



No. 336
February 2021



Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY



LOVE LASTS FOREVER

The Fogcutter was a popular place in town and already it was starting to fill up with the after-work crowd. Anna knew she was early but didn't really care, this was her 42nd wedding anniversary and she wanted to spend it dancing with her husband.

Also in this issue: Krystal in the 1940s; Baby Love; A Grateful Cat; Something Good out of 2020; The Spiritual World; Treating Influenza in the Old Days; Sweet & Hot Recipes; Pet Superstitions and Much More!

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Love Lasts Forever

by Carolyn Parker, as told to Tom Carney

As Anna waited for the waitress to bring her a glass of wine she casually glanced around the restaurant lounge. The Fogcutter was a popular place in town and already it was starting to fill up with the after-work crowd. Anna knew she was early but didn't really care, this was her 42nd wedding anniversary and she wanted to spend it dancing with her husband.

The couple was popular at the restaurant. The waitresses called them "Mrs. Anna" and "Mr. Bill" and would often stop to watch as they danced to the music of Roberta and her band. Anna smiled as she thought of her husband Bill. He was tied up with a late appointment at the office but promised he would be there as soon as he could get away.

Anna had often tried to imagine what her life would have been if she had not met Bill. In 1945 she was a displaced person, living in a camp near Salzburg, Austria and he was an American soldier. She

had no family or friends. Her only possessions were a pair of Luftwaffe overalls she had salvaged from an abandoned German Army truck.

Anna Kempka was born in 1923 near a small village in southwest Poland. Her family were ethnic Germans who, although they had lived in Poland for over two hundred years, still considered themselves to be Germans. In 1939 the Nazis invaded Poland and the farm they lived on was confiscated. It became part of an artillery range and the family was forced to move.

Everyone was required to work for the "war effort." Anna was assigned to a factory that made shoes for the German Army where she labored ten hours a day, six days a week. Her job was sewing the soles on the boots, but the machines were so old and worn out that often they would break down for days at a time.

The machinist assigned to repair her machine was Hans, a young man only a year older than her, with bright blue eyes and a shaggy mane of blond hair. The couple began seeing one another after work and within a short time had fallen in love. In 1944 the couple was married and life would have been perfect except for the war. They still considered themselves lucky though as Hans' job was considered vital to the war effort and there was little chance he would be called up.

Seen on local bumper sticker:

"Make Love, Not War. See Driver for Details."



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(in memory)

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Germany was losing the war and basic necessities were almost impossible to obtain. Air-raids had halted the transportation of food and many people were starving. Hans began stealing leather from the factory to trade on the black market for food. It was small amounts, just enough to trade for a few potatoes or a piece of fish.

Exactly six months from the day they got married Hans was arrested as he attempted to sneak some leather out of the factory. Germany was experiencing a severe manpower shortage so rather than being sentenced to jail, he was assigned to a penal battalion. These units were often assigned to the German Army as ammo carriers, freight handlers or ditch diggers, thereby freeing more German soldiers for combat.

Anna never saw Hans again. Although she spent days walking from one office to another, no one had any information of his whereabouts. He was just another name, among millions of others, who had been swallowed up in a horrible world

war. In the final days of the war the Russians began entering the city. There were still some die hard German units who refused to give up and the Russians began obliterating large parts of the city with bombs and artillery. Anna's apartment was destroyed and both parents killed. With nothing but the dress on her back she fled to the safety of a nearby train station that had been turned into a refugee center. Anxiously she searched the crowds trying to find someone she knew, but there was no one. She was alone with no friends and nowhere to go.

Her home had become about twenty square feet of a bombed out railway station.

At that time, in the closing days of the war, it had become a custom to place small notices on the walls of the train station inquiring as to information on missing loved ones. People who had been bombed out would post a notice to let their family know where they were. Soldiers returning from the front, if they had a comrade from that city, would tape up

notices letting families know what had happened to their sons or husbands. As Anna searched the walls for the notice she had placed for Hans weeks earlier, her worst fears were confirmed. Someone had written on the bottom of it: "Killed - Cracow."

The following months were an unending, horrifying nightmare - searching garbage cans for a scrap of food - drunken Russian soldiers dragging screaming women off into the darkness - stepping over dead bodies to get a drink of water.

Every morning she would join long lines of people hoping to be selected for work in clearing the war damage. The only reward was a bowl of thin porridge, but it was enough to keep thousands of starving



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people coming back every day.

Anna met a truck driver who made trips back and forth to the American lines. After much pleading and begging he agreed to smuggle her across the border in exchange for her wedding ring and a few other pieces of jewelry she had managed to hold on to.

Several miles from the border the truck stopped on a dark side road. After opening the rear door the driver motioned for her to get out, telling her in no uncertain terms that he expected her to be nice to him before they went any further.

Screaming and fighting, Anna finally struggled to escape and began running into the darkness. Daylight found her at the edge of a large forest where several German Army trucks had been abandoned. There was no food but she salvaged a pair of Luftwaffe overalls which she put on in place of her ripped and tattered dress.

That afternoon while walking across a field she was picked up by American troops and sent to Salzburg, Austria where a huge camp for displaced persons had been set up. Going from the Russians to the Americans was like leaving Hell and going to Heaven. Things were still bad but there was now hope for a future.

That night as she lay on an Army cot she began to listen to the conversations around her. Everyone was talking about where they were from, what they had lost and the horrors of the war.

Anna made a silent vow to herself that night. She would forget the past, erase it like it

never happened and live in the future.

After weeks of searching, Anna got a job as a cleaning woman for the American Army. The pay was almost nothing but occasionally some G.I. would give her a pack of cigarettes or a piece of worn out clothing which she could trade. Her boss was a young red headed soldier named Bill, who was always playing practical jokes on everyone. Despite her misgivings Anna found herself attracted to him and when he finally asked her out, she readily agreed. On their first date Bill gave her a dress, "so he would not be seen with the enemy." The overalls quickly disappeared and Anna and Bill began seeing one another regularly. When he proposed getting a room in town and living together she did not hesitate. Being a soldier's mistress was better than starving to death.

Bill never asked questions about her past. Several times Anna tried to talk to him about her experiences but it was too painful. She was afraid to tell him about having been married before for fear he would ask if she still loved Hans.

Almost from the beginning Bill had talked about getting married but Anna never took it seriously. Every soldier told every girl friend the same story. Much to her surprise, right before Bill's enlistment was up he announced that he had started making arrangements for her to go to the United States.

In 1947 Bill was discharged. Eight months later, after countless interviews and stacks of paperwork, Anna joined him in Chicago where they were married. She still was not sure if she really loved him but was determined to live in the future and make the best of it.

Years passed. Bill became an engineer and they had two children. In 1966 he was transferred to Huntsville where he worked on missile development. They made friends and became active in the community.

From all appearances they were a happy couple, but there was a dark secret constantly in the back of Anna's mind. Regardless of how long she was married to Bill, Hans would always be her husband.

"Aliens from outer space probably ride by earth and lock their doors."

Seth Rogers, Gurley

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Anna and Bill had always enjoyed going out for dinner and dancing and when the Fogcutter opened it became a favorite of theirs. Oftentimes if he worked late, she would go on ahead so they could get their regular table.

As Anna waited for Bill she glanced casually around the dimly-lit lounge. It was still too early for most of the regulars. Most of the people there were business people from out of town, having a quick dinner before going back to their hotel rooms.

She didn't notice him at first; it was more like she felt him staring at her. Curious, she shifted her chair to get a better look at him. He was a handsome elderly man, tall, well dressed and sitting by himself. She would have turned away had it not been for his eyes - they reminded her of someone whom she had known a half century earlier.

Suddenly she felt as if she was about to pass out.

The man got up and walked over to where she was sitting.

"Anna.....," he said. It was half question and half statement. "I knew it was you as soon as you walked in."

Anna was speechless but finally managed to say the name.

"Hans..... I thought you were dead." The words came pouring out. Hans told of being arrested, being sent to the front

lines where he worked unloading trucks. When the Russians swept through he was captured, given a Russian uniform and a rifle, and sent back to the lines. The war ended but instead of being released he was sent to Russia where he was tried and convicted for allegedly helping the German war effort.

The next eight years were spent in a prison camp where he worked in a lumber mill. When he was finally released he went home but no one was there. Neighbors told him that everyone in the apartment had been killed during the war.

He told of emigrating to the United States and living in Chicago, ironically only a few blocks from where Anna and Bill lived.

Anna finally managed to explain how she had found a notice at the railway station saying he had been killed.

Almost as suddenly as they had began, the words quickly died out with neither knowing what to say.

After what seemed like minutes of silence Hans asked her, "Are you married?"

"Yes," replied Anna. "Two children." Noticing the ring on Hans' finger she asked, "You too?" "Yes.

Bad Stomach Cramps?

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Two boys and a girl." Hans instinctively reached for his wallet as if to show their pictures, then decided against it.

More silence passed as Anna stared into his eyes as if trying to remember someone from long ago. There was nothing else left to say. They sat there silently for the next few minutes just watching each other, both thinking of questions they knew they would never ask.

Suddenly her attention was drawn to a man walking into the lounge.

"Is that your husband?" asked Hans.

"Yes."

"Do you love him?"

Suddenly Anna thought back about all the years she had known Bill. She thought about the hours he had spent patiently helping her learn English and about all the times he had been there to comfort her when she felt bad.

She remembered how proud he was when their children were born and how he never let a day go by without saying he loved her.

Finally Anna replied, smiling for the first time. "Yes," she said in a soft voice, "I love my

husband very much."

The look on Anna's face answered all of Hans' questions.

"It is best I go." Hans said as Bill approached the table. There was a trace of tears in his eyes. Taking a napkin from the table he wrote something on it before placing it gently in her hand and walking away.

When Bill sat down he immediately sensed something was wrong. "Are you all right?" he asked.


"I'm fine," Anna replied. "I want to dance. I just want you to hold me."

As Anna and her husband danced to the slow tunes of the music she watched over his shoulder as Hans paid his check and walked out.

Late that night, hours after her husband had fallen asleep, she got up and went into the den. After turning a lamp on she retrieved the napkin from her purse. The words were simple but beautiful; a poignant reminder of what might have been.

"I will love you forever."


Just one of millions of stories from World II. One that would have been lost forever, if she had not told her daughter.



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SELLING THE FARM

by Bill Wright

It was June 15, 1922 and the location was a small community in South Alabama. My grandfather was working as a foreman in a potato shed. The potato shed was located at the end of a feeder railroad track, off of a main railroad track.

The railroad company sent a crew this day to make repairs to the feeder line. The crew opened a switch to allow the work vehicle to enter the feeder line. After entering the feeder line they would close the switch. However, the switch was improperly closed. Soon, a fast moving passenger train on the main line traveling from Montgomery to Mobile approached the area of the main line and the feeder line. Because of the improperly closed switch the passenger train was diverted from the main line to the feeder line, resulting in the passenger train crashing into

the potato shed.

My grandfather at age forty-six and a twelve year old boy working in the potato shed were killed. Several crewmen on the train were injured, but all survived the crash.

The railroad company, to avoid a lawsuit, made a substantial payment for negligence to my grandmother. The Court named a relative as Administrator of my grandfather's estate. My grandmother took some of the funds and

purchased farm land with two houses located on the property. It was believed the relative lost most of the funds in his failed used car business.

My grandmother farmed the land with help of relatives as her livelihood. I remember when I was five years old visiting her. It was an experience for a city child to be around farm animals, drinking water from a hand pump, riding in a wagon pulled by a horse and picking cotton. I certainly did not realize then that sixty-five years later I would be the family member to sell the farm.

In 1966 my Mother and an aunt inherited the farm. My



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Mother and I had several discussions about the property. Each time she would say that when I and others inherited the property and sold it she wanted it sold to someone that would build a nice subdivision on the property.

Every time I would explain to her that it would be very difficult to find a buyer with a restriction like that attached. I also explained that if a buyer agreed to the restriction and later did something else with the property it would be too expensive to take legal action against the buyer.

Every time our conversation would end with her saying "I still want them to build a nice subdivision on the property."

In year 2001, I and other relatives inherited the farm. The following year I sold the farm

to a Commercial Farmer with no restrictions attached. During the real estate closing I ask the buyer what he intended to do with the property.

He said he was going to build a large warehouse on the property to store his farm equipment and probably farm the remainder of the land. I felt sad selling the farm because it had been owned by the family for eighty years. Also, I was disappointed I had not sold the farm to someone who intended to build a subdivision on the property, thus fulfilling my mother's desire how the property would be used.

A year later I learned the Commercial Farmer had sold the property to a Real Estate Developer. Today, A NICE SUBDIVISION sits on the property!

Cheddar Baked Potatoes

- 4 medium potatoes
- 1 can Cream of Mushroom soup
- 1 t. paprika
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- 1 t. black pepper
- 1 c. Cheddar cheese, shredded

Cut the potatoes into 1/4-inch slices. In a small bowl, combine the soup, onion powder, garlic powder, paprika and pepper. Arrange the potato slices in a greased 2-qt. baking dish in overlapping rows.

Sprinkle with cheese, spoon the soup mixture over the cheese. Cover with foil and bake at 400 degrees for about 45 minutes - uncover and bake for 10 additional minutes and the potatoes are tender.

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MY EXPERIENCE WITH THE SPIRIT WORLD

by Carolyn Woodyard

I was the 4th of 5 children born to Weston and Ruby (Stallings) Hatfield who lived in Sulphur Springs (DeKalb County), AL. Dad was a sharecropper; Mother was a good Christian lady who was a homemaker plus worked alongside Dad in the fields.

I remember going with Dad when I was 3 to this farm in the cove of Fox Mountain and Sand Mountain. The house seemed so large to me - 4 large rooms downstairs and 2 upstairs (all wood interior). To get the vision of the house, there was a full porch across the front. The single door entrance was in the middle of the house. As one walked in the front door there were 3 rooms to the left and 1 to the right. The hallway led to a large L-shaped back porch. Just before going out that door the stairway led to the right.

The name of the family living there was "Blevins." We only went into one room downstairs to the right of the hallway where Dad was talking with a group of people about us moving there. I only remember an old lady sitting in a rocking chair, sitting in front of a fireplace. She had a blanket draped across her lap. I clearly remember her saying, "Weston, you are going to hear noises in this house but don't think anything about it; it's only rats." Later I realized rats can't make sounds of walking up and down stairs, much less come out with a blood-curdling scream.

One room upstairs was used for a "play" room when company came. On Sundays after church, if family didn't all gather at the Hatfield's house, they visited each other for lunch and spend time together all afternoon; older people visiting and children playing. One Sunday when company was there, my sister, Myrna had one corner of our children's "play-room" for her "house"; my brother, Jimmy and a cousin, Roberta, had another corner for their "house". I had one corner with my doll for my "house". The other corner (close to the door) was our "church." I had my baby (doll) dressed and was ready before the others so I was leaving early for "church" and started to sing. We had closed the door when we went in to play.

When I started "singing" the door opened about a foot, closed, opened all the way, closed, opened again about half-way. There was a man standing just outside the door. He was all the same color (a pale blue-grey all over; hair, skin, eyes which were wide open and did not blink), clothes. The 4 of us ran (falling on each other) to the opposite corner where my sister Myrtle was and called for



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someone downstairs. They all answered. We four picked up enough courage to ease along the wall and tried to close the door but couldn't. When my older brother Tommy came up to check on us, there was no one there.

Other people that would come to our house at different times to visit (but we would not be at home) witnessed seeing a man in light colored clothes, heard a terrible scream, or heard footsteps going up or down staircases or walking in the hallway. A cousin Burt Heard that lived on Sand Mountain was visiting us once when Dad had made a trip to Chattanooga. It was late in the day. Mother was in the kitchen cooking supper; we children were lying on a cot in front of a window that looked out onto the L-shaped porch. Burt saw a man walk by the window, jumped up and ran to the door. No one was there.

On another occasion, Mother and I were a short distance from the house where she was looking for hen nests. Since they had the run of the property, we called them "yard birds". Suddenly mother said, "Let's run!" Myrna had been left in the house to wash breakfast dishes. She was running out the back door, crying and calling Mother. She had heard a SCREAM and Mother had heard the same. I didn't. Don't know if it was because I had other things on my mind (such as picking wild black berries or just being in my own little world).

Another time, Mother was in our living room and she saw a man walk out the front door and close it behind himself. She thought it was one of Dad's brothers who was in the room across the hall from the living room. His wife was in that room after she had given birth to one of her children and Mother was helping take

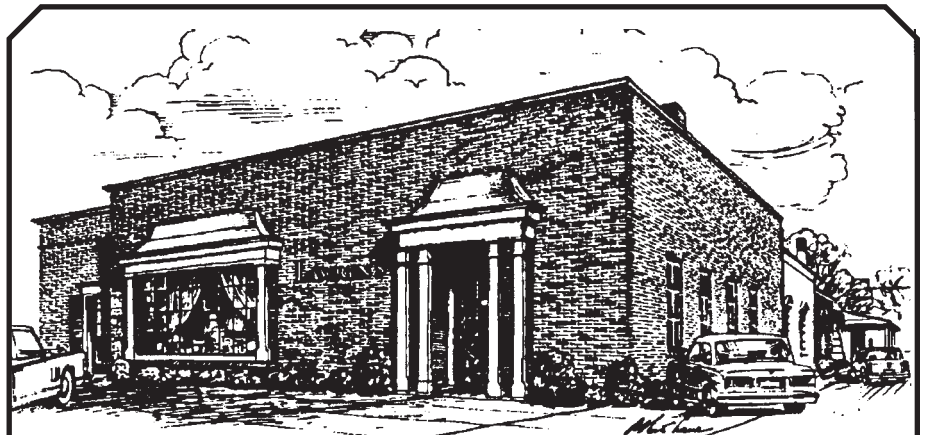
care of her - a normal thing back then. (And by the way, this is the room where my baby brother Ted was born.) When Mother walked into that room and saw my uncle sitting there, she went pale from shock when she realized it wasn't him she had seen go out the front door.

In the hallway close to the stairway there was a stain on the floor that Mother said looked like blood when it stains wood. She always mopped the floors with lye soap/water. The more she mopped that floor, the brighter it got just as blood does. Always wondered if someone was murdered there. It was rumored that a man came to date a daughter of the family and mysteriously disappeared.

Two other families lived there after us, but no one confessed to seeing or hearing anyone or anything. The original house burned and a group of "hunters" purchased the property with a different house. I took some friends to the area to show them where I grew up. I was pleased to see and talk to one of the hunters. He told me about his brother who was going to spend one night there but called and said he was leaving as the place was haunted!

So apparently the SPIRIT is still there!

Some years ago, a speaker came from another city to Huntsville to speak on the SUPERNATURAL. I attended and after the speech was over, I talked to him because I wanted to know why some "heard" and "saw" and others had not. He said some people are just more susceptible to the Spirit World.



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**Ask
Grandma**
by Mimi

Let me be the first to say good riddance to 2020. It will be one everyone will remember. Now let's think positive for 2021. Everyone take advantage of the vaccine as soon as it is available. This is the first time I've been glad that I'm in the older group of people getting the injection first.

Let's start the new year with joy and meaning. I've made my New Year's resolutions and will try to stick with them. Just don't make yours so unattainable. I've had my black-eyed peas, turnip greens, slaw, ham and cornbread - just what my grandmother fixed every New Year's Day.

She was convinced that the menu would bring good health and luck, so I hope she is true to her word. I ate it all. She lived to be 97-1/2 years old and lived by herself; her last piano concert was at age 96.

Her son called to tell her he had a brain tumor, which got her blood pressure way too high. Her doctor told me she accidentally overdosed her on digitalis and thought she would pull through, but she didn't.

Otherwise I bet she would still be here today. I believe until everyone is vaccinated, everyone should still wear a mask, stay six feet apart, wash hands and sanitize as often as possible.

1. Expect the near future to be hard.
2. Be easy on yourself and be thankful for the small things.
3. Don't be afraid to ask for help.
4. It is okay to enjoy being with other people, even if it is only on Zoom.
5. Tell God how you feel.
6. Care about yourself and care about others.
7. Wear your mask and encourage others to do so.

I've been busy making Valentine cookies for friends. They freeze well and are ready to give to friends to brighten their day on February 14. Who doesn't need a little cheer this time of the year? Now I'm thinking positive and trying to be upbeat, which can turn a grey day into a sunny one even if there is no sun.

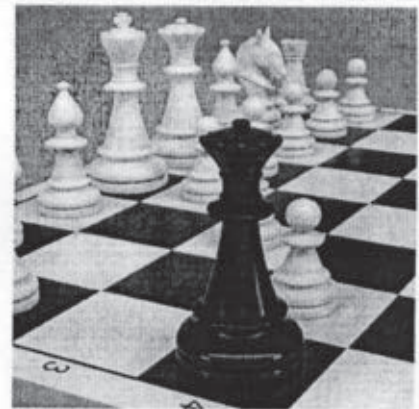
I'm urging every one of you to get the vaccine as soon as it is available to you. This terrible virus can be contained if we all do our part and get vaccinated. Good to be over seventy-five. I should have had my first shot as you read this.

So until next time, my friends, stay well and safe.

"Facebook just sounds like a drag to me. In my day seeing pictures of people's vacations was considered a punishment."

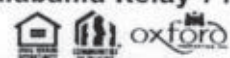
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MY FIRST TRUE LOVE

by John H. Tate



No matter how many loves you have in your life, including your life-long partner, there is no more incredible love sensation than your first true love. So it is with this writer; my heart still pains as I recall the love that got away. Just thinking of her causes me to lose my breath and feel a little light-headed.

How can I describe or explain Susan? Of course, I would go on and on about her beautiful brown eyes and how they seemed to twinkle as she looked at me. Or I could talk about her long brown hair and the way it shimmers in the sunlight. But none could relay the feelings I had for her and my strong desire to protect her from the world.

Just thinking of her name, Susan, today sends chills down my back, and I would like to ball up in a corner somewhere and call her name over and over until she comes to me. To hear her run by me one more time and call my name, "Hi John Tate," no one could say my name the way she did.

It took me some time before I got up the courage to let her know how I felt about her. After all, how could such a beauty consider me, with all of the other available men around her? But I could not stand it any longer; I made up my mind that I would let her know that she was the love of my life and we were meant to be together.

I decided that I needed to give her a gift when I told her, but it just couldn't be any gift; it has to be one that matched her beauty and reflected my great love. Since I did not have such a gift, I had to look for one; and I found the perfect necklace. I had to commit a crime to obtain it, but she was worth it.

Not knowing anything about fine jewelry, especially a necklace, I put it in my pants pocket without a box. The chain got all tangled and knotted up; I could not give it to Susan in that condition, so a girl named Lori helped me untangle it to present it in a very classy way. Lori loved it, so I felt Susan would love it too.

Well, the time came, I was able to find a private moment to speak with her. My voice was trembling, and my hands were shaking, but I did it. I want to think I said something like, "Susan, you are the most beautiful girl I have ever seen, and to look at you makes me feel special for just knowing you." But I think I said, "Here, this is for you."

The look in her eyes and the smile on her face let me know I hit it out of the park. She took a deep gasping breath and said, "Wow, how beautiful!" She let me put it around her neck and said, "Thank you very much." There were conflicts in our schedules for the rest of the day and I knew I would not see her again until the next day. So, I just stood and watched as she walked away. I cannot recall anything else I did that day; I know that I was on cloud nine for the rest of the day.

I was still floating the next day and could not wait until I saw her. There she was, standing and talking to others. I don't recall who they were - after all, they were just obstacles between me and my true love. Yes! She saw me and headed in my direction, but her smile was gone, and the light in her eyes was less bright as she approached. She reached out her right hand and dropped the necklace into my hand. I could tell this was not what she wanted to do, but she steadied herself and said, "My mom said I had to give this back to you; she said that this was much too valuable of a gift for me to accept in the fifth grade." She then turned and walked back to her friends.

I took the necklace with a sad heart and snuck it back into my momma's jewelry box. I wonder if Susan remembers me?

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Big Guys, Bigger Hearts

by Elizabeth Wharry

A little known fact during the 1980s was the community outreach by the original Cleveland Browns football team. Art Modell was the owner, Sam Rutigliano was the head coach and Marty Schottenheimer was originally an assistant coach, then became head coach. These gentlemen were big on community relations. They encouraged the players to volunteer in their home towns. The idea was to give back something to those who support the team.

During the offseason, it was not unusual to hear of these guys volunteering in the inner city schools - teaching the little ones (kindergarten through 4th grade) their shapes, colors, numbers and alphabet. Occasionally, one of the local TV stations would be on hand to film one of these big guys trying to squat down into chairs designed for ages 5 to 9 years old! It was quite a sight to see. They usually ended up sitting on the floor.

RIF...Reading Is Fundamental was a summer reading program so the kids wouldn't lose their skills. Again, it wasn't unusual for these guys to take the time to encourage the youngsters to read and write. They also took the time to toss around a football with these kids.

Big Brothers/Big Sisters was for at-risk kids in their preteen and teen years. Again, the team members would spend a couple afternoons a week tossing a football, or chatting with these kids. The wives who were available would work with the at-risk preteen and teen girls. Most of these kids were from the inner city.

Of all the volunteer work that was done, my favorite was seeing them on the news at a local pediatric hospital, rocking the preemies and the crack babies. Keep in mind, this was long before the patient privacy act. The news crew would stand outside the nursery, and film these guys wearing surgical caps and gowns, each holding and gently rocking two tiny babies.

If that's not love, I don't know what is.

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Treating Fevers and Influenza in the Old Days

by Elizabeth Janos

(These tips are presented for your entertainment and should never take the place of your doctor's advice.)

In the 1500s, the Italians were plagued with an infectious disease that they called influenza; this name was chosen because they believed it was caused by the influence of the stars. In the 1700s the French named it La Grippe; the origin of the word means "to take hold of."

There were times when I asked people what they had done to treat influenza and a troubled expression came over their faces. A brawny backwoods man who is now confined to a wheelchair summed up the confusion nicely, "There is no cure for influenza. It takes so many days to come on, so many days to get better and so many days to go."

Old-time treatment involved consuming large quantities of fluids, going to bed and adding extra blankets. Many took a laxative. Some seniors recalled that old adage, "Feed a cold and starve a fever." According to some Yankees, years ago, influenza was called a "hard cold," and indeed, many similarities in treatment can be seen.

In American Indian Medicine, Virgil Vogel writes that Native Americans dealt with fevers in a similar manner: "Indian fever treatment commonly included rest, sweating, purgation and a liquid diet or no food at all, in addition to the anti-fever medicines."

Alcohol. Some seniors felt that various types of alcohol, especially whiskey, were effective for treating influenza and fevers brought on by other causes.

- Take lemonade and a huge shot of whiskey, as hot as you can drink it, a hot shower and go right to bed. Cover up with all the blankets you can find. It will get the blood circulating and warm up the whole system.

- Start with a bottle of bourbon whiskey; put in rock candy, raw cherries and orange peel. Leave it for a week or two. When you have a fever, take a large gulp often, throughout the day.

- Take a glass of good fortified wine, add honey and lemon and bring it to a boil. It makes you sweat like a horse and brings everything out.

- Put into a jar one pint of rum and ten ounces of honey. Shake it up good and take a spoonful as needed.

Onions. Some people sliced an onion and secured it around the neck; others took onion syrup. One woman told me that whenever she had the flu she would chop up an onion, put it on a plate and sleep beside it. "I

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"Cannot possibly attend first night, will attend second...if there is one." (Winston Churchill, in response)

always thought it worked," she said. Onions were secured to other areas of the body as well.

- Bind slices of raw onion on the tops and bottoms of the wrists; also the balls of the feet. Leave them on all night and repeat in the morning. Continue the treatment until the fever goes away.

- Take slices of onions and heat them in the wood ashes on the stove. Put them in a cloth and place that on the forehead. It will bring the fever down.

Herbal teas. Many seniors felt that inducing perspiration with herbal teas was an effective treatment for influenza and fevers. The most popular of these teas was ginger.

- When we were sick, my mother would wrap us up in a special old robe and put lots of blankets on us. She'd give us a cup of ginger tea, more if we were real sick. Best thing in the world that I know of. You would sweat your eyeballs out. When my husband had the flu or a cold, I would give him a few cups of ginger tea to warm him up – and did it ever! I would have to change the sheets, because they would be wet from perspiration.

- Some favored yarrow. Yarrow is very bitter. Steep it and add sugar. We took it for any ailment. When my baby had scarlet fever, Grandma came over and put yarrow under the sheet of the crib and gave the baby a little yarrow tea every few hours.

- Yarrow grows wild; there used to be millions of plants all over the place. You cut the plants and hang them somewhere to dry – but don't touch the blossoms. When you get the grippe, cut off some of the blossoms and steep them until the color comes out. You have to add sugar because a strong cup is bitter as hell. If someone has a fever, I personally guarantee it will break it up overnight: it really makes you perspire. You drink a few good swallows at a time throughout the day, and you must go to bed. Yarrow was used by the American Indians.

- As a fever treatment, Catnip and camomile teas were also taken for influenza and fevers.

Other approaches. Some had soaked the feet in mustard water, others had taken a mustard-water bath. Baking-soda baths were taken.

- Cold water and ice were used in various applications: a cold cloth or ice was applied to the back of the neck; a cold pack was placed on the forehead; a person was immersed in cold water; a cold compress was placed on the lower legs; a cold compress was placed on each arm where the elbows bend.

- Some had taken a sponge bath with rubbing alcohol; others had put rubbing alcohol on various parts of the body.



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Heard On the Street

by **Cathey Carney**



Mary Harris had an 88th birthday on January 30th. I hope you had a great day and it was great talking with you. Until she told me about her birthday, I thought she was in her 30s!

The Photo of the Month from January was **Austin Miller** of Ryland. Many many people called because they know and love him. Austin writes frequently for Old Huntsville and so many are proud to call him a friend. The first of many who called was **Bill Gossett** of Hurricane Creek in Gurley. Bill retired from 31 years at Wyle Labs and when I asked him if he knew Austin, he said he's known him for 100 years! That's a long time to know someone.

We actually had two winners

for the hidden syringe that I put on page 37 - do you see it now in the Scotty's ad? I made it larger this time so had lots more calls. The reason we had two winners was they called at nearly the exact same time! First one was **Dale Riddle** of Huntsville. Dale is a retired lineman for Huntsville Utilities, worked there many years. I told him so many people appreciated the dedicated work done by our Huntsville Utilities men and women. I know everyone remembers the storms and trees down we've had over the years and how fast the power came back on. Thank You Huntsville Utilities!!

Our second winner for the syringe was **Tom Neal**, of south Huntsville. He retired from SAIC but they keep calling him back to work - he said the Army can't do without him. Love his attitude. Congratulations to all our winners - who get a free subscription to Old Huntsville!

A lady called us last week needing your help. She purchased a silver water pitcher at a garage sale. On the bottom was engraved "**2nd Grade, 1960-61 - Mrs. W. E. Mellette.**" Research shows that a Mrs. Mellette was a teacher at Rison Elementary - does anyone remember her or know her family? Wouldn't it be great to get this water pitcher back to the family? If you know the family please call **Norma** at (256) 509-8557.

I've noticed that the parsley I planted in my garden last year

is doing great - it is not bothered by the freeze at all. Also I heard that if you like **Cilantro**, get some seeds now and just sprinkle them in an outdoor pot or garden area. Press into the ground and soon you'll have all the Cilantro you want for your favorite Mexican dishes.

Annette Cruse called recently with a message for the Butler High School class of 1967 - have a safe and happy 2021! Annette retired from Redstone Arsenal in 2006. She has two sons, three granddaughters (2 twins) and two furbabies - dogs **Katie** and **Snoopy!**

It was good to talk with **Jim Price** recently. He remembers **Sam, Neil** and **Milton Keith** from years ago, and now lives in Ohio. He lived in Huntsville for many years and really misses it. It's amazing to me the number of U.S. subscribers we have who spent time or grew up in Huntsville, and still remember and miss it.

Ianthia Bridges had a birthday on January 10 - I hope it was a good one and you celebrated with your loved ones.

This is random but do you have a **manual can opener** in

Photo of The Month

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

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This little guy knows all there is to know about Big Cove, Al. He taught many kids in Brownsboro, Owens Cross Roads and Madison County High School in Gurley



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your kitchen? Many are collecting extra canned products and paper products but if there's no power and you can't open the cans, they're useless! Also **Belinda Talley** gave me a great idea that I had not heard of - in case of power outage. Those solar lights that you put in your garden make good lights for inside your home at night. You charge them all day in the sun, bring them in at night and you have light. They probably will last 4 hours or so but after that you're in bed! Great idea Belinda.

I have hidden some items, this will be a challenge for you. There are a number of tiny hearts hidden all over the magazine. You all know I'm prone to trickery so find them all if you can! The first local person to call with the correct number of hearts wins a free subscription. The first subscriber from out of state will also win if they're the first to call. Get out your specs!

Many are having problems now with wearing masks and hearing aids, and when they take their masks off they pull out the hearing aids. Considering the cost of hearing aids, you sure don't want to have to replace lost ones. If any of our readers have good tips to avoid that, let me know and we'll publish it.

I got a great tip from one of the customer reps at Hiller plumbing recently. He was unclogging my sink and told me that even just a little bit of bacon grease can catch and hold food particles, hair etc. and just stop up your pipes. He suggested NEVER pouring bacon grease into your sink thinking the hot water will move it thru - as soon as it cools it's a white hard mess. So what I do is pour it into a coffee cup, when it's hard transfer to a Ziploc bag, toss into the trash. Then wipe out the pan with a paper towel and throw in the trash. Seems like a lot of work but it can save major plumbing bills down the road.

Kathleen Vaughn sent in a good quote: "Housework is something we do that no one notices, until we don't do it."

Our favorite Ayers Farmers Market on Cook Avenue behind Krispy Kreme is one of the best places to go for good, healthy local produce. I found that they will be open again in Mid-March - they are closed for some remodeling. Looking forward to shopping there again in the spring.

More are working at home these days and **Dr. McMillion** had a good idea - don't sit for long extended periods of time at your computer. You need to get up and move around, walk a bit and stretch. The body is used to moving and your blood will flow better especially in the legs and core. Plus every movement uses up calories!

Beta Sigma Phi is a ladies service soror-

ity that is international, with lots of chapters all over the U.S. as well. There are chapters in Huntsville, Decatur and many surrounding cities. In Huntsville the chapter Alpha Preceptor Gamma has about 14 ladies as members and two of them will be awarded the Golden Circle ritual in 2021. They are **Barbara Saunders** of Hampton Cove and **Jean McIntosh** of Huntsville. That means they have been members of this chapter for 50 years!! That is a really long time to be a member of a club and we send congratulations to these ladies!

Most people are not aware of the daily challenges that are faced by a very large (and often underserved) community in the Tennessee Valley, which is the deaf community. **Frances Smallwood** set out to change this 25 years ago. As one of North Alabama's longest-running, successful interpreting services business, Deaf Access, Inc. will celebrate 25 years in business. They have made great impacts to help the deaf community and have provided support to businesses, families, individuals, employers, healthcare providers and so much more. Unfortunately, COVID put a bit of a stall on their anniversary celebration plans, but we wanted to help them get the word out and celebrate their success. Old Huntsville says congratulations to Frances and we will be collecting her story for a future issue!

Have a good February and call that loved one you haven't been able to see in a while - it'll mean the world to them and you too.

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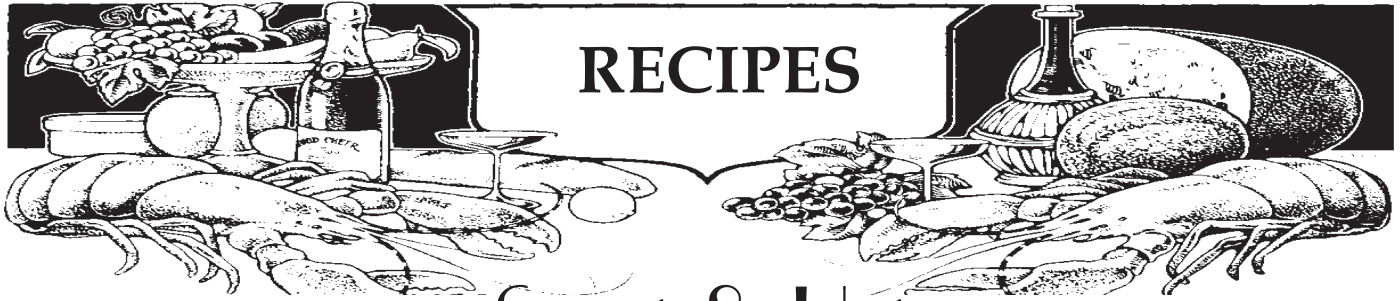
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- Apricot halves
- Pear halves
- Peach slices
- Pineapple chunks
- Large jar chunky applesauce
- 1/2 t. cinnamon
- 1/4 t. nutmeg
- 2 T. butter
- 1/2 c. Sherry

Drain all fruit and layer the first 4 fruits in order in a casserole dish. Cook applesauce and spices in small pan for 5 minutes uncovered. Add Sherry and pour over the fruit. Dot with butter. Bake at 325 for an hour.

Cinnamon Bars

- 1 c. butter
 - 1 c. sugar
 - 1 c. flour
 - 1 egg, separated
 - 1 t. vanilla extract
 - 2 t. cinnamon
 - 1/8 t. salt
 - 2 c. chopped pecans
- Cream all ingredients to-

gether except for the egg white. Spread on a large cookie sheet or pizza pan. Cover dough with unbeaten egg white. Spread 2 cups of chopped pecans on top, pressing lightly. Bake for 15 minutes at 325 degrees. Cut into bars while still warm.

Toffee Dream

- 1 pkg. brownie mix
 - 2 sml. pkgs. instant chocolate pudding
 - 2 c. milk
 - 6 Heath Bars, crushed
 - 8 oz. Cool Whip
- Prepare brownies in a 9x13" pan. Prepare pudding with the milk, layer over brownies. Sprinkle 3/4 of the candy bars over the top, then spread with Cool Whip, rest of candy on top, refrigerate 4 hours or overnight.

Cream Cheese Squares

- 1 box yellow cake mix
- 1 stick butter, melted
- 1 egg

- 8 oz. cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 box powdered sugar
- 1/2 c. flour
- 2 eggs
- 1 t. almond extract

Mix cake mix, butter and egg; press into a greased 9x13" pan. Mix remaining ingredients with a mixer and pour onto the dough. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes and top is golden. When cool, cut into small squares.

Walnut Pudding

- 2 eggs
- 1 c. powdered sugar
- 1 T. plain flour
- 1 t. baking powder
- 1 c. broken walnuts
- 1 c. dates, pitted

Beat eggs, sugar flour and baking powder together thoroughly. Stir in walnuts and dates.

Pour batter into a buttered baking dish and set in a pan of boiling water, Bake for 30 minutes at 350 degrees. Let chill and serve with homemade whipped cream.

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Candied Pecans

- 1 c. brown sugar
- 1/2 c. sugar
- 1/2 c. sour cream
- 1 t. vanilla extract
- 1 t. cinnamon
- 2-1/2 c. pecans

In a heavy saucepan combine the sugars and sour cream. Cook to soft ball stage, or your candy thermometer registers 234 degrees. Remove from heat and add your vanilla and cinnamon, beat well til mixture starts to get thick. Add pecans and stir very quickly. Spread on shallow pan that you've covered with waxed paper. When cool break into pieces.

Annie Weber's Nut Cake

- 1 box yellow cake mix
- 1 pkg. vanilla pudding mix
- 4 eggs
- 1/2 c. vegetable oil
- 1 c. rum
- 1 c. ground pecans

Mix all ingredients well and pour batter into a greased, decorative Bundt pan. Bake in 325-degree oven for an hour.

Remove from oven, invert to a plate. While still warm, sprinkle with powdered sugar. Serve with whipped cream -- it's delicious and German!

Chuck Owens' Sweet Potato Pie

- 4 medium sweet potatoes, cooked and mashed
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 c. brown sugar
- Small can evaporated milk
- 1/2 c. butter
- 1-1/2 t. cinnamon
- 1/2 t. each of ground nutmeg and ground ginger
- Pinch ground cloves
- Dash salt
- 2 9-inch pie shells

Mix all ingredients, preheat your oven to 400 degrees. Pour the sweet potato mixture into the pie shells, place in oven. Bake for about 45 minutes and pie is set in middle (it doesn't shake).

Great with whipped cream or just by itself!

Comforting Rice Pudding

- 1 c. uncooked rice
- 1/2 t. salt
- Peel of an orange or lemon
- 3 c. lowfat milk
- 1 large cinnamon stick
- 3/4 c. sugar
- 1/4 c. seedless raisins
- 2 T. dark rum

Mix the rice with 2 cups of water and 1/2 teaspoon salt in a 3-quart saucepan. Bring to a

boil, stir once. Place orange or lemon peel on top of the rice, reduce heat, cover and simmer 15 minutes and liquid is absorbed.

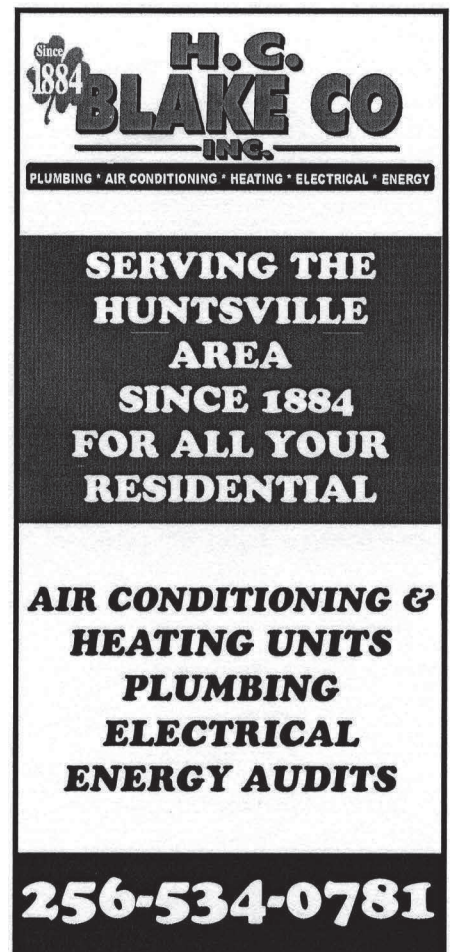
Remove and discard the peel, heat the milk and cinnamon in a small saucepan til milk is infused with the flavor of cinnamon. Strain milk and stir into cooked rice. Add the sugar and simmer for 20 minutes, or until thick, stirring often. Add the raisins and rum, simmer for 10 minutes. Serve hot. Reheat with a bit of milk.

Hot Kettle Corn

Heat 3 tablespoons oil in a saucepan, add 1/2 cup popcorn kernels and 3 tablespoons sugar and dash of salt. Heat oil, cover pan and shake til popped. Sprinkle with cinnamon. If you like it sweeter adjust the sugar amount.



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Irrefutable Proof My Wife Loves Me

by Al Dean



Leslie Weatherhead, in his book, "The Christian Agnostic", wrote: "To prove the existence of God is a bit like proving that your wife loves you." He goes on to say that your wife may act the way she does because it's easier or she wants to inherit your money. To which I say, "Pshaw!" My wife will inherit shotguns and fishing tackle; there is no money. She has never accused me of making life easier for her. I know she loves me and I hereby offer several proofs why this is so.

She accepts my imperfections. It took nearly two weeks of marriage for her to discover she had been duped, and except for the three years her mother lived with us, she's never mentioned it.

She appreciates the practical gifts I give her on special occasions. Less sensitive husbands miss many opportuni-

ties to express how they really feel. I overheard her lamenting her weight gain in a conversation with my sister. I astutely recognized that candy for Valentines' Day would send the wrong message, so I'm surprising her with a Weight Watchers membership. It is typical of me to present her with gifts that convey my feelings; the riding mower with the roll bar for last Mothers' Day, the replacement ductless under-cabinet range hood for Christmas. Which reminds me of another husbandly characteristic she finds endearing: I'm a DIY kind of guy.

She asked if I would separate two pans stuck one inside the other. I got enough water in the bottom pan to create steam, set them on the stove with the burner on high and waited for the pan to bubble free. She was saying something about steam powered locomotives when the stuck pot launched into the range hood and mangled it. I haven't replaced the cookie jar. Maybe I'll do that for her birthday; either that or the forged-in-fire meat cleaver advertised on TV.

She applauds my choices in wearing apparel. It takes her breath away when I wear my white no-tuck embroidered front Guayabera shirt with the four oversize pockets and round out the ensemble with complementary black pants. She says it makes me



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look like Mr. Richard - he's my barber. If I promise not to wear the western bolo tie with the bullhead clasp, she insists I wear my fancy cognac colored cowboy boots to church.

She lets me control the TV remote, which has nothing to do with me telling her that it's more fun to watch her do it. She aims it, like a pistol, at arm's length, punches a button and grimaces. She also appreciates that I mute the sound for Saturday and Sunday ball games, and I can tell by the look on her face how impressed she is that I understand what's going on without sportscaster's commentaries.

She approves of my pipe smoking. Upon reading "Weber's Guide to Pipes and Pipe Smoking" and discovering that an early 1960s Surgeon General's report indicated that death rates for pipe smokers was little higher than for non-smokers and upon reaching the decision that a pipe is simply a pacifier for adult males, she created my very own private smoking area.

She bought a yard sale recliner and end table to hold my pipe smoking paraphernalia She cleared away a spot between the freezer and the hot water heater in the garage where I enjoy my pipes before cold weather sets in.

She appreciates my enthusiasm for the out-of-doors, and even though it meant spending most of our waking hours apart, she encouraged me to take up gardening during our at-risk, stay-at-home Covid-19 isolation. I can recall her squeals of delight as I put on my work gloves, loaded my tools in the truck and headed for the perfect spot she had chosen for a garden on the far western reaches of our property.

Action may speak louder than words to express love, but it needs to be said. I never heard either of my parents tell the other they loved them. Then again, I don't remember either of them saying they loved me. I know they did, but it would have been nice to hear them say it. My wife and I have had to say it often during this past year of lockdowns to remind ourselves that the coronavirus pandemic hasn't destroyed 62 years of marriage - at least, not yet.

"The only real mystery in life is why Kamikaze pilots wore helmets."

Al McGuire

GOO-EY BUTTER CAKE

1 box yellow cake mix
 1 egg
 1 stick butter, room temps
 1/2 c. pecans, chopped fine
 Mix this together and press into greased 9x13" pan. Mix together the following:
 1 box powdered sugar
 2 eggs
 1 8oz pkg cream cheese
 1 cup coconut (optional)
 Pour this over the cake mixture in pan. Bake for 40-45 minutes at 350 degrees. Cool and cut into small squares.



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The Cave (1959)

by Bill Alkire



I had attempted to assemble a small band. We had a lot of fun - all of us enjoyed music. We met at different homes and I always made Pizza (Chef-BoyareDee in a box). We were learning a powerful lesson about breaking into the music business. One thing was certain - a performer had to have more than talent. We had none of what we needed, except a desire to play and sing.

The man who helped with our sound system was named Norman. Norman was older than we were; however, he shared our passion for music and he had a desire to help us succeed. We were always searching for venues where we could observe live bands in performance. Facilities that played live music usually had good crowds.

One of the more popular venues in Elkins, WV at that time was at the YMCA. The venue was called the "The Cave". The "Cave" had the best bands as well as the latest in vinyl records and a great DJ who could spin the best. I attended as often as I could. I knew many of the teenagers who came even though they were mostly high school students and I attended a rival high school. I liked to dance and did so with many of the young women that came to the "Cave" and other venues.

Norman had tried to identify a young woman he was fascinated with that he said attended the "Cave". He had asked her for a date with no success. Since I knew many of the ladies and guys that attended, he asks if could help him in his effort get a date with this young lady. Norman pointed the young woman out to me. I had previously danced with her and when I requested a dance, she said "Okay!"

After a short time during our dancing, I asked if she would consider a date with Norman? Her answer was clear and to the point, "NO!" she went on, "If you want to dance with me again...do not ask me that again." All I could say was "Okay! I do like to dance with you, we dance well together." She looked at me with those big beautiful brown eyes and said, "We do, don't we!" That was it - I was hooked!

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**"I've come to view Jesus much
the way I view Elvis.
I love the guy but the fan clubs
really freak me out."**

John Fugelsang

A few weeks later my best friend Ronnie, who attended high school with Marilyn, called me. He wanted to know if I knew Marilyn Williams. I answered in the affirmative, "Why?" Marilyn had requested when they were in class together if he would ask me to attend an upcoming Valentine's dance at their school. What could I say, "Yes, I would love too?" Ronnie indicated he would pick me up so Marilyn and I could go with him and his girlfriend.

I immediately called Mrs. Sparrow, she was a florist and had always made great corsages for me. I ordered a corsage to wear on the wrist. Mrs. Sparrow wanted to know if it was special. "Yes", I answered, "make it with pink rose buds and baby's breath." "Excellent choice. Is she from here?" she asked. "Yes!" I answered. "That's a first" she said, "I will have it ready - come by on your way to the dance."

This event set in motion a change to my way of thinking, my attitude, and my life.

The Valentine Dance was great, everyone had a good time. Many of the participants I knew and it made for a much-relaxed event with less anxiety than I had expected. Acceptance by the kids at this high school for rival students was great. The relationship between Marilyn and I grew. We continually met at different dance venues and began to become closer and more comfortable being with each other.

Marilyn, after knowing I had a car but no license, volunteered to assist me in getting my Driver's License. After we graduated from high school, we began to frequently date and double date to events and dance venues. It took over a year, but I finally realized I had chased her, until she caught me. I began to include her in any and all plans I made. When we were not together, we called each other.

Marilyn was working for the phone company and I was working for a grocery store. The job at the store took a hit. My hours were cut when a previous employee bumped me. The guys I hung around with were off to Military Service or headed for college. My efforts to attend the University fell flat - no job could be found. My Mom was getting married and the building we lived in was going to be demolished.

With the war in Vietnam gleaming at me with the draft situation a great possibility, I began to rethink Military Service. My Dad was a career Navy Sailor.

Marilyn was firm about not getting

married until she was twenty-one and I was in no position to consider it either. She and I agreed I would enlist in the U.S. Army (I had scored high marks on the entrance exam). I was able to get into an Air Defense Missile Program. I would send any extra monies to her and she would save it for us so when we got married, we could have money saved. We had that kind of trust and love for each other as we grew in our relationship.

We got married in May 1962, three years after we first met. We were married 58 years when she passed in 2020 from complications from Alzheimer's.

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Close Cucumber Call

by Gary Gee and Charles Malone

In Florida in the early 1950s, Greg's dad was a firefighter. But he had a second income from a couple of truck tractors that he used and - sometimes leased out - for hauling trailers loaded with cucumbers up north as far as such states as Connecticut and Delaware. Greg had learned his firefighter and trucking skills from his dad and followed in his dad's footpath. He liked contributing to his neighbors in his firefighting profession; however, he loved the independence of trucking vegetables on the side. He described the latter this way: "Trucking was ingrained in my soul; while my friends went off to college to get their education, my education primarily came from seeing the world through the windshield of an 18-wheeler semi-trailer truck."

Greg's tractor was his mobile apartment. One of his memories never left him - nor people in Huntsville - especially those living at the base of the west side of Monte-Sano mountain.

Greg's solo trip in the trucking business was transporting a load of cucumbers from Florida to Delaware in an 18-wheeler. While he had heard of the possibility of "imbalance of brakes" with the tractor and the trailer, he had expected this to be a remote

occurrence and quickly put it in his "things- to-learn-more about" folder. But the "remote phenomenon" happened on his first solo trip, while ascending and descending Monte Sano. This was his first major lesson learned from looking through a windshield.

Brake imbalance, reportedly, is one of the more common reasons for loss of brakes. It can result in jackknifing or swingout, depending on which of the two braking systems have become too hot. Reaching the crest of Monte Sano, Greg began his roller coaster ride. He was shocked when he realized that his brakes had failed and that he and his cargo had entered a serious emergency. He knew the trail - that the highway intersected first with Longwood Avenue, then California Street and Whitesburg Drive. He also was aware that Longwood terminated at the Madison Heights subdivision just west of Fifth Avenue Elementary School.

Under stress - and like a pro - Greg quickly chose to deviate onto Longwood Drive and try to avoid the traffic near Huntsville Hospital at the Whitesburg Drive intersection. He - and his load of cucumbers - sailed down Longwood Drive at over 80 miles per hour and then through the next two busy intersections. Then Greg sped by Fifth Avenue School and plowed into Charles' home at the end of Longwood and came to an abrupt stop - an uninjured and wiser man.

Eleven-year old Charles was a student at Fifth Avenue School, where on this day, many students were getting their education. Glancing through the classroom windows in response to Greg's laying down on his air horn and flashing his lights in warning of the cucumber emergency, their education today also was beyond the books. Charles' dad was a firefighter. His mom had a beauty salon in the family's converted garage. Charles has a great memory of the "cucumber event."

"This event happened around 1951. At that time Longwood Drive was the road going over Monte Sano Mountain. Governor's Drive (then known as Fifth Avenue) eastbound ended at Madison Street, next to Huntsville Hospital."

"I was a student at Fifth Avenue Elementary, the back of which faced Longwood Drive. That day I claimed to be sick (sometimes it worked), but my mother sent me to school anyway. That likely made it possible for me to be telling this tale."

"In those days truck air brakes that failed were then worthless. A truck

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carrying a load of cucumbers from Florida had topped the mountain and was headed down when the brakes failed. As I recall the driver mentioned 80 MPH going through the Whitesburg Drive/Longwood intersection. Progressing west on Longwood he realized the road ended at what is now Harvard Road, requiring a right turn to go to 5th Avenue. Fearing he could not stop before hitting a house (mine) he decided to try laying the truck on the side in the hope it would stop sooner. Instead, the truck spun around and hit my house going backwards. The truck trailer hit the corner of the house and veered into the area between houses, with the tractor rear wheels in my bedroom and on my bed. Going to school likely saved me."

"My mother's metal clothesline posts were sheared off at the ground, and my dog's house containing the dog was moved across the back yard. My dad had built the doghouse atom bomb proof (2x6 lumber covered with sheet metal), which likely saved the dog. I recall this because my mother used to laugh and tell the tale about how hard it was to get the dog to come out of the house."

"My mother had a small beauty shop in our converted garage part of the house. She felt and heard the impact (it moved the house a quarter inch or so on the foundation) and thought Redstone Arsenal had blown up. Around that time the truck driver came to the beauty shop door and informed my mother that he had run into the house. Fortunately, the only thing that happened to him was his shoes were mysteriously removed from his feet. Shortly after this I was sent home from school. Not sure how that was caused to happen."

"The back yard was pretty much covered with cucumbers spilled out of their bushel baskets. Many unopened baskets were also spread around. Neighbors (eventually a lot of townspeople) began showing up and gathered up loose

cucumbers and unopened baskets and left with them for their own use. By the time people left the back yard was covered with cucumber mush that had been trampled. Thankfully, the city Fire Department came and nailed up a tarp to stop people from touring my now exposed bedroom. We even had people walking in the front door (never locked in those days) and touring the entire house. Relocating the dog to the front porch stopped that. In all fairness I must say there were numerous people who later brought pickled cucumbers to us."

"My room was rebuilt, the bed replaced, and thus ends the tale of the cucumber truck event."

(Gary here) "I also was a student at Fifth Avenue Elementary and a friend of Charles (still am). I remember Charles sitting on that pile of cucumbers in what was his bedroom. He was selling them at "two-for-a quarter."

Charles also added the following: "The tarp the Fire Department put up on the house had a very small tear around eye height. Everyone who came along pulled on it trying to see inside my room. The small tear became large enough to crawl through. For some reason I was in my room, playing with a large stuffed rabbit skin.... when

I looked out through the hole and spotted a kid staring up at it. I vigorously shoved the rabbit through the hole at him. I know he must have jumped three feet straight up and ran away screaming. I know, that was mean. Probably stunted his growth."

In addition to having great artistic skills, Charles is one humorous guy. I may have been the kid who jumped.

The Governors Drive intersections with California Street and Whitesburg Drive have become much busier. Of course, traffic there has increased along with the expansion of Huntsville Hospital and growth of the City's Medical District.

One law firm specializing in semitrailer-truck brake failure accidents, which are rare occurrences, sums up the following about the problem today: "Most large trucks and tractor-trailers not only have an air brake system but also have a secondary braking system to prevent devastating accidents that occur when a truck cannot slow and stop properly. Despite the backup system, and despite the fact that air brakes are generally considered to be a very reliable braking system, vehicle accidents involving a truck's braking problems do happen."

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Seen in the Papers Around the South

An apple tree in Elberton, Georgia, was thoroughly confused by the mild winter of 1939. It bore its regular crop of fruit in the summer, then another in the fall, and yet a third in the unseasonably mild winter. Reports of the phenomenon brought requests for seeds from all over the country.

Sharp-nosed policemen in Gaffney, South Carolina, found 10 gallons of bootleg whiskey under a church pulpit in 1910, and then began to wonder whether moonshiners had caches in other places of worship. They discovered three 10-gallon barrels of whiskey atop another church and 10 gallons on a third church's roof.

October 1931. Henry Johnson of Jacksonville, Florida, had just arrived in town early last evening, sneaking into a parking lot behind a two-story brick building with the intent of stealing a car. After gaining entrance into one of the vehicles parked there, he pushed what he thought was the start button on the dashboard. But the sedan he planned to steal was a patrol car parked in the lot behind the police station, and the button he pushed proved to be the siren. As the siren wailed at full blast, he was promptly arrested and thrown in jail.

September 1932. The volunteer fire department bought a brand-new pumper truck and proudly invited the citizens down to the coal mine pond to see how well it worked. While the crowd cheered, the pumper sent a stream of water high into the air, but sparks from its motor exhaust ignited dry leaves on the ground. Flames enveloped the new truck. Sadly, the firefighters sent the blackened truck back to St. Louis for repairs and a new paint job.

April 1939. Ill with pneumonia and believing he would live only a short time longer, a sharecropper known as J. H. Howard made his "deathbed confession" when he told officials in Marked Tree, Arkansas, that he had escaped from prison at McAlester, Oklahoma, 20 years earlier while serving a 20-year sentence. But he was hurried to a hospital in Memphis and given sulphapyridine, a new treatment for pneumonia. He recovered from the illness and Oklahoma officers sent for his return to prison.

June 1938. Herbert Bendon, 65, conducts his relations with the law with politeness and dignity. "This is Herbert Bendon," he phoned to a police station. "I'm over at Third Avenue and I'm drunk again. Send over the same cop that took me the last time, please." "Thirty days in the workhouse," ruled the magistrate.

Police in Knoxville, Tennessee, received a call from a homeowner stating "There's a war going on next door." Arriving at the scene, they found a perplexed mother and a soapy boy. "I was giving him his bath," she explained to the officers, "and he didn't like it much."

"Worry is the first time you can't do it a second time; panic is the second time you can't do it the first time."
Anon



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Krystal in the 1940s

by Ted Roberts



The sad thing was that she passed away on the 15th - and nobody seemed to notice but me. Not a soul mentioned it but me. "She's gone, I tell you - lights out - no cars in the lot. Big "For Rent" sign in front."

"Oh, you're just having a bad day. There's plenty of them left. C'mon man."

I stared in disbelief. Nobody cared but me. Naturally, nobody had my kind of relation with her but me. In the late 40s, for 25-cents you could get four of 'em for a quarter; "with extra onion and pickle, please". This encounter was usually on the way home from swimming lessons at the Y.

Who could forget the steamy, soggy bun enclosing a thin sliver of meat - those chopped, not sliced, onions? There was nothing like it. You dare not call it a hamburger.

This is not one of those tire-sized, sloppy burgers that wouldn't fit into a horse's mouth and soaked your shirt with a mix of mayo and tomato juice. This was a neat, little thing that fit in your shirt pocket. It was not a hamburger

any more than a crayfish was a lobster. It was "sui generis", which means - if you're a student of Latin - one of a kind. (Every chef should know this).

Then there's that old classic: "There's nothing like a dame" - uh I mean "Krystal". Yes, that's what I'm talking about - the Krystal - the heart of my culinary life since I could fish a nickel and pennies out of my pocket with the hole in it.

When we were kids, Krystals were so universal that they substituted for currency. Like: Two Krystals say that Notre Dame will win by 14 this Saturday. In those poverty stricken years a hamburger, due to a post recession economy, was a skinny slab of beef on a bun baked without enough yeast. So a Krystal was the ultimate. But somehow with a flavor concocted in Hamburger Heaven.

"Let's go get a sandwich" in my boyhood meant, "Let's go get a Krystal".

But then came the war and

suddenly, due to plenty of jobs, pockets jingled with change. Besides the old mom and pop sandwich shops, the chains with their drippy, hard to eat, mouth-challenging burgers hit the street. But they weren't the same to me. They were meals artificially mounted mountainously on bread.

There was no way you could eat one and read the paper at the same time without flavoring your clothes in mayo, pickle and onion, which caused you to lose valuable friends and incur cleaning bills more expensive than your weekly hamburger bill.

None of this helped the big K, but they're still marching on with their miniature, inexpensive fare. Consider also their contribution to the culture. Today's new culinary term is "slider", only recently established in the language. Well, guess who was selling "sliders" in 1940? And they were only a nickel!

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"Never have more children than you have car windows."

Erma Bombeck

Some Good News from 2020

by John E. Carson



Hey folks, your favorite four-legged ex-con here! I got a question for you - why are you so hung-dog?

Cause I gotta tell you, this past year has not been all bad. I know it is hard to see that right now with people put out of business, out of their JOBS and many put out of life. In our own house, we almost lost the Mister and the Missus this year and we have housed the homeless and jobless among our children and siblings. But after two hospitalizations for my main person and his wife, we are thankful to have them back home. I swear I did not know what to do while they were gone or if I would see them again.

When I was homeless and living on the streets, abandoned by my family, I wondered if anyone cared. I wandered the hood looking for scraps to eat and water to drink and pined for the people that left me behind.

When I was arrested (picked up) for vagrancy and sent to the Big House (City Pound) I had no idea that it was a blessing in disguise. You see, no one wanted to take a chance on me. But I had food and water and lots of company!

of Huntsville. I have fans even my person doesn't. Of course, I am the better looking one. Together with some other good friends we created Rescue Me, a non-profit that matches up shelter dogs and Veterans who suffer from PTSD and related conditions. We have made a difference in someone's life.

In addition to my person still being with us, something else happened this year; my breed was finally included in the Westminster Dog Show! Not that I am a blue nose but since there are so few of me in the United States and only two of us in Huntsville,

it is nice to be recognized as a citizen.

I am a Kookierhondje, that's Dutch for Caged Dog. We originally came from Border Collie and Spaniel blood and appeared in paintings by Rembrandt and Jan Steen in the 19th century. We can be traced back to Holland in the 1600s. We were very popular in Holland in the 17th and 18th centuries.

We are small, agile, intelligent and love to hunt. We make great companions to families and kids and are awesome watchdogs as well as herders. You can see the family resemblance in all of us in our red and brown markings on a white double coat. We are known as a "Velcro" dog as we stay close to our master. Long black hairs at the end of ears, called "earrings" are one way to identify us.

The word Decoy comes from the work we do attracting ducks with our white fan tails, De kooi.

Forgive me, I do go on! But the point I wanted to make is never give up! It's always darkest just before dawn and sometimes when you wonder if things could get worse, something good comes along to surprise you!

Was it making it to Westminster that was the most important thing? No, it was that the people in my life are still there.

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Baby Love

by M. D. Smith, IV



We were newlyweds, as I began my junior year at the University of Alabama in 1961.

My new bride of three months and I made the best of the University's married student's WWII army barrack apartment, called Riverside. She did an excellent job of decorating. We got help from parents with a new bed and later a window AC unit in the bedroom to at least sleep in Tuscaloosa's oppressive heat.

When you're young, five months still seems like a long time, and by October, Judy said, "I would love for us to have a baby." I was terrified. I assured her we needed to wait longer and for her to stay on the birth control pills.

When she found a pair of free black and white kittens and wanted to keep them, I agreed, feeling it would satisfy her mothering instincts. It worked -- for a while.

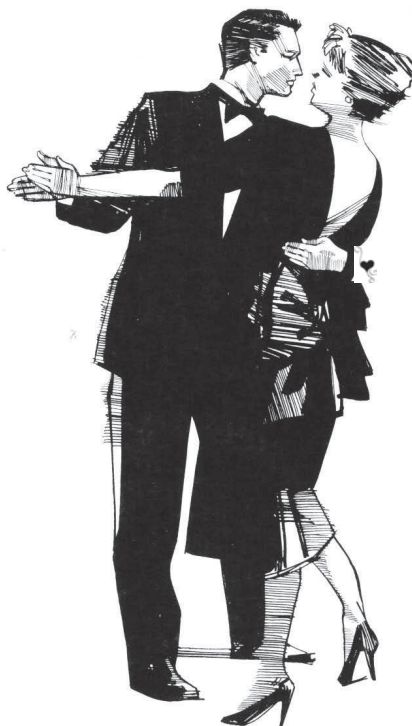
By spring of 1962, the cats were grown and a baby was back in discussions. New brides can be very persuasive if they catch a man in a weak moment of love and affection. It was summer when I finally agreed, and Judy got pregnant the very next month. (This was a precursor of which I had no idea).

At twenty-one and Judy, twenty, we were a young couple with no idea of dealing with a baby. We read books and she told me what her doctor said. That was the extent of our knowledge. We read about Braxton-Hicks, false labor pains. The book said, when they were real, you'd know. We didn't want to be foolish and go to the hospital too soon. But we damn sure didn't want to be too late.

I've got to say, it was a warm and loving Valentine's Day we spent at the University. I had the same monthly allowance from before I got married. That was the deal. I had two part-time jobs at radio stations that brought in enough extra for a night out to eat at Morrison's Cafeteria and a movie once a week. Valentine's night was Thursday in 1963, and we got unique heart desserts at Morrison's. Later that night, I drew a heart on Judy's big round belly with a red felt marker. Baby was moving a lot by then.

By the ninth month in April, I was taking some easy electives, including a pottery class. I learned to throw clay on a wheel in my class dominated by female students. I have a kiln and clay in my basement to this very day. An excellent hobby for kids, as it turned out. But I digress.

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OSCAR & MARIA LLERENA

HUNTSVILLE HIGH CLASS OF 1966

**"Starbucks says they are going to
start putting religious quotes
on their cups.**

**The very first one will say, 'Jesus!
This coffee is expensive!'"**

Conan O'Brien

Sunday morning, the 21st of April 1963, Judy woke me at five a.m., saying she'd started labor pains. We both got up and I put on my watch to time the pain's duration and time apart. We called the doctor on the only phone on the living room wall at seven and again at eight-thirty when he said, "Go ahead to Druid City Hospital and check-in."

We called both our sets of parents "collect" on our phone. All gladly accepted long-distance charges to hear the news. We were off, arriving at nine. Six hours seemed like forever before I got the news at three p.m. in the waiting room that I had an eight-pound son. Wow, a boy. We already decided if it were, he'd be M.D.S., V. The fifth in the Smith line.

All our parents arrived that afternoon to congratulate us and see their new grandson. I bought a box of cigars with blue wrappers saying, "It's a boy!"

The week Judy was in the hospital, I was back in school. Took cigars to my classes. In the pottery class, an attractive female student on the wheel next to me said, "Wow. I didn't even know you were married. I like you, but I guess you're off the market."

To this day, I'm not sure exactly what she meant. If I hadn't been married, perhaps I'd have noticed her friendliness. I visited Judy and the baby every day for a week. A week was the customary time for new mothers in the hospital.

Upon leaving the hospital the next Saturday, the nurse told us, "See you next year." We both agreed, no possible way. Mainly I was graduating, and we were moving to Huntsville with baby Dee.

Those first few weeks at 21C Riverside with a new baby scared us as new parents. I can't tell you the times he was sleeping in his crib in our bedroom and we got up to make sure he was breathing. Don't let him get diaper rash. Judy kept our washing machine busy. No Pampers in those days.

They say, "Love finds a way." And in our case, I guess so because 19 months later, near Thanksgiving 1964, our second son (of seven boys and one girl) was born in Huntsville. At least the Druid City nurse wouldn't be involved saying, "I told you so."



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"Inside me there's a thin person struggling to get out, but I can usually sedate her with four or five carrot cake cupcakes."

Bev Thomas, Arab

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Love at First Sight

by Charita Smith Avery



My mother, Annie Mae Sexton and my dad, Albert Duey Smith were married for 48 years before Dad died of a heart attack in March 1972 at age 74. They had both grown up in Jackson County, Alabama. Daddy, the youngest child of a family of seven children, was born In January 1898. Mother was born in July 1909, the oldest of three girls. From the stories I hear, Mother's family had a much harder life than Daddy's. Mother's mom died when Mother was only thirteen, and she had to step in as housekeeper, cook and mother to her two younger sisters. Her daddy was not a very loving father, so the girls had it very hard with no mother to guide them.

One day Daddy was, for reasons unknown to me, visiting Mother's farm when he saw this shy young girl (my mother), whom he did not know, peeking out from the side of the house. Daddy told the friend with him, "That's the girl I'm going to marry," and he kept his word. It was "Love at First Sight." There was quite an age difference - when they married in 1924, Mother was 15 and Daddy was 26 years of age. The age difference had to be somewhat of a problem; but, added to that. Daddy agreed to bring both Mother's younger sisters to live with them in Huntsville, where they moved for jobs in the Lincoln Textile Mill. That tells you the kind of man my Daddy was. He was determined to get those children out of a bad home situation.

An interesting story was about one of the sisters, Beatrice. One day while walking down Oakwood Avenue, the man who would turn out to be her future husband, Jesse Wilbanks, was riding by with a friend and he said to the friend, "One day I'm going to marry that girl."

He did some checking and found out who she was and that she went to Fifth Street Baptist Church (now known as Jackson Way Baptist). One Sunday, he went in during service, found where she was sitting and sat down beside her. Long story short, Uncle Jesse and Aunt Bea married and reared five children together. Another example of "Love at First Sight."

In 1925, my sister Mildred was born, when Mother was only 16 years old. Three years later, my brother, Edward, was added to this crowded household. By this time, they had moved from a house on Oakwood Avenue into the mill housing and Daddy was father to 2 young children and 2 teenage girls.

In 1942, I was added to the family. By this time both Mother's sisters had married and left home. Mildred was sixteen and Edward was thirteen. I had lots of attention from everyone, including a brother-in-law, Elmo Hastings, after my sister mar-

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Rodney Dangerfield

ried when I was only four years old. My parents were very loving to me—maybe more so because they were older when I was born and I was very much like an only child.

I particularly have fond memories of times with my Daddy sitting on his lap in front of the old radio listening to Gabriel Heater in the evening. Of course, I wasn't really interested in the program, but, how safe and loved I felt nestled in Daddy's arms.

Mother and Daddy both worked in the cotton mill and I understand it was very hard work. I believe they had to make a quota. Mother told me how hot and tired she would be (no air-conditioning) and Daddy would leave his position in another area of the mill to come help her catch up on her job.

They are both in Heaven now, but they left a loving legacy of what a married couple and parents should look like. The only one left is my sister, Mildred, who just turned 94 in November and now lives in Regency Assisted Living. She is like a second mother to me since she is sixteen years older than I—the same difference in age as she and Mother were.

I feel blessed to still have her with us and I dread having to give her up, since it will be almost like losing my mother all over again. Mildred and her husband were married for 53 years before Elmo died, and my husband Buddy and I were also married 53 years before he died in 2014.

Some people say there's no such thing as love at first sight, but these examples of people close to me make me a believer.

How different the world would be if more parents could leave a legacy of a long loving marriage such as these for their children.

"All right, everyone line up alphabetically according to your height!"

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Houses, Houses, Houses

by *Charlie Lyle*



My dad never believed in owning a home. He said that repairs were too expensive during the Depression Days.

Some firsts: First was Huntsville Hospital and the first baby born there was L. Miller, Jr. in about 1928. The first house that I lived in was on Williams Street. The second house was a little white frame house where California meets Whitesburg Drive. My father, mother, brother, grandmother, sister and I all lived there. That house is still there. I would lie on the front yard grass and look at the stars. We had a Collie named Pal. I was playing in the front yard when a mad dog came into the yard. The dog was going to bite me but my dog Pal came to my rescue and the dog bit him instead. Pal saved my life but unfortunately he contracted rabies and died.

Mr. Saddler lived next door and he raised chickens. I would stomp through the weeds over to his house and he would give me an egg to take home for mama to cook for me.

From there we moved to a boarding house on Madison and Gates Street. There we played Monopoly. I remember going to the Lyric Theater and seeing a serial and space movies. Our next place to move to was on Russel Hill. It was like living in the country. Next door lived some kids that I played with. They had country ways and taught me such things as corn-cob battles and how to drink out of a dipper.

The next move was to N. Rose Dr.

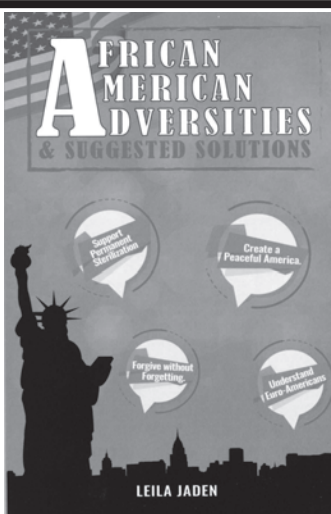
in Westlawn. Then to Quietdale on Meridian Street. Then to Big Cove Rd. where we lived in a house owned by Luke Matthews. The farm had a pony.

After that a business opportunity caused daddy to move to Mobile. We first lived on Oakland Terrace. A famous boxer named Jack Dubois lived down the street from us. We finally had a house

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A Book You Will Remember



African-American History Month observations often do not include a Christian rationale for slavery or how some European-Americans helped during and after slavery.

This book was written by author Leila Jaden, a 70-year old African-American woman who was born and raised in Alabama during the Jim Crow Era.

It provides information about how some European Americans view African Americans and how negative stereotypes can be changed. Anyone who would like to hear more than talk about racism should read this book to gain additional information about African-American life during that period in United States history.



Available on Amazon

Author: Leila Jaden

built on Westwood Drive, our first real house.

News of Redstone Arsenal was heard as far away as Mobile. Guess what? We moved back to Huntsville and took up residence in a four-plex apartment on Gates Street. We had the top north one and Xea and Judge Blanton had the one below. We heard the news about Pearl Harbor there.

The Church of the Nativity, Episcopal has a children's playground on that spot now. Huntsville Clinic was on the corner. A friend of mine, Harry Coons, lived a block or two over.

Well, the next house was in an area I loved. It was a block from town on the corner of Gates and Franklin Street (a big white frame house). There was just one big problem, it looked a lot like Laughlin Funeral Home which was a block over on Madison Street. One day my folks and I walked into our living room to find several people standing around and when I asked if I could help them, they equally enthusiastically replied, "Where's the body"?

The next move in this area took us to a terribly ugly brick two-story house. We rented, of course, upstairs owned by Jean and Rube Robinson. Ironically this area is where Alabama joined the Union. The historic marker is still there.

Since I am coming to near the end of this article, I would like to mention some of my rich neighbors new and old that live on that wonderful Franklin Street. There were the Gerons, Stocktons, Yarbroughs, Lewters, Lowes, Chases, Price, Winton, Garth, van Valkenburgs and the old Mims house two houses left.

After that, we moved into a house on Sanders Road in 1957. My mother finally got her wishes for a new house. Ironically, she died in 1957 a few months later and Dad died two months later. A few of our wonderful neighbors there were the Joshlins (Bob is currently the Mayor of Arab), Robert Lowerys, Margaret Cole, and Ralph and Marge Burt.

From there we moved to my present location on Westbury Drive and have lived there for thirty-seven years. This being my last move. Thank the Lord. We live close to everything that one could need or want.

One can't help but feeling just a wee bit insecure moving as much as we did but I am here to stay.

Addendum: after the Quietdale move, we moved to 432 Newman Avenue. There we had several things happen to us. One, my brother buzzed our house while in the Air Force, and I experienced my first kiss.

Some of our neighbors who lived there were the Pitzs, Wardens and the Todds.

"There is a theory which states that if ever anyone discovers exactly what the Universe is for and why it is here, it will instantly disappear and be replaced by something even more bizarre and inexplicable. There is another theory which states this has already happened."

Douglas Adams



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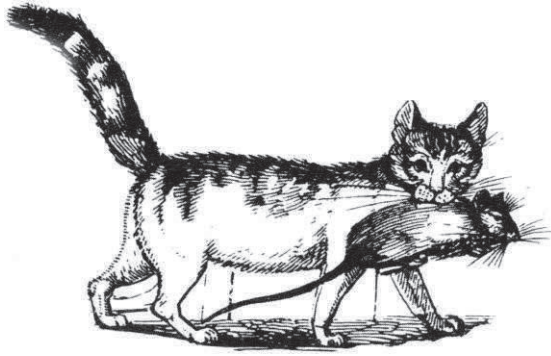
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A Grateful Cat

From 1873 Newspaper

A cat in a local cottage had taken poison and come in a pitiful state of pain to seek its mistress' help. A neighbor trying to kill barn rats had thrown out poisoned meat. The little cat, in a hungry state, ate much of the rancid food.

The fever and heat was so great that it dipped its own paws into a pan of cool water, an almost unheard-of proceeding in the water-hating cat.

The cat's mistress wrapped the patient in wet linen, fed it with gruel, nursed it and doctored it all next day and for five nights after.

The little cat recovered, and could not find ways enough to show its gratitude to its loving owner.

One evening the lady had gone upstairs to bed, when a mew at the window roused her, she got up and opened it, finding the cat with a mouse in its mouth. It had climbed up a pear tree which was nailed against the house. It laid the

mouse at its mistress' feet and went away.

For more than a year the cat continued to bring its tributes to her. Even when it had kittens they were not allowed to touch this reserved share, and if they attempted to eat it the mother would give them a little tap that said, "That is not for thee,"

After a while, however, the mistress accepted the gifts with a pleased look and restored the mouse. The cat permitted her offspring to take the prey, after it had served its purpose in her eyes.

The people who doubted the memory of a grateful cat were very surprised. Here was a refined feeling of gratitude remembered for years after, quite disinterred, and placed above the natural instincts (always strong in a cat) toward her own offspring.

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Superstitions About Cats



* To see a white cat on the road is lucky. - American superstition

* Fisherman's wives kept black cats while their husbands went away to sea. They believed that the black cats would prevent danger from occurring to their husbands. These black cats were considered so valuable that they were often stolen.

* It is considered bad luck to pass a black cat after 9 pm.

* In North America, it's bad luck if a black cat crosses your path and good luck if a white cat crosses your path. In Britain and Ireland, it's the opposite.

* If a black cat walks towards you, it brings good fortune, but if it walks away, it takes the good luck with it.

* If you see a one eyed cat, spit on your thumb, stamp it in the middle of your palm and make a wish. The wish will come true.

* It is bad luck to cross a stream while carrying a cat.

* In ancient Japan it was thought that somewhere on the tail of a cat there was a single hair that would restore life to a dying person.

* In Sweden, there is a myth that cats turn into super spirits when they die.

* According to the Buddhist religion, the body of the cat is the temporary resting place of the soul of very spiritual people.

* Some people believe that cats engage in astral travel even in life. They also believe that if a cat adopts you, it will stay with you forever, even after death.

* Folklore says that if a witch becomes human, her black cat will no longer reside in her house.

* Back in ancient days, the Druids thought black cats were human beings. These humans in cat form were being punished for evil deeds they had committed in past lives.

Dreaming of Cats

* If you dream of a tortoiseshell cat, you will be lucky in love.

* If you dream of a ginger cat, you will be lucky in money and business.

* If you dream of a black and white cat, you'll have luck with children; may also mean the birth of a child.

* If you dream of a tabby, you will have luck for your home and all who live there.

* If you dream of a multicolored cat, you will have luck making friends.

* A dream of two cats fighting means illness or a quarrel.

* Seeing a black cat in your dream indicates that you are experiencing some fear in using your psychic abilities and believing in your intuition.

* To dream of a gray cat means to be guided by your intuition.

* If you dream about a cat with no tail, then it means lost independence.

* If you dream of an aggressive cat, it suggests that you are having problems with the feminine aspect of yourself.

* To dream of being badly scratched by a cat means sickness and trouble.

* If you heard the noise of alley cats in your dream, it is a warning to avoid an indiscreet acquaintance in your immediate circle.

* If you hear the scream or the mewing of a cat, a false friend is trying to do you harm.

* To dream of seeing a cat and snake on friendly terms signifies the beginning of an angry struggle with a lover.

* American folklore has it that dreaming of a white cat is good luck. It also means luck in creativity, spiritual matters and spell craft.

* In Spain, a dream of two cats looking at you through a window means you will be having twins.

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An Excerpt from
"The Way It Was, The Other Side of Huntsville's History"

A book of local stories by Tom Carney and other local authors

A Love Story

by Tom Carney



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

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

Emily McClung was at the depot that morning when the cannons opened fire on the train. Her fiance had been wounded at the battle of Vicksburg and was coming home to recuperate when the train was captured that morning.

She watched with terror as the blue-coated invaders herded John and the other prisoners to the depot at the points of bayonets.

John and Emily had been

childhood sweethearts for as long as anyone could remember. People used to tease their families that if John ever got lost, all they had to do was to find Emily; John was sure to be close by.

When the war began John enlisted into the Confederate Army, postponing their plans for marriage.

When Emily received word that John had been wounded and was coming home, she immediately started making plans for their wedding.

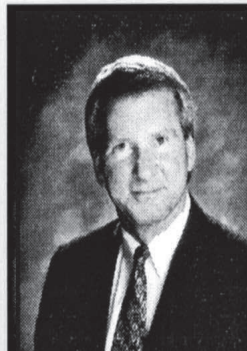
Years later, people would talk about how sad it was to watch Emily standing off at a distance, staring at the depot with tears in her eyes while John would stand in the win-

dow helplessly looking back at his love.

The other prisoners, upon learning of John and Emily's plight, began conspiring to help John escape. Word was passed to Emily that she should be waiting across the road from the depot at the stroke of midnight.

Late that night, John put on a Yankee officer's uniform, and while the other prisoners created a loud commotion, he walked boldly out the front door. Walking slowly at first in order not to draw attention to himself, he made his way across the road.

But upon seeing Emily waiting for him, John, unable to wait any longer, began running toward her, with his arms spread.



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A Union guard, seeing what he thought was a fleeing prisoner, ordered John to halt. When John continued to run, the guard opened fire. After firing the first round, the guard noticed another figure across the road. The gun roared again, leaving both Emily and John lying in the road, dead.

The Union soldiers placed their bodies in an empty railroad car until they could make arrangements to bury them.

The next morning, a burial detail went to remove the bodies, but they were gone. A guard had been posted all night and it would have been impossible for anyone to approach the railroad car without being seen.

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

1884 - People waiting to buy tickets at the depot told of seeing a young couple walking and holding hands late one night. The man was dressed in an old-fashioned Federal uniform. When the couple were approached, they disappeared.

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

1909 - Police are called to the lumberyard. Neighbors

had called and complained of a loud party, with people dressed in Confederate uniforms. One man was supposed to have been dressed in blue, escorting a beautiful young lady. The police could not find any signs of a party.

1933 - Mr. Dilworth is called to the lumberyard early one morning. It had been snowing the night before and the night watchman had found fresh footprints in the snow. Mr. Dilworth and the guard followed the prints to where they disappeared into the side of his warehouse. After a complete search, they were still at a loss to explain the strange trail that led to nowhere.

No one has ever been able to offer an explanation for the curious events surrounding this legend.

Maybe there is no answer.



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"A successful man is one who makes more money than his wife could ever spend. A successful woman is one who can find such a man."

Lana Turner, actress

FEBRUARY 14TH

by Barry Key



February 14th, a day romance and love fills the air. A day we share our feelings of adoration with the ones we cherish most in life. It's a day that you can write, or say, those intimate little phrases that would normally give rise to; "What have you bought now?", or "Honey, did you wreck the car again?"

In grammar school when it was taboo to show affection toward the opposite sex, a Valentine Card with all sorts of mushy words was perfectly acceptable. A card to that special someone that you secretly admired would contain little red, pink and yellow sugar hearts printed with words like; love, kisses, be my Valentine, etc.

Even boys swapped Valentine cards but were very careful about what words were written inside. Sometimes with the card would be a small colorful sucker with the twisted paper handle.

In the late 1940s, my elementary school years, most kids could not come up with the money to buy cards for every classmate, so teachers would have colored craft paper for students to make their own cards.

Each student would design and cut out his version of a Valentine card...most of the time in the shape of a heart.

Some of the cards were very elaborate and were folded, so when unfolded would form the shape of a heart. On one side would be your classmate's name, and the other side those special words depending on who the card was going to. Some of the classmates would draw pictures representing animate and inanimate objects. Some of the classmates, lacking artistic talent, would cut pictures out of magazines and paste them inside their cards, the most common as I remember, a picture of Cupid.

Valentine's Day is not just a day for the young, but also a day for the "YOUNG AT HEART". It is not a day you share with others, as with a lot of celebratory days, but a day you share with just that special one. A day you can just be yourselves without feeling you have to entertain or respond to others. A Valentine card or a gift required? Not necessarily as long as the affection

you proffer is sincere.

During my courtship of Judy, and our first years of our marriage, we would exchange Valentine cards and an inexpensive gift. I usually gave Judy a piece of jewelry or clothing... and always flowers and a box of chocolate covered cherries. Judy would give me something related to hunting or fishing. Several times during the day, while wishing each other a happy Valentine's Day, we would share a romantic kiss.

That evening, we would dress in our Sunday best clothes and go to a nice restaurant that we really couldn't afford in those days. After dinner we would take in a movie and a night cap at a local bar. No problem at all staying awake well after midnight.

In our latter years of marriage, we never buy gifts and seldom exchange Valentine cards. One of us will still buy a bouquet of flowers to brighten our home. As the day progresses, we will share a "Robert Young/Jane Wyatt - Father Knows Best" puckered lip kiss.

"Today there is a meeting in the front and back of the church. Children will be baptized at both ends."

Seen in local church bulletin

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John Purdy
Loretta Spencer
Sarah Chappell

Our favorite thing for our evenings is casual dress, an early matinee and an early dinner. We are usually home in time to watch Liz on the local news and partake in a nightcap of Irish Coffee.

At times the discussion goes like this; "I don't want to get dressed, so let's go to Burger King or Chick-fil-A, or better still, just pick up a Pizza." Pizza sounds good and while we're out, we can rent a romantic DVD to watch while we are eating". If it sounds like our keeping of Valentine's Day has diminished with age, in reality, I don't know of any couple that's more "YOUNG AT HEART."

Over the years Judy and I still get our share of Valentine cards. For several years we exchanged cards with the grandchildren....and now we exchange cards with the great grandchildren. I must say that things haven't changed much in 70 years. Most of the cards (and the ones we like most) are hand made with hand drawn pictures and hand printed messages with cherished little sayings. Sometimes you open the card and there is a photo of the kids in a cute pose or blowing a kiss. The cards we give them, of course, still have the little heart shaped mints with the printed Valentine messages. I guess as long as there are young ones in our family, Judy and I will always have a very special reason to celebrate FEBRUARY 14th, VALENTINE'S DAY.

"Men who have pierced ears are better prepared for marriage. They've experienced pain and bought jewelry."

Rita Rudner

The Famous Bon Air Restaurant Secret Recipe for their popular Chocolate Chip Bread Pudding

Thanks to Delores Forsman for calling with this great recipe. I gained about 4 pounds just typing it. It came from one of the original cooks at Bon Air.

4-5 c. crumbled biscuits or day old French bread
 6 eggs
 3-4 c. whole milk
 1-1/2 c. sugar
 1 t. vanilla extract
 1 t. cinnamon
 1/2 t. nutmeg
 3/4 t. salt
 1 regular package chocolate chips
 1 stick butter, melted
 Chocolate syrup

Place bread pieces in sprayed 9x13 inch pan. Beat eggs, milk, sugar, vanilla, cinnamon, nutmeg, salt and half of the chocolate chips. Pour over bread crumbs. Pour melted butter on top. Sprinkle with remaining chocolate chips.

Bake at 350 for 35 minutes and it's golden brown. While still warm pour 1 cup chocolate syrup on top.



Christmas Surprise for The Ark!

Hello, you would never guess what a surprise we were for the Ark. We know they see lots of animals that need help but not usually all at once on Christmas Eve. We were found as homeless puppies with our mommy. Mommy is a beautiful English Setter. She is a very sweet dog. How we got on the side of the road is still a mystery. A kind family found us and asked the Ark if they would take us and mommy.

Ms. Kim is so sweet, she came and got all 11 of us. Our Mommy makes 11. We are not quite ready for adoption. Please if you don't want puppies then

have your mama dog spayed. If you don't want any puppies or dogs, please don't be cruel and abandon them.

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Monrovia High School Class of '51

by *Jean Brewer McCrady*
in collaboration with
W. L. (Dub) Hoover

Seventy years have taken a toll on the close-knit group of 23 that was the Monrovia Class of '51. Our periodic reunions dwindled from a room full of classmates and spouses to a mere handful in recent years. Many are gone for good, some live far away, some have chosen to self isolate, even before Covid required it. The handful of hangers-on are Dub Hoover, George (G.B.) Rudd, Marcel Toon Land, James Whitaker, myself and Jack Moring, until we lost him in 2019. But NOW is not what this story is about. It's about THEN – the way it was when there were 23 of us.

There is something about bonds formed in high school that are different from other types of friendships. Maybe it's the mutual experience of crossing the line from child to adult that creates those special ties. Dub and I are sharing some things from the Monrovia experience that we think contributed to the closeness of our little group while preparing us for successful lives beyond school.

At the top of that list, we agree, was the life-forming teaching, preaching, and discipline by our Principal, Mr. C.W. (Pop) Fanning, who was Monrovia's

principal for 30 years before retiring in 1977. "Pop" was never used in his presence, but represented his role in our lives as the extension of the Daddy disciplinarians we had at home.

This will sound like science fiction today, but Pop Fanning would walk the hall, tapping his leg with a long wooden paddle (with holes for sting effect) as a visual reminder that he was in charge and was prepared to prove it. Every kid knew that an encounter with that paddle was the first of two whoopin's. The next would be with a belt, razor strap, or maple switch when they got home. The note that went home with the offender was sufficient proof of guilt, no questions asked. Today, the followup action would be a string of lawsuits filed by the parents. What a difference 70 years makes.

The paddle was not Pop Fanning's only weapon. There were lighter forms of punishment, and School Assembly on the bleachers in the gym was one of them. Some Assemblies included the whole 300 students, 1 thru 12 (Kindergarten had not been invented yet); but the ones we dreaded most involved only the upper grades. This usually meant someone had committed an unpardonable sin – like stealing, showing disrespect to a teacher, skipping class, or telling a falsehood. Mr. Fanning was a master intimidator and had an arsenal of proclamations for shaming such "sinners." Two of his favorites that Dub remembers were: "Anyone who would steal someone's lunch is so small they'd have to tiptoe to scratch a snake's belly" and "Anyone who would cheat on a test is so small they could sit on a cigarette paper and swing their feet off."

The Assemblies had other purposes too. We heard repeated sermons about life that were hard to dismiss or ignore. One of his regular admonitions, designed to head-off dropouts, was: "If you go to school long enough and study hard enough, someday you'll make \$10 a day." That sounds like a misprint now, but to put it in perspective: In those days, people who hired out to pick cotton, if they were highly skilled and worked really hard for a long day, could earn up to \$4.00. So the very idea of earning \$10 a day sounded like the impossible dream, but one to be pursued. If Mr. Fanning said it could happen, we were prone to believe it.

Here I need to offer a disclaimer. I promised Dub I would make it clear, any time the spotlight is on him in this story, it is of my doing,

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not his. Here comes the spotlight. Basketball was Monrovia's claim to fame in Madison County and Dub Hoover was a major reason for it. In his Junior year, 1950, he was the only non-Senior among the starting 5. That year Monrovia was the County Champions, having lost only 3 games that season, two to Gurley and one to Rison. In 1951 the Coaches voted Dub the county's Most Valuable Player.

For insight into that honor, consider this example. We were playing New Hope on our home court; down one point with 2 or 3 seconds left on the clock. Dub stole the ball at center court and threw a Hail Mary, stripping the net just as the buzzer sounded. The house went wild and Dub gained several new layers of heroism.

He then discovered that kind of fame can get one in trouble, and almost did. Here's how — We had a test coming up in Mrs. Faye Pettus's English class and she told Dub if he didn't do well on the test, he would fail English. He responded with, "You won't fail me; I play basketball." (The rule was, players had to maintain passing grades in all subjects to qualify for the team.)

Her response was, "You go report to Mr. Fanning right now!" He did, and when he got there, the conversation went something like this: Mr. Fanning: "Why are you here?" Dub: "Mrs. Pettus sent me because I told her she wouldn't fail me in English, because I play basketball." Mr. Fanning: "What did you mean by that?" That gave Dub just enough time to come up with the quick answer: "I meant I'm going to study really hard." Mr. Fanning (stifling a snicker): "Quick thinking, you are dismissed." Dub fully expected contact with the infamous paddle for smarting off to a teacher, but his quick thinking saved him. (Can you imagine that scene? The star of the basketball team getting his backside thrashed with a wooden paddle!)

A basket ball slip-up that could have gotten me into big trouble happened during my senior year

while I was time keeper for our home games. A role my A+ standing had earned me. Being enamored with one of the players created considerable distraction from my time-keeping task, such that after one of the time-outs, I forgot to re-start the stop-watch to time the balance of that quarter. When I came to myself and realized the failure, without acknowledging it to the coach, I made a quick guess at how much time had passed since play resumed, started the watch and let it run for another guessed-at balance of time, then blew the whistle as though all was normal. To my surprise and delight, no one commented on the odd length of that play interval. I couldn't think of any good reason to confess and risk losing my privileged job, so the incident remained my secret. I have a certificate signed by Coach George M. Bates saying Jean Brewer has been awarded the School Letter in Basketball for the year 1950-51. Maybe I should've felt guilty accepting that, but I don't recall that I did.

We had no Annual and no Prom (Pop Fanning didn't allow dancing), but there was a Junior-Senior class trip. Our Junior trip was to D.C. and New York City. My standout memory is our getting stuck in the revolving door at the Cornish Arms Hotel. We crowded into the wedge-shaped stalls and stood there, expecting the door to revolve. No one told us you have to push and walk to get to the other side. Dub's keenest memory is of getting separated from the group and wandering around lost on the streets of NY. As dark approached, he hailed a cab only to learn the driver had never heard of the Cornish Arms Hotel. Together they eventually found it. As Seniors, our class trip was to Key West. By then, we felt like world travelers.

If you haven't done so lately, consider some quiet reflecting on your own high school years and the bonds formed that you can still feel, even in the absence of regular communication over the years. Ponder a bit on the common experiences that made you a forever "family," then go a step further. Arrange a visit with one or more of those members and relive some of the special moments and events of your shared youth. Things that contributed in a powerful way to who you have been since that graduation day so long ago.

Footnote: Monrovia School as pictured above, on Jeff Road halfway between Hwy 72 and Hwy 53, had a life span of 53 years. It lost the upper grades in 1958 with the opening of Sparkman. The announcement of Mr. Fanning's retirement in 1977 said this: "After prodding, Fanning talked about the old, two-story, dingy school. The walls were dull and dirty, he said. There was no central heat or air conditioning. The bathrooms were about 50 yards out behind the school. It was torn down 4 years ago." (That would have been 1973). Last year I drove by the school site to see the building being demolished that had replaced our "old school". A lot of things can come and go in 70 years.



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A LOVE STORY

by Austin Miller

Essie Shepard Phillips, born in 1915, was one of eleven brothers and sisters, four boys and seven girls. In the late thirties, Essie married Emmett Orville Phillips. All Ryland families were poor in those days but Emmett's family owned a farm and was better off than some. It was not much of a farm but a farm all the same. The land, poor and rocky, was between the two mountains on what is now Dug Hill Road; the locals call the area Possum Hollow.

Because the farm was surrounded by mountains, people teased the family about the sun not coming up until noon and having to wipe the owl manure off their clocks every morning before they could see what time it was. A small white frame house in the hollow is where Essie and Emmett lived most of their married life.

I remember Essie from the first grade. She worked in the lunchroom at Central School and watched after me closely.

She would remind me about my manners and if I had any kind of mishap she was there to help. I also remember her husband, he was a friend of Daddy's; they played basketball together at Central School.

When he and Essie visited Mrs. Shepard, Essie's mother and our closest neighbor, he would lay on his back on the front porch, propping his head against the wall with his arms back over his head enabling his hands to act as a cushion against the brick siding. Anytime I saw him out there I would go talk to him. Usually my dog named Old Shiner was with me and he would tease me about turning him into dog sausage.

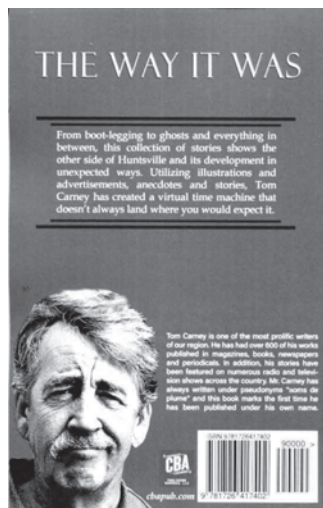
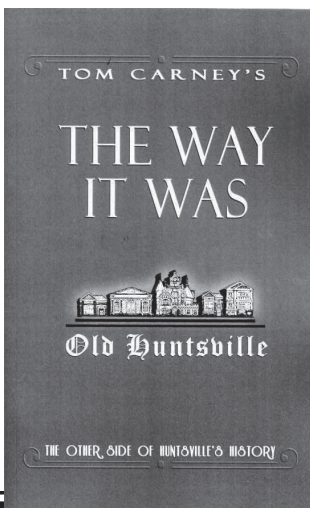
He served in World War II. I don't have the details of his war record but he served in combat in Italy. When he was stationed in the U.S. before he went overseas, Essie moved near the Post and got a job at Montgomery Ward. After the war they came back to their little home between the mountains. One night he came in late and went directly to bed; the next morning Essie found him dead. I remember the funeral. I was too young to go

but I was in Shiloh churchyard after the burial and I remember some of the family walking by crying. Essie cried at the mention of his name for years, there is no doubt that she loved him dearly.

Shortly after the funeral, Emmett, Jr. was born. Essie had no money and no means of support so she moved in with Mrs. Shepard and became our closest neighbor for over 45 years. One day soon after she moved in, she left Emmett, Jr. with Mrs. Shepard, walked to Ryland and flagged down the morning east bound passenger train to Huntsville. In the afternoon she came back home with a job at Montgomery Ward. The store at that time was located on the north side of the Square; it moved to the Parkway in 1959.

Essie sold men's clothing her entire career. Many years, she was the top sales person for the store and always the top in sales for her department. She was a hard worker and knew her job. If there was a retail sales hall of fame, there is no doubt that Essie Phillips would be in it. If Essie had been able to keep all the profit she made for Mont-

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gomery Ward, she would have been a wealthy woman.

After her husband died she never dated or even as much as had lunch with a man. She was a very attractive woman who sold men's clothing and there is no doubt that she had many, many offers. I don't think she ever got over the loss of her husband and besides that she was totally devoted to her son. In the spring of 1990, Essie was seventy-five years old and still in good health.

I was walking by her house one Sunday morning after picking up the paper at our mailbox on Ryland Pike. She must have seen me on the way to get the paper because she was standing in the door waiting on me when I came back by. She was beaming; the night before she had attended her High School class reunion at Gurley. There was a good turnout and she visited into the wee hours with old friends, some of whom she had not seen in years. She said she had been so excited that she had not slept a wink all night. The thing she was most excited about was getting to dance with her old high school boy friends.

Sometimes, things change fast. About four years later I was again walking up the drive after getting the paper. This time, Emmett, Jr. was waiting outside to meet me. He said, "Austin can you stop by and see Mother, she is not doing well."

I didn't want to stop because I had several other things to do and I was in a hurry. I stopped anyway and we had a good talk about old times. On the wall above the sofa was a picture of her husband in uniform, a picture that always hung somewhere in the house. I told her about my memories of him and I remember thinking that after all these years she still loves him as much now as she did when he died nearly forty five years ago. When I was leaving, she asked me when I was going to move back to Ryland. She said you know this is your home and nobody else loves you as much as we do! That was the last time I saw her; she died three weeks later.

Essie was a good neighbor for nearly half a century. In all those years there was never a squabble or cross word spoken between our families. I know there were aggravations and miffs but they were never exchanged. Essie loved

to talk and confided her daily life to Mama and Daddy. We knew all about the Shepards and Phillips, her ups and downs at work, the names of her co-workers, the names of all of her bosses and the details of in-house things that went on at her work.

This helped me learn early that a good neighbor is a blessing from God. If we had searched the world over, I don't think we could have found one better than Essie Phillips. I am sorry to say that this story ends on a sad note. Her beloved son Emmett Jr. died last week; he was sixty. God gave Emmett a great personality and many talents. In his youth he was an outstanding basketball player and one of the best baseball pitchers in the county. He was a good student and got his college degree from Athens College, now Athens State University. He also attended law school and did well but had to drop out before he graduated because of money. There is no doubt that he would have made an outstanding lawyer.

More importantly he had three fine children, a girl and two boys. I didn't have much contact with him in the last few years but he was one of the boys that grew up on our hill at Ryland and that alone gave him a special place in my heart.

If you're alone and something gets lodged in your throat, do the following:

- 1. Make a fist with one hand and place the thumb side against your abdomen.**
- 2. With the other hand, grab your fist and press your fist in and upwards in sharp, thrusting moves.**

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