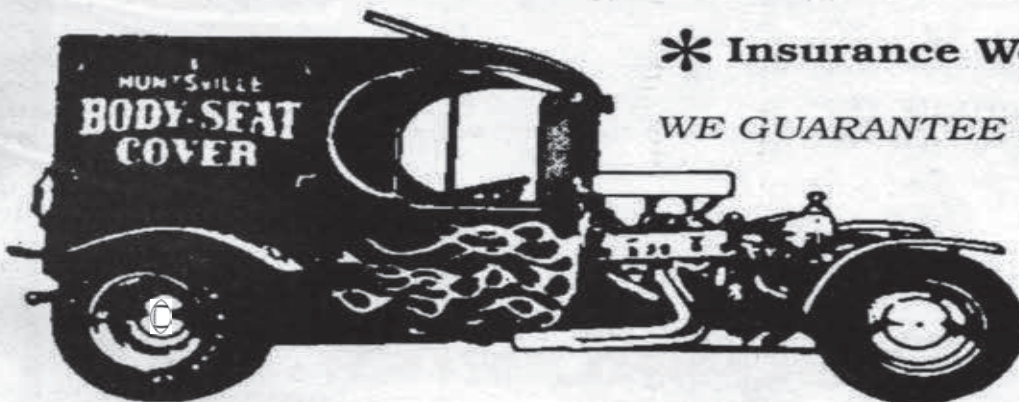
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Old Ad run in Old Huntsville Magazine in the May 1996 Issue

High Hopes

by John Carriker

Sitting with my wife, watching the sun rise through the window, both of us were quiet as we reflected on the various tragedies occurring in our small town just south of Huntsville, Alabama, as well as the deadly disease that has raged the world. We spoke almost in whispers about what had been decimated by this virus which crept into the world's societies ... death, loss of homes, jobs, businesses, faith and hope.

"It's almost a hopeless future, isn't it?" my attractive wife observed. "It seems as if everyone seems to be discouraged and given up. Maybe we should look a little deeper at what God has to say about all

that's happening."

I thought about those observations for a few minutes. We had watched the early morning news as there were virtually no reports of joy or hope. That is, until we saw some activities that families throughout the country posted. There were children playing and singing, pets acting crazy after being dressed in "people clothing"; an anchor who fell asleep as he awaited his cue on television, etc.

We looked at each other and began to smile. "We have hope, don't we?" I asked as her eyes began to shine with a spirit of joy. "You remember that song about the ram that knocked a dam down? It was a story of hope in the lyrics."

"Sure," she replied. "I believe it was sung by Frank Sinatra and was called 'You Gotta Have Hope' (actually the song is 'High Hopes' and was

the title song for the movie 'A Hole in the Head').

"That's it!" I agreed. And we proceeded to look it up on the computer. Maybe we should be reminded of what the song taught us:

"Next time you're found, with your chin on the ground there's a lot to be learned, so look around. Just what makes that little old ant think he'll move that rubber tree plant? Anyone knows an ant, can't move a rubber tree plant. But he's got high hopes, he's got high hopes. He's got high apple pie, in the sky hopes. So any time you're gettin' low 'stead of lettin' go, just remember that ant! Oops there goes another rubber tree plant."

Remember always that God is forever the One Who is in control. Oops! There goes another rubber tree plant



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Cat Heroes



* A man who fell out of his wheelchair says his cat apparently called 911 for help. Rosheisen said he got the cat 3 years ago and tried to train him to call 911, but was unsure if the training ever stuck. When police arrived, Tommy the cat was lying on the floor next to the phone.

* A cat was reunited with his owner after six years. Colin, a tomcat, disappeared from Emma Phillips' home in Barkingside, Essex, in 1999 and lived as a stray until a woman handed him to pet rescue charity PDSA. He was identified by the microchip embedded in his neck.

* Czech Airlines had to fly a cat home on an empty plane after the animal escaped from the cargo hold. When workers couldn't find the cat, officials decided it was imprudent to allow the passengers back on board, so the plane had to fly back to Prague. It was then dismantled, Airlines spokeswoman Jitka Novotna said, and the cat was finally found.

* Cats helped to search for survivors in the World Trade Center destruction.

* A suspected burglar was caught in Egypt after stepping on the tail of a pet cat as he sneaked away. The cat's screech awoke his owner, who went after the burglar. The home owner was stabbed in the chest, but was able to phone the police and the burglar was eventually arrested.

* A 10-week-old kitten survived 17 days without food or water after stowing away in a lorry traveling from Israel, a 2,000-mile trip.

* A cat called Schimmy refuses to eat anything but Chinese take-out. His owner, who eats Chinese take-out 5 days a week, had started giving Schimmy a small bowl of leftover shrimp or chicken chow mein each night and Schimmy now refuses to eat anything else.

* A cat survived a 120-mile drive through Belgium stuck under the hood of a car. The cat had crawled underneath the hood and gotten stuck in the engine compartment.

* A tortoiseshell kitten, named Flow-

erpot after the contents of the crate she was trapped in, survived for more than a month inside a crate on a ship traveling from Malaysia to the UK.

* Boris, a cat, almost managed to order 450 cans of its favourite food on an internet shopping site while its owner wasn't looking. His owner had ordered 6 cans - apparently Boris didn't think that was enough.

* A Siamese cat named Musya took over the mothering of two 2-week-old wolf cubs from a Russian zoo after their own mother failed to produce enough milk.

* Bonnie the cat, upon discovering that two men were stealing pet food from her owner's Derbyshire warehouse, attacked them. The burglars were scared off, after loading just a few bags of food into their vehicle.

* A cat named Felix by his RSPCA rescuers, survived a several-week journey from the Middle East to Britain inside a shipping container by lapping condensation from the walls.

* A pet cat in Wisconsin survived being tumble dried for 10 minutes. The cat's tail needed to be amputated, sustained badly burned ears and fluid on his lungs. He had crept into the dryer unseen.

* In Gulfport, Mississippi, a cat was blown onto the roof of a shop, then fell 60 feet into an oak tree during Hurricane Georges in 1998. In an interview in May 2001, Ron Roland, Big Boy's caretaker, said Big Boy has never left the tree - he eats, sleeps and eliminates in the tree. He climbs from limb to limb for exercise.

* Two cats saved their owner in Switzerland after scratching at his bedroom door until he woke up. When the man got out of bed to see what was going on, the living room was already filled with smoke and the TV and curtains were on fire. Firefighters were able to save the home.

* A couple was reunited with their beloved tabby after recognizing its picture in a local newspaper. Oliver disappeared when owners Diana and Roger Gerry moved in 1993; they were reunited in 2001, when Mrs. Gerry saw a picture of the cat who had recently been rescued by the RSPCA after being found on a doorstep, in her local newspaper.

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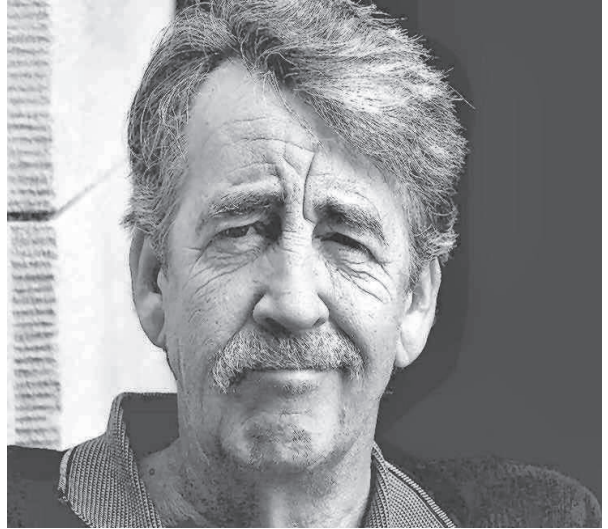
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A Preface

by Tom Carney



Several years ago, I wrote a short, nostalgic story about the closing of Bragg's Grocery on Hurricane Creek. It was about people, most of whom are long dead, who had traded at the store.

I had forgotten the story until late one afternoon when a strange car pulled into my driveway. An elderly, well-dressed woman got out and walked over to where I was standing.

After I introduced myself, she asked, "Please, my mother is in the car, could you say something to her?" The lady went on to explain that in the story I had mentioned her father, who had been dead for almost fifty years.

Walking over to the car, I introduced myself to the old woman sitting there. Her face was wrinkled from almost a century of living and on her left hand was a worn wedding ring that must have been almost as old as its owner. In her other hand she clutched a copy of the story I had written.

Slowly she turned her head to look at me and, after glancing again at the story, said in a low, soft voice, "Someone remembered ... someone remembered his name."

I spent almost an hour talking to the old lady that day. She regaled me with tales about the Huntsville of her youth and the people she had known. She told me about dancing to the

fiddle of Monte Sano Crowder and about working at Redstone Arsenal during the Second War when she would go home every day with yellow skin, a result of the chemicals with which she worked.

I listened as she described growing up in a mill village where preachers and bootleggers rubbed elbows at the local speakeasy. It was obvious that she enjoyed remembering.

Unfortunately, her body was weaker than her memory and soon her daughter had to take her home. The memory of that old lady stayed in my mind for a long time. "A life of stories," I thought, "and when she dies, they will be gone forever."

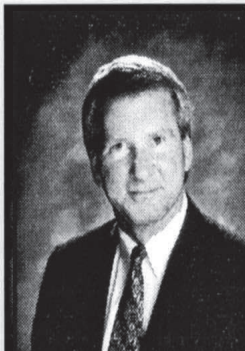
For the next several years collecting these stories became an obsession. Literally thousands of hours were spent talking to senior citizens and searching through old newspapers and manuscripts.

During this time, I was confronted with many questions. Are ghost stories part of our history? Does a whimsical story about a neighborhood bar fit into a book about our city's history?

In the final analysis, the answer had to be yes. All of these stories helped to make our city special.

Old Huntsville Magazine makes no pretense of this being a literary work. That endeavor is best left to the scholars. I also leave to the historians the task of quibbling over people's middle initials, the exact date of some long ago occurrence and the thousand other trivialities about which they seem to be concerned.

My sole intention is to try and preserve that part of our rich heritage which has been ignored for far too long.



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Aunt Thelma Parks

by Bob Everest



My family never lived in Huntsville, but we often went there to visit my mother's only sister, Aunt Thelma, when I was a child.

Aunt Thelma was the most unconventional person I have ever met. She was born in 1900 and lived all her life on a small farm about five miles outside of Huntsville. She never married, saying "there ain't a man on this earth I could put up with for very long."

One of her passions was fighting roosters. She never fought them herself but every Sunday morning she would inspect her roosters, telling her hired hand Rufus which ones to take and how much to bet. She would then go to church and pray for the sinners who did that sort of thing.

Aunt Thelma never learned to drive and always depended on someone else for a ride. In 1934 she decided the time had come to learn how. She sent Rufus to town with a wad of cash and instructions on exactly the kind of automobile she wanted.

Rufus was pressed into service as a driving instructor. The lessons quickly proved disastrous. She would yell for the car to stop, blow the horn instead

of shifting gears and turn the steering wheel in the wrong directions.

Finally, after several weeks, Rufus informed Aunt Thelma that he did not believe God ever intended for her to drive. He also threatened to quit if he had to give another driving lesson.

The car was consigned to the

barn and once a month Rufus would drive it to the front of the house where Aunt Thelma would sit in it and wave at the neighbors who passed by.

Once a month Rufus would wax the car and once a year he would change the oil, even though the longest trip it ever made was to the front driveway.

In 1987 Aunt Thelma died and I went to Huntsville to settle her estate.

Most of her property was sold or given away but I had one item shipped to my home in Arizona where it remains as one of my prized possessions.

A 1934 black Ford with 163 miles on it.

Success is the ability to go from one bad failure to another without losing your enthusiasm.

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Random Acts of Kindness

by Lawrence Hillis

I will begin this story with a Dolly Parton quote. "If you see someone without a smile, give them yours." In 2007 just before Christmas, I was shopping at Belk's for a Christmas present for my wife Karen. Our twin daughters Lauren and Lindsey were in their last semester at University of North Alabama and we were finishing up with their last tuition payment. Their apartment rent was due so we did not have a lot of extra cash for Christmas.

Years ago, I gave Karen a pearl necklace for Christmas. Since then I have been giving her necklaces with hearts and crosses to show my love for her and Christ. I was standing at the counter looking at two necklaces and trying to decide on which one to buy. There was a small elderly lady standing beside me and we struck up a conversation. She asked me if I was buying a Christmas present for my wife and I said yes. Then she reached into her purse and pulled out a gift card and slid it across the counter to me. She told me to buy both of them and save one for Valentine's Day.

I said that was a good idea, but I handed the card back to her and politely thanked her and told her I will put in on my charge card. She said she was given the gift card and came in to buy something but didn't really want or need anything. I said keep it for later and she said she was moving out west and would never be back to Belk's.

I suggested that she look around the store to see if someone else might need it. She said she wanted me to use it since I was trying to buy something for my wife. So, thinking it was probably a \$20 or \$25 gift card, I agreed to use it and thanked her very much. Each of the necklaces were about \$55 so with tax the final bill would be a little over \$100.

When the sales clerk returned with the ticket, she said the remainder for me to pay was \$16 which meant the gift card was \$100. I said hold it and immediately ran out the front door to find the little lady to thank her again. She had just walked out the door about one minute earlier so I thought she would still be on the sidewalk or in the parking lot, but I could not find her anywhere.

I don't understand how she could have walked out into the parking lot and drove away in such a short time. It was like she had disap-

peared. I wish I could have thanked her again or taken her to lunch or something, but she had vanished. She was my Christmas angel.

One summer morning about 10 years ago, I was at a local convenience store picking up a few things to take to the lake house. A group of two adults and 10 young people called World Changers came in wearing their orange t-shirts with their church name on it and a location of a church in Ohio. The World Changers travel to other states and do volunteer work by repairing houses and cleaning up neighborhoods for people who are not financially or physically able to do the work themselves. They were obviously getting ready to go to a house in our neighborhood to work on that hot summer day.

I heard the group leader tell them to buy Gatorade and a snack for later that day. As they lined up to pay for their snacks, I stepped in front of them and handed my debit card to the clerk and said I would like to pay for their snacks. The group leader was surprised and said they were prepared to pay for their snacks with their own money. I told him, I knew why they were there and I appreciated them coming to Huntsville to work in our neighborhood. I knew what they were doing for others and wanted to pay their bill so they could use their money for something else later. He said okay and thanked me and gave me a World Changer metal coin.

I quickly estimated that each of them would buy about \$8 or \$9 worth of snacks so times 12 would be about \$98 to \$100. When they were gone, the clerk said my bill was \$50. I told the clerk that I thought the bill was too low, and he said he saw what I was doing. He gave me a 50% discount.

Wow, giving just keeps on giving.



Family is the Most Important.

Hold Your Babies Close!

*From Oscar and Maria Llerena
with Love to the Huntsville High Class of 1966*

ANOTHER FRIEND

by Don Broome

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

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

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

As we passed by the cages, I noticed a little grey and white face looking at me from the back of her cage. She looked like she didn't want to be seen much less be picked up. She was so small and really pretty that I reached in and pulled her out. I curled her onto

my shoulder and heard her purr. She stole my heart right there.

A worker came by and I told her "She was mine" and they said they would get her fixed and all and I could pick her up around Wednesday, this being Saturday. I said I would make the arrangements myself with my vet. They gave me a card for the free spay for her and I took her home. I went back out and bought proper food and cat box and litter and went home to visit with my new little girl.

She was shy and sweet but she wouldn't eat hardly anything and didn't want to play. I took her to my vet and he couldn't find anything wrong but gave her a strong antibiotic in case. He gave me some baby food and applicators to feed her by hand.

She only weighed 2.2 pounds and after a week of hand feeding every 2 hours she was down to 2 pounds. The vet gave her shots of Vitamin B12 and Steroids and as I held her before putting her in her carrier, the Vet's assistant

said that if love will save her she'll be ok.

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

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

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



Marshmellow

Hello, the Ark named me Marshmellow. I think that is a very sweet name for me because I am a very sweet dog. I am a hound mix dog with a coat of white, tan and some black. I came to the Ark as a stray skinny dog. After a while at the Ark, I now weigh 56 lbs. It is sad how many dog owners actually abandon their dogs anywhere they can. The

Ark sees a lot of dogs like me. They also see a lot of puppies, cats and kittens. For animal lovers like Ms. Nina, Mr. Doug and all the volunteers at the Ark, it is so heartbreaking. So many people do not know or even think about how much animals know and understand. Think about some of the things we are trained to do, like a partner for law officers, search & rescue to find you if you are missing or lost, find illegal drugs, be companions for people that need us, seeing eyes for the blind, help our military companions, a guard for your home and business, sniff and warn of danger, and so much more. I am a hound mix dog with a coat of white, tan and some black. I would love to be your family pet. When you come to the Ark, ask to see Marshmellow. That's me.

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You know the economy is bad when the parents in Hollywood fire their nannies and have to learn their children's names.

Being a Little Boy in Huntsville

by Jan Williams

The Doctor came to our house to see us when we were sick instead of us going to his office! Dr. E.V. Caldwell was our doctor.

A piece of candy was 5 cents; it cost 10 cents to get into the movie. Bubble gum was 1 cent.

At Kresses or Woolworth's 5 and 10 Cent stores you could actually buy something for 5 or 10 cents.

We had the Lyric, Grand and Elks theaters downtown. They used to say if you went to the Elks theatre, you had to carry two sticks - one to prop your seat up and the other to beat off the rats! Roy Rogers was king of the cowboys and his wife, Dale, was Queen. Roy's horse was "Trigger." Other popular cowboy stars were, Gene Autrey, Lash LaRue, the Cisco Kid and his side kick, Poncho, Gabby Hays and Fuzzy St. John.

At the Lyric, the most popular theater, we had the Kiddy Club on Saturday mornings with Grady Reeves the MC. Yo-yos were popular. Donald and Daisy Duck, with Huey, Duey and Luey, along with Mickey and Minnie Mouse, Goofy, Pluto and Popeye (spinach), were our favorite cartoons.

At school, Blue Horse was the kind of paper we bought for our homework. Our TVs were black and white, no color. On Wednesday nights we watched the Gillette Calvacade of Sports. Sunday evenings we saw The Ed Sullivan Show...and remember the Lucky Strike Hit Parade, I Love Lucy, Dick Clark.

Instead of computers, we used dictionaries, World Book Encyclopedia and the newspapers to gather our information.

We had one telephone in the house and it had a cord on it attached to the wall. Our telephone number was 882-J and instead of a dial tone, you heard the voice of an operator saying "Number Please."

Our school year always began the day after Labor Day, on Tuesday, and we got out the following Friday for the County Fair. We had 2 days for Thanksgiving (Thursday and Friday), 2 weeks for Christmas, and one week in the spring for "Spring Vacation" or as we called it, AEA holiday. School was out the last of May and we had 3 months for summer vacation.

Our punishment for doing wrong in school...stay after school, write 100 times "I will not...", stand in the corner of the class room with your nose in the corner or go stand in the hall.

We bought our school books at T.T. Terry's on the South Side of the Square. Their logo over the door? "GREAT IS THE POWER OF CASH"

Summer consisted of swimming at the City pool downtown, where we learned to swim, playing at the East Clinton School playground and the

YMCA where we played basketball and swam.

For our medicine we used Tom Dark City Drug or Organ and Sparks Drugstore. We ate out at Steadmans, Snowwhite, Zesto, the Alabama Cafe, City Cafe, Russell Erskine Hotel.... Mexican, Greek, Italian? I don't think so!

Our first integration experience? When the German rocket team came to Huntsville at the Redstone Arsenal, their children came to East Clinton School. We had no idea who they were at first. They tore up our "educational curve", we were in the 4th grade and they knew things we would not learn until high school!

Our teachers at East Clinton were: 1st grade Miss Coons, 2nd grade Miss Matlock, 3rd grade Miss Baker, 4th grade Miss Bessie Russell, 5th grade Miss Walker, 6th grade Miss Johnston, 7th grade Mrs. Alice Nance, (I fell in love with her, she was the youngest and best looking teacher I had ever seen! The others were older ladies and "old maids")

Good times? They were for sure GREAT times.





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And A Mug!

by Elizabeth Wharry

The last full weekend in September is the Pennsylvania fishing tournament, held in Tidioute PA. The town is located on the Allegheny River, with the closest towns being Warren and Titusville PA.

The tournament is the town's main fundraiser. For a small town, one will find a weekend packed with much to see and do. On Saturday, the fire hall is transformed into a craft fair. Usually about 20 to 25 crafters have a variety of really unusual items for sale.

The parade steps off around noon from the fire hall. Neighboring towns will send volunteer fire departments, high school marching bands, baton twirling and dance classes, and everyone's favorite... the Shriners and their motorized antics.

The biggest event everyone looks forward to is the door prize drawing and hearing Henry Brown call a name, the prize, and yell "and a mug!" The door prize drawing starts about 8pm, after the fishermen have turned in their catches, which are weighed and measured.

Occasionally, Henry will take a break, and the reigning Miss Tidioute will toss out Tee shirts (size XXXL), mugs, ball caps or frisbees, all of which are embossed with "Championship Fishing Tourna-

ment" and the year.

Last year, my husband and I made the 14 hour drive up. That includes the hour time difference, stops and construction zones. There were quite a few changes. Gone were the bingo tent, and the lady who sold homemade apple dumplings. In their places were more carnival rides and games. It was definitely fun seeing a new and younger generation enjoying the weekend.

We registered for door prizes, all of which are donated by various merchants. Twice, I heard my name, a prize "and a mug!" called. Cheers, Henry Brown!

**"Our Father, who does art in heaven,
Harold is his name."**

Tessa, age 6, in Athens Sunday School

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The cause of most computer hard drive failures is...subpoenas.

Her Last Batch of Fried Pies

by Jean Brewer McCrady

Aunt Lalma Swafford never missed a chance to delight her guests nor her hosts with a large batch of her famous fried peach pies. It didn't matter whether you went to her house or she came to yours, fried pies were involved. When you went to her house, it didn't matter whether she had a day's notice or no notice, you still got those peach pies. The only difference was, if she knew you were coming, even with an hour's notice, the pies were fresh out of the skillet and waiting when you walked through the back porch door. If you totally surprised her and just walked in, then you got to wait a few minutes around the kitchen table while she whipped 'em out. Even though we cousins had seen them in the making, none of us ever learned to make 'em just like she did, and no one else will ever make them as fast as she could.

Likewise, a standard part of her getting ready to go visiting was turning out a batch of peach pies to take along — didn't matter who or where. All the kinfolks and many "just friends" were charter members of Aunt Lalma's "pie club". And the only dues we ever paid was the joy of eating them and going back for more. The batch was always big enough to insure there'd be some left after everyone had their fill, for taking home to family members not present, or to enjoy later ourselves.

Don't think we didn't watch to see how many each one was taking. There was a strict code of honor to be observed when it came to divvying up the leftover pies. The number you'd already eaten

had better be factored in when claiming your take-outs.

All of my growing up life, Aunt Lalma Swafford was a giant role model for us all and it was a real treat to go to her house. She made us feel so welcome and never sweated the small stuff. Like a dirty apron, a messy house, or unswept floors. She worked like a man in the fields, whether it was picking cotton or baling hay. At noon time she'd go to the house, gathering eggs from the henhouse and tomatoes from the garden on the way, and have dinner on the table before the rest of the family could take off their straw hats and wash their hands.

In spite of the heavy load she carried as Uncle Gordon's farming partner and mother of five kids, she always managed to seem "care free" and relaxed when company came for meals, no matter how many or whether or not she knew you were coming. Aunt Lalma was a pioneer woman at heart and could've made a wagon train trek across Kansas appear like a vacation trip. No doubt she would've found a way to serve up fried pies.

Half way between her 95th and 96th birthdays, Aunt Lalma brought a batch of peach pies to my house, and you'll soon learn what was extra special about that particular batch. On a Saturday in July 2009, the female cousins on the Swafford side had a somewhat spontaneous get together at my recently-moved-into condo at Timbers Edge (Hampton Cove). These cousins made a point of getting together periodically, and after Uncle Gordon died, Aunt Lalma was adopted by the group as one of us and always included in our gatherings. This time was no different. But what was different, it was the first time in my adult life that she had been to my house.

"You start with a bag full of luck and an empty bag of experience. The trick is to fill the bag of experience before you empty the bag of luck."

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Francis Ford Coppola Wines

For this occasion, my sister Net was commissioned to bring pecan pies, one of her high-reputation specialties. There was no mention to Aunt Lalma about bringing pies (we wanted to spare her the trouble), but we all knew she would – and she did. And we all knew we would eat one along with Net’s pecan pie – and we did. We also knew that what wasn’t eaten then would be divvied up and enjoyed later – and they were.

What we didn’t know then was, this would be the last batch of pies Aunt Lalma would ever make. Shortly after this event, I saw her once more. At her funeral.

Now think on this. Peach pies can come in many forms. A batch could look like this: Uplifting words spoken to or about someone who is feeling down. A kindness shown to someone who didn’t expect it. Words that build people up rather than put them down. Recognition given to someone for an accomplishment or a job done well that they thought had gone unnoticed.

We all have talents and skills or time and means we can use to help heal a hurt or ease someone’s burden. Let’s look for chances to do that and then do it. If there is someone out there you have hurt, go to them and make it right. Think of someone whose life would be

changed for the better, maybe forever, by something you could do or say. Then do it, or say it. There are people all around us whose lives could be enriched by a “peach pie” from our batch. Let’s keep a batch near at hand and dispense them freely as we look for and find opportunity.

Make yourself the promise that every day you will do or say something that will bring joy to someone else’s life. And keep that promise. We can stay motivated to produce and distribute our “pies” by staying aware that one day we will, each in our own turn, make our last batch of pies.

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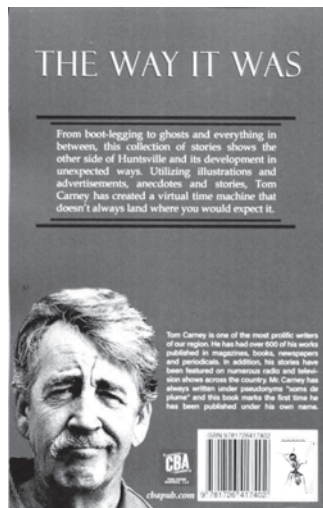
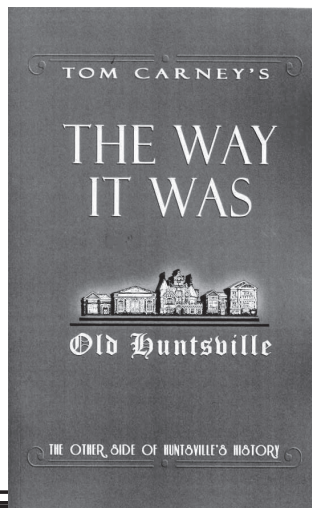
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