



No. 345

November 2021



Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

MYSTERY ON SHARP'S MOUNTAIN



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Also in this issue: Ghost of Bryant Denny Stadium; A Different Thanksgiving; The Rumba Bowl; Timeline of the Huntsville Times; A Family Funeral; Games We Played; Holiday Recipes, Pet Winter Safety and much more!

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Mystery on Sharp's Mountain

by Linda (Herring) Kapes

For the residents of Lincoln Village, the Christmas season of 1929 was one of mixed emotions. The mill had cut back to a skeleton staff, laying off hundreds of workers at the very time the paychecks were most needed. For many people, despite the financial uncertainty, it provided a rare chance to spend time with family and friends.

Mary Markham was planning to spend the holidays with her husband, James Markham, on Sharp's Mountain in northeast Madison County. Their home, a small rough-hewn cabin, was located high on the mountain at the end of a wilderness trail, miles from a road or any neighbors. The reclusive family had lived there for years, eking out a living by trapping, making whisky and gathering ginseng.

As their three daughters be-

gan to grow older, the family decided that Mary would move to Huntsville where she would work at the mills and the children could attend school. As often as possible, Mary and the children returned to the mountains.

On December 19, a Thursday, the public schools closed early for the Christmas holidays. Mary had borrowed a car from her father and as soon as her daughters returned from school they set out on the twenty-mile trip to Sharp's Mountain. The weather had been unseasonably warm, in the high fifties and sixties, and despite the children's protests, Mary made them wear sweaters.

That afternoon, about 3pm, the family reached the home of Harvey Allan who lived at the base of the mountain. Mary was anxious to continue on up the mountain but Harvey and his family beseeched her to spend the night. The children, excited about being around other children, begged their mother to stay. Reluctantly, Mary agreed.

The next morning, December 20, after a hearty breakfast, Mary and the children began the trek up the mountain to the cabin. The weather was overcast with the temperatures hovering in the fifties. A strong wind blowing out of the northwest made Mary aware that she and her children were not dressed warmly enough for the changing weather. Although it was a long and difficult walk,

"I called my acupuncturist last night and told him I was in pain. He told me to take two safety pins and call him in the morning."

Stacie O'Reilly, Arab



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P.O. Box 4648
Huntsville, Al 35815
(256) 534-0502

Email - oldhuntsville@knology.net
(Website) www.oldhuntsvillemag.com

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Sales & Mrktg. - Cathey Carney
Editor - Cheryl Tribble
Consultant - Ron Eyestone
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almost four miles, the family always looked forward to it. The rough wilderness had a certain fascination that only one who had been raised in the mountains could understand. About a quarter way up the trail the weather began to change drastically.

The dark clouds that had been hovering in the distance now enveloped the mountains in a cold mist, bringing with it strong gusting winds that made walking difficult. The temperatures began to drop - in fifteen minutes the temperature dropped by 20 degrees. At the end of the hour the temperature was below freezing and still dropping. The mist changed to sleet with the pellets being driven sideways by the hurricane force winds.

The once beautiful wilderness trail was suddenly becoming a nightmare as ice began wrapping the mountain in its freezing embrace.

The sleet quickly gave way to a wind-driven snow so thick that within minutes a heavy white blanket covered the mountain. Mary pushed and

urged her daughters to walk faster but the task had become almost impossible. Every step became a test of their strength and endurance as the family fought their way up the icy slopes. Bruised knees and elbows gave silent testimony to the treacherous ice and snow.

The two youngest girls began crying as the bitter arctic wind made a mockery out of their light cotton dresses. The snow began falling harder and the trail grew more obscured. Any semblance of a footpath was now hidden beneath the snow and landmarks once familiar and comforting could no longer be recognized. The family was adrift just like the snow.

When the evening darkness began to cast its long shadow on the mountain, visibility became even more difficult as Mary began to realize that they were going to have to spend the night outside, exposed to the elements. They found a large, hollow tree, with an opening just wide enough for them to crawl inside. All night they huddled together, taking turns rubbing each other

in a feeble attempt at warmth. At one point Mary passed out the cookies and oranges the children had saved from their school Christmas parties the day before.

There was little sleep that night as the family listened to the terrifying sounds of the storm whipping more snow across the mountain. Ice laden branches snapped from trees throughout the night, sounding like gunshots in the darkness.

This freak winter storm that would paralyze North Alabama for days had caught Mary totally unaware. Temperatures set records as they plummeted to below zero and the snow created blizzard conditions not seen in almost a hundred years.

The next morning, a Satur-



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day, did not bring the sunshine they had prayed for. Instead, the snow was falling just as heavy and the temperature was hovering around zero. Mary, who had placed herself at the opening of the hollow tree in an attempt to block the wind from her children, was suffering from hypothermia and was too weak to walk.

It was decided that Jane, the eldest daughter, would take Pearl and together they would try to find the trail. After hours of searching in vain they returned to the tree where Mary and the youngest daughter, Viola, were still huddled. Another night was spent in the bitter cold praying for miracles that were nearly beyond hope.

The next morning, Sunday, Mary was worse, barely able to talk or move. Jane and Pearl set out again to try and find the trail that would lead them home to their father. All day was spent criss-crossing the mountain and retracing their footsteps in the snow. Finally, at about three o'clock that afternoon, they stumbled onto the trail. It was barely two hundred yards from the hollowed tree and less than a half mile to the cabin.

Relieved and excited, Jane and Pearl rushed back to the hollow log where their mother and Viola were waiting. Excitedly, Jane told of how they had found the trail and it was just a short walk on to the cabin. She was sure, she added, that they could make it before dark. But spending two nights in the unrelenting cold had taken its toll on Mary and so she pleaded that they wait until the following morning when surely the

weather would be warmer. Jane reluctantly gave in to her mother's wishes.

The following morning they began the short journey with Jane carrying Viola and Pearl helping her mother. They had not gone very far however, when it became apparent that Mary's weakened condition would not allow them to continue. Mary begged them to help her back to the hollow tree, saying she did not want to die out in the open. A saddened and disheartened family returned to the hollow tree that had become their safety and refuge. Nature's shelter would now become a coffin for two.

That night, with her head lying in Jane's lap, Mary succumbed to the cold. Jane, knowing she had to protect her sisters from the same fate, placed her mother's lifeless body in the opening of the tree as a shield against the arctic wind. Hours later, Pearl joined her mother in death. With a determination born of necessity, Jane removed the sweaters from the cold bodies and placed Pearl in the opening beside her mother.

The next day, Christmas Eve, Jane and Viola once again at-

tempted to find their way to the mountain cabin. By this time they had spent five nights and six days lost in the wilderness with zero temperatures and no food.

That afternoon, around four o'clock the two girls finally arrived at the end of their long and sad journey. As their bodies warmed before the open fireplace, they tearfully relayed the events of the past week to their father. That night James Markham returned to the hollow tree and retrieved the bodies of his wife and daughter.

As word of the girls' miraculous survival spread they became almost instant celebrities. Their pictures appeared on the front pages of newspapers throughout the country, with detailed accounts of their harrowing life and death experiences. The following Sunday Mary Markham and her daughter Pearl were buried at Cameron Methodist Church. A charitable fund was established for the care of Jane and Viola.

It was a story that tugged the heartstrings of everyone who heard it.

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cooking - as often as
possible."**

Henny Youngman

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Within days of the rescue, however, a story quite different from the first was being told. One that was steeped in local suspicion and mystery.

It went as follows: James Markham was well known as a man who loved his whiskey. From the day he first appeared on Sharp's Mountain, sometime around 1915, he had the reputation of a rough-talking, whiskey drinking man who didn't like people "meddling in his business."

The few people who ever visited Markham's cabin all came away with a sense of pity for the family. Markham, his wife and three daughters all lived in a one-room cabin barely 12 by 14 feet wide. The cabin was almost devoid of any type of furnishings. The mere basics, such as soap or combs, were a rarity and the girls' only bed was a pallet on the floor.

The stories that were told by neighbors about Markham's temper when he was drunk defy belief. Many people in the valley told of seeing Mary and the girls walking off the mountain late at night in attempts to escape Markham's drunken rages. Other stories were told of the mother and three daughters hiding in the woods for days at a time waiting for him to sober up.

In the summer of 1929, Mary Markham finally found the courage to leave her husband and move to town where she went to work at Lincoln Mills. Like so many other women in her situation, she was torn between wanting a better life for her family and loyalty to a husband she had sworn to love, honor and obey.

That December, Mary decided to return to Sharp's Mountain and her husband's home. Mary and the children spent the night at Harvey Allan's house before walking up the mountain early the next morning. The weather was unseasonably warm, making the walk even more pleasant than usual. Even allowing for loitering along the way the family, at the latest, would have reached the cabin by 11:00 that morning. No one noticed the heavy clouds that were beginning to cover the sky.

That afternoon James Markham was seen walking along the road with a sack over his shoulder. When Kenneth Pitts stopped to give him a lift, Markham explained he had been to the store to purchase more supplies. Pitts got the impression that Markham's wife and children were waiting at home. He said Markham was intoxicated.

What happened next can only be conjecture. As evening approached, it started sleeting and then changed to snow. By the next morning the mountain was completely snowed in, making any kind of travel impossible. Six people - James, his brother Robert, Mary and three children - were trapped in a small room barely large enough for two. James was drinking, along with his brother. The cramped quarters and the whiskey led to arguments. At some point, as many people believe, Mary decided to take her daughters and walk off the mountain as she had done so many times before.

On Christmas Eve, a neighbor who lived about a mile from the Markham cabin heard three shots, placed closely together. This was an age-old sign of distress. His first thought was of fire as he scanned



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“Never sing in the shower. Singing leads to dancing, dancing leads to slipping, slipping leads to paramedics seeing you naked. So remember - Don't Sing!”

Bessie Thomas, Gurley

the horizon for signs of smoke. Seeing none, he started to go back into his house when he heard three more shots. Quickly he saddled a mule and began cautiously making his way through the ice and snow toward the Markham cabin where he thought the shots originated.

When he reached the cabin he found the blackened bodies of Mary and Pearl lying on the floor. Jane and Viola were huddled, terror stricken, in a corner of the room while their father was trying to boil a pot of coffee.

After listening for a few minutes as the girls told a story of spending 5 nights in the freezing wilderness, the neighbor rode his mule on down the mountain and called the authorities. No one knows what story he told the authorities, but the next morning two officials from the County Health Department, along with three armed deputies, appeared at the cabin with a warrant to take the girls into custody. The girls were taken to town where they told their story again. The next day Judge Thrasher signed an order appointing himself as guardian. The newspaper

said, "Mr. Markham agreed to stay in the background for his daughters sake."


Almost seventy-five years later the tragedy of Sharp's Mountain is still being debated. Did the family perish going up the mountain or leaving it?

Records prove it did not start snowing until that night, long after the time the family should have reached the cabin. A puzzling question probably never to be answered is, "How did two of the girls live while the other two froze to death?"

Most medical authorities insist that it would have been impossible for the girls to survive the bitter temperatures dressed only in light cotton dresses. Did Jane and Viola return to the cabin earlier than people thought? Was it possible that they never left the cabin? What did the neighbor see or hear that made armed deputies arrive with a warrant? Why did the judge remove the girls from their father's home? Could it be

"Hey, it's either one nation under God, or bite my ass and leave!"


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that Markham's reputation as a drunkard and brute prompted them to take this action?

Most importantly, why did the two girls relate the story as told above? A story that was passed on to their children and children's children for 75 years. A story that from outsiders points of view contradicts the accounts told by neighbors and some historical records regarding the timing of the snow storm of the century. Was it loyalty for their father, fear, or shock that would block their memories? Or could it be that the truth lies somewhere in between the accounts as told by Jane and Viola and the stories passed down as legend by old timers of Hurricane Creek?

My mother was the youngest survivor of this mountain tragedy, but her story does not end the winter of '29. She lived for two years with Mary's brother and wife. When the funds that had been donated by the kind citizens of Huntsville ran out, my mother was placed in the Alabama Children's Home in Troy, Ala. There she grew to adulthood. During the summer of '41 she met a soldier who would become the love of her life and in the spring of '42 they were married. The tragic story of being in the snow and cold for days, and the trauma of having to leave her mama behind produced deep fears in my mother that she never overcame.

She had a fear of storms and snow that would affect the way she raised her children. When we had the occasional snow or severe storm my mother would not allow us to go outside to play. We had to stay indoors until the snow melted.

Viola's older sister Jane was able to go to school from the donated funds. Although nominated for the Carnegie Award for her heroic action, nothing ever transpired. She became a schoolteacher and later married and became a mother of two children. She and my mother kept in close contact throughout their lives. However, they did not ever talk about the tragedy.

James Markham, my grandfather, had an emotional break down but later remarried and had other children.

Although two stories emerged from the tragedy, one factor cannot be ignored. The good people of Huntsville joined together to assist the survivors. From the many volunteers who carried the stretchers containing my mother and aunt down the mountain to the ambulance; to those who donated money to provide for my mother and aunt; to the flowers dropped on their cabin by the airmen from Robert's Field.

I speak for the children of these two survivors when I express our heartfelt thanks to the people of Huntsville for their help.

"Instead of getting married again, I'm just going to find a woman I don't like and give her my house."

Lewis Grizzard

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THE BIRTHDAY SURPRISE

by Kathleen Vaughn



My daughter Brenda and I were sitting on the porch when I told her that I would like one of those little libraries that you see around town and have it in memory of our Tracy who we lost October 18, 2019. Nothing was said about it anymore.

Fast forward to July 17th two days before my 84th birthday. My son and his wife Teresa came over with gifts, cards and food, then they asked me to step out to the carport. There was a BIG BOX with a big red bow on it. My son David removed the box and there was my beautiful Little Library. I cried with pure joy.

“The pedestrian had no idea which way to go, so I ran over him.”

On Local Accident report

It appears that after Brenda left, she then called Teresa and told her what I'd like to have. Teresa told my son David and he started building my Library. It sits in the back yard and I can see it from my kitchen window.

Tracy would be so proud of all the books that have been put in it. I hope they have a Little Library in Heaven.

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News From The Year 1911

News From Huntsville and Around The World

New Auto Company Formed By Louis Chevrolet in Detroit

The automotive team of William Durant and Louis Chevrolet have announced the incorporation of the Chevrolet Motor Company of Michigan. According to a public statement issued by the firm, they intend to establish a factory in Detroit for the manufacture of a new, high-priced car.

The chief distinctive feature of their new motorcar will be an engine perfected during the last winter by Chevrolet, assisted financially by Durant. In 1900, at age 22, Swissborn Chevrolet left Europe for America. He has worked as an automobile mechanic and is known for his daring antics as a racing driver. Six years ago, he won New York's Morris Park race with a speed record of 68 mph at the wheel of a Fiat. Last year, he completed a new, six-cylinder touring car.

Col. Rison Buys New Packard Car

Huntsville - Col. A. L. Rison today received a handsome 7 passenger Packard car, which he will have out in a few days. The car has a dark green body with gray running gear and is a beauty, being perhaps the costliest and prettiest car in the city. He is planning a road trip to Birmingham soon.

Mona Lisa Stolen

Paris - French police say it must be the work of a madman. During the night someone slipped into the Louvre and stole the "Mona Lisa," which may very well be the most famous painting in the entire world.

Curators at the Louvre are at a loss for words. Visitors to the museum are stopping to stare at the empty space on the wall in the Great Gallery, where the "Mona Lisa" has hung for more than a century.

French investigators say that the theft cannot be the work of professional thieves, because the painting is too well-known to be sold. They suspect the "Mona Lisa" was stolen by a person who had lost all of his mental faculties.

The "Mona Lisa" has been a part of French art collections for 400 years, and it is considered a national treasure.



THE INCONTINENTALS

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Booker T. Washington in Hospital

Tuskegee - Booker T. Washington was beaten up last night by Albert Ulrich, a janitor at an apartment building who accused him of acting suspiciously around the building. He was unable to appear in court this morning on account of his injuries.

Ulrich was released on a \$1500 bail for his appearance on Washington's charge of felonious assault. Ulrich declares he attacked the man on a complaint of his wife and that Washington tried to hit him.

Washington declares he went to the apartment house to look for Auditor Smith of the Tuskegee Institute and that not knowing the latter's suite number, was looking for the name on the directory board when the janitor attacked him with a club. Washington is in a hospital where sixteen stitches were taken in his scalp.

FIRST WOMAN RECEIVES PILOT'S LICENSE

New York - The first pilot's license ever issued to a woman by the Aero Club of America, and the second ever earned anywhere by a woman, has gone to Miss Harriet Quimby. Miss Quimby, a student at the Moisant Aviation School on Long Island, nearly matched the world record set by experienced fliers in her trial for the license; she landed her plane within seven feet, nine inches of a target.

The official record is five feet, four inches. Miss Quimby had failed the same test a night earlier.

Tennessee River Three Miles Wide

Huntsville - Hundreds of people are daily viewing the big river at Ditto Landing. The Tennessee river here now is more than 3 miles wide. The water was stationary but heavy rains were reported to have fallen above here. The present flood will delay farming in the river bottoms for more than a month and will cause great losses to the farmers by fences and small outbuildings washing away.

Along the river several large barns have been washed away and a few dwelling houses have also disappeared.

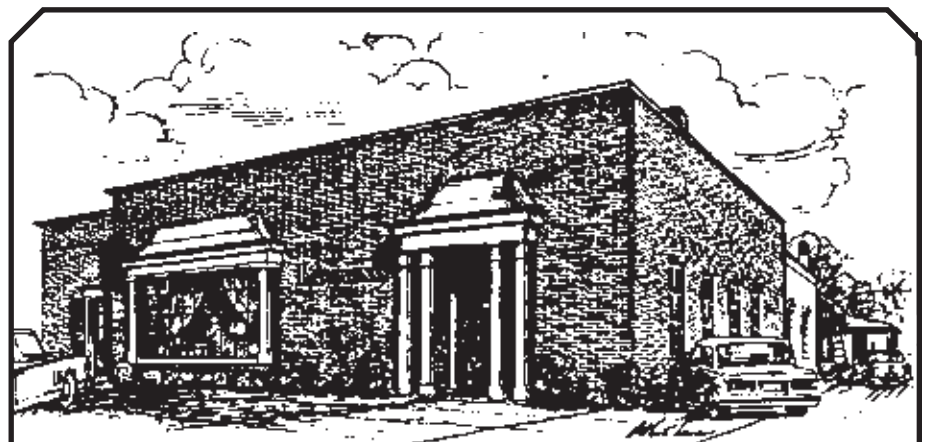
A mule belonging to Henry Ingram was lost when it became trapped by the rising waters near Hobbs Island.

Polio Discovered in Maysville

Dr. L. W. Howard has confirmed that a new and dreadful disease has been identified in Maysville.

Nettie Preston, the two year old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Will Preston, was diagnosed yesterday as having polio.

Though two other cases have been reported in other parts of the state, this is the first confirmed case in North Alabama. (1916)



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I've started the month on a good foot, getting my yearly physical, flu shot, and the third Covid booster shot. I feel like an antique car. We must keep them in good repair, or they will give out, and I try to keep this old buggy running and in good shape. If you haven't had your shots get moving and get yours. You might wonder where they are given.

To start with, try the drug stores, health departments, doctor's offices, or one of the hospitals. They are widely available. You can get the regular flu shot and the Covid shot on the same day since they are unrelated. I would use different arms if you did that. You can not get the flu from the vaccine.

With the shortage of items on the shelves at the grocery stores, due to the backlog of ships unloading and shortage of truck drivers, I suggest you get Thanksgiving needs well in advance. If you wait, you may be disappointed. Christmas shopping too, for that matter. Don't wait till "Black Friday".

Now, if you are like me, what's for Thanksgiving dinner? A traditional one with turkey, dressing, rice and gravy, English peas and asparagus casserole, cherry marshmallow and pecan salad, of course, good old homemade rolls with butter and cranberry jelly, and my favorite, a Doodle Cake. I know some of you are saying, "what in the world is a Doodle Cake?" So I thought I would share the recipe with you. It is so easy and really, really good. I hope

some of you will make it and enjoy it as much as my family does and say, "It's so good." Washing everything down with cranberry-mint tea is a good choice.

Doodle Cake:

- 2 C. sugar
- 2 C. plain flour
- 2 eggs
- 2 tsp. baking soda
- 1 can (Large) crushed pineapple in juice

Icing:

- 1 stick butter
- 1-1/2 C. chopped pecans
- 1-1/2 C. coconut (sweetened, shredded)
- 1 C. Sugar
- 1 tsp. Vanilla extract
- 2/3 C. evaporated Milk (small 5 oz. can)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix all cake ingredients and pour them into a 9x12 glass dish, (spray dish with Pam).

Bake at 350 degrees for 40-45 minutes.

Put icing ingredients into a medium-size saucepan and simmer for 10-12 minutes. Pour warm icing over the cake right when it comes out of the oven. It's delicious when warm, or let it cool and cut into squares. A dollop of whipped cream is a good addition also.

Now that I have all the ingredients written down, I think I will head for the grocery store and get all the items on my menu. Everything will freeze well.

With fall underway, why not take a road trip to one of Alabama's many state parks and enjoy the beautiful fall leaves and a meal at one of the park's restaurants. The food is as good as the scenery.

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Running to the Store

by Tommy Towery

"I need you to run to the store for me!" This was a common directive aimed at me by my mother when I was a kid in the mid 1950s.

It was not a big deal really, and often I enjoyed having a reason to go there. The store to which I had to "run to" was Kroger at the northwest corner of East Clinton Street and Lincoln Street. It was a mere two-tenths of a mile from our house on East Clinton - less than a 10 minute walk. It would have taken less time had I actually run.

Most often my trips were to purchase a half-gallon of Meadow Gold milk and/or a loaf of white bread. It was never an order for bread or just a loaf of bread; it was always a "loaf of white bread." The brand of bread I normally bought was Merita. It may sound a bit strange for a pre-teenage male to be brand conscious, but not to me. After all, Merita bread sponsored "The Lone Ranger" and the name was pounded into my brain with multiple commercials during each week's Saturday morning show.

My mother finally quit asking me to buy lettuce because every time she did I bought cabbage instead. She always told me to get the firmest head of lettuce I could find, and the green leafy head of cabbage

was always much firmer than the head of iceberg lettuce. I didn't eat either one so how was I to know the difference?

No matter how short or long the grocery list happened to be, no trip to Kroger was complete for a kid without taking a stroll down the breakfast cereal aisle. I could have cared less which type of cereal was in a box, it was the toys inside which caught my attention. "Free Inside" was printed in big letters on their fronts for kids back then.

Cheerios once offered a collection of guided missiles which could be fired from their spring-loaded launchers. I hated Cheerios, but ate them religiously just to get the toys in the bottom of the cereal boxes. Like a coal miner I dug through the flakes of cereal until my fingers finally grasped the prizes.

Once, with a box top from Kellogg's Frosted Flakes and 25-cents, I became the proud owner of a set of three colorful plastic frogmen who would surface and dive in a tub of

water when their bases were filled with baking soda. Later, another quarter and a box top brought me a small USS Nautilus inspired submarine in our mail box using the same principal. Other items were designed to catch the attention of children while their parents shopped. Our kitchen cabinet became the home to a set of



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"Howdy Doody" jars which once held Welch's Grape Jelly.

In the 1959-60 time frame, Kroger offered shoppers an opportunity to purchase a complete set of The Golden Book Encyclopedia. One new volume was added to the shelf each week and for 99-cents per volume it took 16 weeks to own the complete set. I had to rush to Kroger at the start of each week to insure I got the latest volume before they sold out. As an aside, I still sing the song from "The Mickey Mouse Club Show" each time I try to spell out E-N-C-YC-LO-PEDIA, thanks to Jimmy Cricket's efforts.

A trip to Kroger in 1956 resulted in the purchase of a box of Quaker Oatmeal. I did not particularly like oatmeal, but just as I bought cereal for what was free inside, I did the same for the oatmeal. Inside specially marked boxes of Quaker's was a free theater ticket to attend the opening of the space classic "Forbidden Planet". The idea of getting to see a first run movie for free was exciting. Those tickets now sell for over \$35 each on eBay.

And who could forget the opportunity of free things available when shopping at Kroger via their Top Value Trading Stamp program? With each purchase the small yellow stamps would be distributed to be pasted onto a page in a book. Stamps became pages; pages became books; books became merchandise. The more books you collected, the bigger the items you could redeem them for at the local Top Value Redemption Center.

Over the years I witnessed great technological changes happen at my Kroger store, I remember the installation of the motorized conveyor belts at the cashier stands. It was magic. Put your items on the belt and the cashier pushed a button and they moved to her. She rang up each item up by manually entering the prices printed on them. There were no bar codes and no scanners then. After keying in each price she pushed the items to the sack boy who skillfully packed them into the brown paper bags, I always put my purchases on the far end of the belt just to see her do her magic and make the items come to her.

Another technology change I witnessed happened to the store's front door. One day when I walked up and reached out to open the front door, I fell flat on my face. The door had opened automatically - without me touching it. My momentum intended to push open the front door could not be stopped and down I went. That was the first time I had ever seen a door which

would open when someone stepped on the rubber mat in front of it. I think I stood there and made the door open and close about a dozen times. I was so fascinated with the concept.

I also became fascinated with the store's new automatic coffee grinder. Coffee beans were sold in bags and were poured into the top of the grinder. The empty bag was placed in the holder below a funnel. The dial to select the desired grind of the coffee was set and with the push of a button the beans spilled into the grinder with the sound of a buzz saw. The ground coffee filled the bag and the aroma of fresh coffee filled the air. Although I did not drink coffee, I loved the smell emitted from the machine as it did its job.

Unlike the historical value of the houses on East Clinton, the Kroger store's importance was not considered the same. Though its physical structure fell victim to the demolition team several years ago, the memories of my trips to it remain in my mind. I have other memories of those days, but they must wait until later I suppose. I can't put all my eggs in one basket.

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Duck Hunting in Homosassa, Florida in 1958

by M. D. Smith, IV

As early as six, my father took the whole family on fishing trips to Homosassa, Florida, sixty miles north of Tampa. The Homosassa River, fed by a giant spring, is freshwater upriver and brackish as it nears the Gulf, turning to saltwater. You can catch all kinds of fish depending on where you are on the river.

I was seventeen years old and interested in Cars, Girls, Hunting, and Rock & Roll music, in that order.

My father agreed to take Mardis Howie and me duck hunting in Homosassa with a guide. It was January 1958. They said it was the coldest January day that area had ever seen.

At five a.m., we left our hotel in a twenty-three-foot flat bottom guide boat with outboard and went about ten miles to the mouth as it flows into the Gulf of Mexico. That was a cold thirty-minute trip. There are Mangrove islands. These trees grow on the coral and rock formations so thickly that the roots

above water make a small island. A stool will sit on the twisted wood, but you can see water underneath.

My father and I got off on one island, and my buddy Mardis and the guide went to another. We were wearing rubber waders on each leg and told to wade out into the shallow water if we shot any ducks. I was already cold from the boat ride with only wool socks and even colder after wading to our spot from the boat. Floating decoy ducks were deployed.

I was dreaming of a pair of Mallards, Pintails, or Wood Ducks. It was a milky white sky with a cold North wind blowing that day with little shelter from the Mangroves.

Soon we saw some dark species of ducks coming near the decoys in the water. My heart was racing because it was my first hunt. We were trained in trap and skeet shooting, and I cut loose soon as the first one got in range. Some feathers flew out and down he came with a grand splash in the water.

The bird was farther out in the water than I planned, and I gingerly left my stool on the trees' roots and began to wade out in the water. It got deep quickly and was a tad slippery. As I got closer, I was standing on my tip-toes, observing the water inching closer to the top of the waders. As

"He does not have a beer gut. He has developed a liquid grain storage facility."

A friend overheard trying to be politically correct about his beer-drinking friend

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I reached the bird and leaned forward slightly, a trickle of ice water came down one leg. I tip-toed even higher, got my duck and waded back. It was a black duck and sort of funny looking, but what the heck, it was a duck with webbed feet.

We both managed to get a few more for the rest of the morning, fortunately landing closer in since we were waiting longer to shoot. A bit before noon, the guide motored over and pulled up. By now, both our legs and feet were completely numb from the cold, and Mardis said he was also. The guide knew how to dress in thermals and was only chilly.

As we hoisted our 5 or 6 birds into the boat, the guide said, "Oh no, you killed yourselves a bunch of "Trash Geese," and they are not suitable to eat. Just throw them away. I had never heard of a duck called that in my life. I found out later that was a slang term for the Double-crested Cormorant, a cross between a duck and a goose and NOT good to eat.

"Fooley," Our bubble of a successful duck hunt popped like a balloon with a pin. Besides, we were so numb from just above the knees down that we could barely make our legs work. So we immediately started for home upriver. Soon, in the open wind, we began to shiver uncontrollably. The guide could see we were in trouble, so he decided to pull over on Shell Island, a well-known stopping place to have a shore lunch, and build us a fire to get warm.

We were delighted. He said we'd be there a while and take our shotguns and load them because there was yet still a chance we'd get a shot at a good game duck.

I vividly remember sitting on a fold-up duck stool with both my waders off and my wool socks almost in the edge of the flames and feeling nothing. I had my feet so close I could see steam from the damp sock rising, or maybe it was smoke about to catch fire.

The guide said to back away a bit from the roaring fire. After a while, some feeling was starting to come back into our legs and feet. Mardis had already put his hip waders on and held his loaded shotgun with the safety on, scanning the skies.

Finally, he saw and pointed to a circling buzzard overhead that must have thought we smelled like some good road kill and was waiting to have his next meal. The guide said they did that because people who ate lunch there would often leave scraps, bones or hush puppies, and vultures would eat anything, particularly dead stuff.

Mardis asked the guide if it was okay to

shoot the buzzard, and we had #2 long-range duck loads in our guns. It was winter 1958 in the boondocks, and the guide said it was okay. So Mardis swung his shotgun even with the circling scavenger, fired once, and that big bird folded his wings and came plummeting down. It crashed through the tops of the big Palm trees and sounded like a B-17 crashing into a building as it landed not far from the campfire, behind some small surface palms.

Still in my socks, I waited as Mardis ran over to inspect his kill. He came back quickly with some "goo" on his hands. It seems the buzzard had some kind of recent dead meal, and the crash landing had caused it to regurgitate all over itself, and Mardis had picked it up to inspect his colossal trophy. These are enormous birds up close, but talk about smell, I believe it is worse than a skunk. The smell was "breath-taking" and not in a good way.

He washed as best he could at the water's edge, but he still smelled awful. We finally thawed out enough to walk around and feel our legs, feet, and toes and get in the boat to return. We kidded Mardis all the way home, where warm showers awaited us.

We learned lessons on that hunting trip. One was that a Double-crested Cormorant was not an edible duck, and two, never shoot a buzzard, but if you do, don't go near it.

Oh yes, dress like you're in Alaska in winter.



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Heard On the Street

by *Cathey Carney*



Congratulations to our Photo of the Month winner. The photo was that of a young **Wernher von Braun** and we had SO many correct guesses but the first one counts. That caller was **John R. Smith** of Huntsville. John spent 32 years as a Research Physicist at University of California/Davis and has been in Huntsville for 3 years. He is now at Northrup Grumman - Happy you're in Huntsville!

Then we actually had an out-of-towner guess the location of my tiny hidden owl. It was on the very back of the magazine, right under "May 5, 1961" on the sign. See it now? Not many people did. I'm getting better at this hiding thing. Our winner hails from Iowa and he is **Rolland Thomas**. He has never been in the South but he loves Southern people and has friends

here who keep up with him. Rolland lives in a retirement home in Council Bluffs, IA and for a hobby he collects rocks and paints on them. Oftentimes he'll paint pictures and Bible Scriptures but lately he's been putting some of the funny Old Huntsville quotes on his rocks. He gives them away to many people who love them! Congratulations to you!

Happy Birthday to my beautiful daughter **Steph Troup on November 16!**

As many of you know, who have older homes, the plumbing is old too. Recently I noticed my bathtub faucet wouldn't stop dripping. So I called **H.C. Blake** who is a family business and has been here forever. The two young men who came out were **John Patterson** and **Cordell Hayes**. They checked it out and told me what I would need, gave me a couple of options. I've had alot of service people here over the years but these guys were some of the best I've dealt with. They answered all my questions, were professional, knew exactly what to do and didn't waste time. John and Cordell work for **Blake Brothers** which is the service side now of H.C. Blake. I just wanted to say Thanks for a job well done!

Nellie Kennedy is 88 years old, born May 19, 1933 and she loves to read. She lives in Huntsville with her sweet daughter **Gina Kitzero** who watches over her. Nellie remembers Huntsville from long ago and I'm hoping to get some good stories from her soon!

Rosemary Leatherwood wants to wish her sweet grandson **Billy Leatherwood III** a Happy Birthday

on Nov. 4 - she hopes he has a great day. Also Rosemary's Mom had her birthday in November, and she's celebrating in heaven now. She misses and loves her so much.

Billy Lawrence has a dear sister who's having a birthday in November. Her name is **Linda Worley** and her day is Nov. 7 - Happy Birthday to you. Her sweet husband **Larry Worley** is a retired mail carrier here who worked for nearly 50 years for USPS. He's been under the weather lately and Old Huntsville is sending love to him and to Linda!

These are certainly crazy times we're living in. My dad was always good at preparing for anything and his 5 page **Personal Affairs document** told my brother and I everything we would need to know about his insurance, retirement information, Army pension, past work benefits, Social Security info, who to call for what. He would review it with us every year. It's not something we wanted to think about because we didn't want him or Mom not to be here with us. But when he passed away, that document was invaluable to us.

So I have done the same with my family and it feels good to have it. Now more than ever, you need a will. You need a medical directive (living will). Where will you be

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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buried? Do you want to be cremated? If you have pets, who will get them? These are all decisions that you don't want your kids to have to make while they are grieving for you. Just do it and hope you don't have to worry about it for many years! It'll make you feel better to be prepared.

Agnes Reid had a 93rd birthday on August 25th and she loves to read! We hope you had a wonderful time with your family and here's to many more!

It's so nice to go into a grocery store where the service people are actually friendly and always willing to help. The little Publix downtown at Twickenham Square is one, and Star Market at 5 Points is another. Just puts you in a good mood every time you go.

Kathleen Vaughn wants to wish her dear sis-in-law **Mary Ruth Hubbard** a happy birthday. Mary Ruth lives in Altoona, AL and turns 90 on Nov. 27. Sending love to you from all of us!

BB&T Bank's name has been changed to Truist but the Customer Care reps who work there are still the same - **Jane Eller** is one of the reps at the main Church Street location and she has a birthday coming up on Nov. 15th. Her older sister **Rosann Gerdeman** has a Nov. 20th birthday. Jane said that she was brought home as a tiny baby on her sister Rosann's birthday - what a present! Happy Birthday to Jane and Rosann!

Many use AAA for roadside assistance and I am one of them, for years. Well today I had a lot of errands but my car wouldn't start in the driveway, battery dead. I called AAA and they partner with United Towing Service here in Huntsville. I expected a long wait but almost immediately **Eddie Wallace** called from United Towing and said he was on his way. He was here in 20 minutes. He knew exactly what it was, corrosion on the battery cables preventing a connection. The battery was new but he said corrosion is caused from battery acid and builds up fast.

And here's where I'm going with this - he told me you can buy all kinds of battery cable cleaners but one of the best is just a spray bottle with baking soda and water. That is my kind of tip! He said it just dissolves the corrosion immediately. Use a regular spray bottle, maybe 8 oz, then put in about 4 tablespoons baking soda. Shake up and it's ready to use. Eddie was excellent and very fast, knew what he was doing and professional. Very proud of him and **United Towing** and AAA!

Because we'll all be thinking about eating on Thanksgiving, I have hidden a teeny butter knife in this issue somewhere. Find it and be the first to call, you win a years subscription for FREE.

Have a good Thanksgiving with your loved ones and stay safe. Check on your neighbors too.

Do Squirrels Mourn?

A friend and I were chatting a few days ago and she mentioned that she had a family of squirrels in her yard and that the father squirrel had run across the street (as all squirrels do) and had been hit and killed by a passing car.

"Do you think squirrels mourn?" she asked sadly.

I realized that I might have the answer to her question.

Our yard also has a squirrel family. **Wiggles**, the father, and **Rigoletta**, the mother, had several baby squirrels. One day **Rigoletta** ran into the street and was killed, instantly, by a car. The young squirrels, being hungry, dug nuts out of the ground, raided the bird feeders, etc. But **Wiggles** seemed to have disappeared.

About ten days later I heard a strange hiccupping sound coming from an old oak tree in my yard. Then I noticed that one of the young squirrels ran up the tree with a large chestnut in its mouth and gave it to **Wiggles**, who was there in the tree. The hiccupping noise stopped. **Wiggles** had been sobbing and his little one was taking care of him.

Yes, squirrels do mourn. -
Ruth Weems - GHHS Member
(1996) GHHS Pet Gazette



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Holiday Sweets

Almond Macaroons

- 1-1/4 c. coarsely chopped almonds, toasted lightly
- 3/4 c. sugar
- 3 egg whites
- 1/3 c. chopped maraschino cherries, well drained

Preheat your oven to 300 degrees. In a 2-quart pot mix your almonds, sugar and egg whites, cook over medium heat for about 6 minutes, stirring constantly.

When a path remains when you drag a spoon through the mixture, remove it from the heat. Stir in the cherries and cool.

Cover a cookie sheet with parchment cooking paper, drop the mixture by rounded tea-spoonfuls about one inch apart onto the paper.

Bake about 20 minutes or til light brown. Slide off the parchment paper and place your cookies onto a wire rack, cooling completely.

Coconut Meringues

- 4 egg whites
- 1-1/4 c. sugar
- 2-1/2 c. coconut
- 1/2 t. vanilla
- 1/4 t. salt

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Lightly grease a cookie sheet. Beat your egg whites in a deep glass bowl until foamy, beat in sugar, continue beating until stiff and glossy. Do not underbeat.

Fold in the remaining ingredients, drop mixture by heaping teaspoonfuls about 2 inches apart onto your cookie sheet.

Bake for 20 minutes and light brown. Immediately remove from the cookie sheet and cool. Store in a tightly covered container.

Chess Pie

- Pastry for a 9-inch crust pie
- 4 eggs
- 1-1/2 c. sugar

- 1/2 c. butter, softened
- 2 T. yellow cornmeal
- 2 T. half and half
- 2 T. lemon juice
- 2 t. vanilla dash salt

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Prepare your pastry, or thaw one out. Beat the eggs, sugar and butter for 3 minutes in a medium bowl on high speed. Beat in the remaining ingredients, your mixture will look curdled. Pour into pie plate, lined with the pastry. Bake for one hour or til set, cool for 15 minutes. Refrigerate til chilled.

Good if served with a favorite liquor, such as Kalhua or Amaretto.

Strawberry Cream

- 1/2 c. powdered sugar
 - 1 quart fresh strawberries, sliced (frozen OK)
 - 1 c. whipping cream
 - 2 T. powdered sugar
 - 4 T. orange-flavored liqueur
- Sprinkle half a cup powdered sugar on the strawber-

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ries and stir gently. Refrigerate 2-4 hours, covered.

Beat the whipping cream and 2 tablespoons of the powdered sugar in a chilled medium bowl until stiff, fold in the liqueur. Fold this mixture into the strawberries.

Apple Crisp

- 4 medium tart cooking apples, pared and sliced
- 1 c. dried apricots, chopped
- 3/4 c. regular flour
- 3/4 c. brown sugar, packed
- 1/3 c. chopped pecans
- 3 T. butter, room temp
- Whipping cream

Place the apples in an ungreased square pan, 8x8x2 inches. Top with the apricots. If the apricots are dry, cover them with boiling water and let stand for 3 minutes, drain.

Mix remaining ingredients, except for the whipping cream, and sprinkle the mixture over the apples and apricots. Bake at 350 degrees for 35 to 40 minutes. Serve warm with whipped cream.

Gingersnap Parfaits

- 1-1/2 c. whipping cream
 - 2 T. powdered sugar
 - 1 c. gingersnap crumbs (use about 8 cookies)
- Beat the whipping cream

and sugar in a chilled medium bowl til stiff. Layer the crumbs and whipped cream in 4 parfait glasses, starting with the crumbs and ending with the whipped cream. You'll make about 4 layers of each. Refrigerate at least 5 hours, but no longer than 24 hours.

Sweet Dixie Cake

- 4 eggs
- 1/2 pint heavy cream
- 1-1/2 c. sugar
- 1-1/2 c. self-rising flour
- 1 t. almond extract (or vanilla if you prefer)

Break the eggs into a bowl and beat til light and foamy -at least five minutes. Add the cream, beat another 5 minutes. Pour in the sugar, beat well. Blend in the flour and extract. Pour in a greased tubular pan and bake at 350 degrees for 50 minutes, or in 2 8-inch cake pans for 30 minutes. Dust with confectioner's sugar.

Creamed Nuts

- 2 c. powdered sugar
 - 1 egg white (no yolk)
 - 1 t. vanilla extract
 - 2 t. cold water
 - Walnuts or Pecans
- Mix sugar, unbeaten egg white, vanilla and water into a stiff paste. Shape into little

balls, press between halved pecans or walnuts. Pitted dates may be filled with this cream, or it may be mixed with chopped nuts, shaped into bars and cut into squares.

Melt-In-Your-Mouth Nut Balls

- 2 sticks butter, softened
- 5 T. powdered sugar
- 2 c. plain flour
- 2 t. vanilla extract
- 1 c. chopped pecans

Mix all ingredients together in order listed. Roll into balls about the size of large marbles, bake at 325 degrees for 25 minutes. Check to make sure they don't burn on the bottom.

While still hot, roll the balls in about a cup of powdered sugar you have put into a bowl. The heat will make the sugar stick to the balls which tastes amazing.



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My Life So Far

by Henry M. Phillips

I was the son of Henry M. Phillips, Sr., born in Seattle, Washington in 1945. My dad had been crippled by my grandfather who had run guns for Poncho Villa in New Mexico. Mother had suffered from childhood paralysis and we never owned a car, our left and right feet were our only mode of transportation we used as children.

I dropped out of high school around 1963. My father had already passed, my mother died in the spring of 1963. Since there were eight of us critters at home the oldest boys and one of the older sisters headed to live with other relatives; my brother Frank joined the Marines; I went to live with an Aunt and Uncle in Tacoma, Washington.

A new school, new faces and life was pretty good but I appreciated my uncle's years in the Army. He had been shot in the mouth and the round came out his neck but he survived. He would take me out to Fort Lewis and treat me to these huge donuts, probably 6 to 8 inches in diameter. Recruiters did not have to convince me of Army life - those donuts did all the recruiting necessary.

I'm 18, in Basic Training, September 1963, AIT in 1963, my first assignment was Fort Knox, Kentucky. I had never been in the south before in my life. I played some football in high school and since I scored highest in clerical tests I ended up being a typist. Longing to be outside and doing something athletic I signed up for Airborne

training. From Fort Benning, to Fort Bragg, to Vietnam, back to Fort Bragg, to Alaska, back to Vietnam, to Fort Devens, Massachusetts, to Fort Riley, Kansas. Back to Vietnam then to Fort Lewis, to Korea on the DMZ and finally got an assignment to Redstone Arsenal, Alabama.

By this time I had married twice, had five children and was a sole parent. The Protestant and Catholic Ladies of the Chapel at Redstone Arsenal literally saved my bacon, they helped baby sit, brought food and so many other things, they will forever be special to me.

Just prior to retirement in 1989 I had spent 4 years in Germany, had remarried before going to Germany and life was challenging. Life goes on!

"I've had bad luck with both my wives. The first one left me and the second one didn't."

Patrick Murray



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Area News from 1923

Firemen Not Active, but Ready (June 5, 1923)

The Huntsville Fire Department hasn't had a run for a matter of nearly three weeks, not even a false alarm. However, members of the department are always ready and always prepared to respond to calls when they come.

Gurley Boy Drowned in River

While swimming in Paint Rock River Sunday afternoon, Leslie Thomas, aged 13, was drowned. The body was recovered and removed to the home of his parents in Gurley, where the funeral was held Monday afternoon. According to those who were swimming with young Thomas, he dove from the bank into the stream and never came up. They became frightened and called for help which was soon forthcoming and after a long search the body recovered. It is supposed the young man's head hit the bottom of the stream and rendered him unconscious.

Laughlins to Stay in City

The many friends of Mr. and Mrs. Laughlin will be glad to know that they will remain in Huntsville instead of moving to South Alabama as they had expected.

Arab Child Chews on Dynamite and Lives

Mrs. C. E. Brewster called frantically for police when she found her three-year-old daughter, Frances, eating the neighbor's dynamite. Police said the child was chewing on the end of a half pound when they arrived and removed it from her tiny hands.

Dr. McCown Very Ill

Dr. McCown, of Hazel Green, one of the best physicians in the county, is lying very low at the Huntsville Hos-

pital, having been brought yesterday morning from his home. While suffering from a bad toothache, Dr. McCown called upon his son, who had been studying in Atlanta, to extract the tooth. The young man did so and all seemed to be going well until the close of the day when the jaw began to swell and grow worse. The Doctor was then brought to the hospital.

Baptists want More Room

The First Baptist Church will offer \$11,000 for the Smith and Vaughn property, west and north side of the church. If the offer is accepted the church, it is stated, will be enlarged and other improvements made.

Dr. W. R. Staten Killed by Train

Dr. W. R. Staten of the Flint community was run down and killed by a train Tuesday, the accident occurring near the Flint Station. Dr. Staten is said to have been walking upon the railroad right-of-way when the accident occurred. The Doctor was hit by a freight train and was killed instantly.



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The Ghost of Bryant Denny Stadium

by John H. Tate



There is a story that is told in the bars of Alabama and at tailgate parties throughout the South. It is a story of a father and son's love, and their combined love of SEC Football, especially Alabama and Auburn football. The father loved BAMA ball so much, he named his son Paul Byron; the mother refused to let him name the boy Paul Bryant after the greatest college football coach of all times. Dad could name the starting BAMA players for the last twenty years and could tell you what pro-team former BAMA players are playing on. It was always dad's hope that Paul would attend Alabama. Since they were a poor family the only way was for Paul to get a scholarship.

Well, as fate would have it, Paul turned out to be brilliant in math and won a full-boat Engineering scholarship - not to Alabama, but Auburn University. Dad tried to convince Paul not to accept the scholarship to Auburn and told him

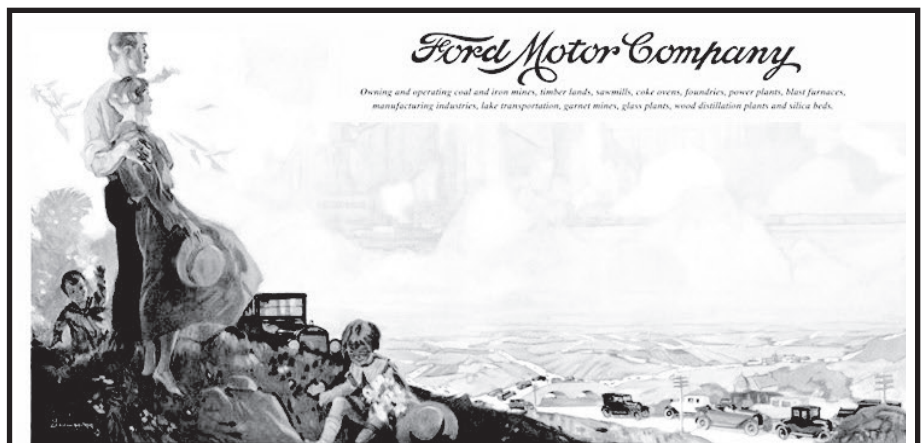
they would find a way to pay for it if he went to Alabama. Paul wasn't having it, he said, "Auburn has an excellent Engineering program and that is what I want to do."

Dad told Paul that if he went to Auburn, he was no longer his son and don't bother coming home. The mother tried to make peace and tried to get the two men she loved to make peace. With tears in his eyes, on the day he had to leave for Auburn, Paul walked five miles to the bus stop because his dad would not take him. Dad sat at the kitchen table as Paul walked out the front door, with a single tear running down his face.

As time went on, Paul graduated from Auburn and was a strong Auburn fan. He and his dad spoke from time to time, "How are you?", "How's the farm?", "Do you like engineering?" That type thing. They never did talk football nor have any real meaningful conversation, until one day Paul gets a call from his mother. His dad was in poor health and was not doing well. But the reason she was calling was because he had won tickets to that year's Iron Bowl and was going to try to drive himself.

Mom thought Paul could talk some sense into him, maybe even take him to the game.

Paul called his dad the next day, and he did sound very bad.



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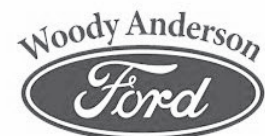
In accomplishing its aims the Ford institute has never been daunted by the size or difficulty of any task. It has spared no toil in finding the way of doing each task best. It has dared to try out the untried with conspicuous success.

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"In Alabama, an atheist is someone who doesn't believe in Nick Saban."
Jerry Knox, Gurley

Paul tried to talk him out of driving; but no matter what Paul said, he could not talk him out of going. After all, as big a fan he was of BAMA, he had never been to an Iron Bowl game, and at 70 years old he had a chance to go to the Iron Bowl for free. Paul had been to several SEC games and even the Iron Bowl a couple of times over the years. Each time he longed for the chance to have his dad by his side at the Iron Bowl, even if they were rooting for the opposing sides.

It took a little convincing, but Dad agreed to let Paul come and drive him to the Iron Bowl. Paul made it clear to his dad, "I am not going to say anything about rolling nothing."

Once Paul saw his dad, he knew the end was near; as a matter of fact, he might not make it through the trip. They made plans to arrive in Tuscaloosa the day before the game, so dad could rest up. The plan was to drive to Bryant Denny Stadium several hours before the game so they could take their time getting to the gate.

The day of the game, dad was very weak, could hardly walk. He would have to stop and rest every few steps or so, and then it happened. Dad sat down on the ground and did not have enough energy to get up anymore, and he was just a few steps outside of the gate. As he sat there trying to catch his breath, Paul said, "Dad this is as far as you can go, I don't think I can get you inside."

Dad never said a word, but big tears start to run down his face. Paul did not know what to do, they came so far and if they left there would not be another chance. With tears running down his face, Paul looked at his dad and thought, "I could have taken engineering at Alabama, we missed so much."

Paul lifted his right hand in the air and yelled as loud as he could, "We need a Roll Tide up in here!" In unison, the crowd yelled, "Roll Tide!" as several came over to see what was

wrong. Much to Paul's surprise, people knew who they were, because sportscasters, including on Game Day, had been running stories about the father-son team going to the Iron Bowl. The seventy year old dad won tickets and is a BAMA fan, while the son is an Auburn fan.

One of the Alabama female students leaned in over Paul's shoulder and said, "You got one more Roll Tide in you papa?" He mustered up enough strength to say, "Roll Tide Roll." The girl yelled for a few of the big guys in the crowd to pick him up and carry him into the stadium.

As they were entering in, the Alabama Fight Song started to play, and the crowd cheered so loud that the ground shook.

It is said, that if you are ever there late at night, and all is quiet, you can hear a little old man's voice, "Roll Tide Roll."

OUR WRITERS

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What you WON'T see on a Hallmark greeting card

THE SEAGULL

by Cathey Carney



The following story is true, and happened several years ago. It was relayed to "Pet Gazette" and appears here for the first time.

Harry Parker was just minding his own business, that day in Florida. He had been looking forward to his fishing expedition for two months now - a welcome escape from his construction job. It was sure good to get away from all that hassle.

It was early morning, and he had just gotten settled on the rough pier with his pole in his hands. He was glad he had brought his jacket, there was definitely a chill in the air. Harry just knew he was going to catch a tubful of saltwater fish.

When he first glanced around to see if anyone had joined him on the pier, he noticed a small seagull, just standing on the pier, about 30 feet away. It looked cold, like him. When he glanced back at it, a few minutes later, the bird had edged closer to him, still looking out to the water.

Harry felt a tug on his line and gave it all his attention for the next few minutes, but it proved to be just a waterlogged sandal. When he looked at the seagull again, it was no more than 5 feet away from him.

"You must be a hungry bugger," he thought. He wondered vaguely what seagulls ate in the wintertime. The wind was really beginning to blow, and he could feel the cold through his thin jacket as he pulled it tighter around him.

When he looked at the bird again, the seagull was only a foot away from him. That's when he saw it.

There was monofilm fishing line wrapped around the bird's beak. There was no way he could open his mouth to get any food. Without even thinking, Harry reached down, and with a slow and careful movement, began to unwind the line. Carefully, slowly, until the bird's beak was no longer encircled with the fishing line.

It all seemed like slow motion, and it seemed to Harry, later, when he recounted the event to his wife, that he and the bird were the only two beings on the beach that cold and overcast day. He was very surprised that the bird, being a wild animal, had not been startled or tried to fly away when Harry reached out for it. He would always remember the look in the bird's eye - very steady but not afraid. When the line was removed from the bird's beak, it just flew away.

Harry just sat there afterwards, almost hoping that the bird would come back. Checking his line, he saw that the bait was gone. He started to bait his hook, then really looked at the hook, felt the sharpness of the tip. He remembered reading in a conservation magazine that the most sensitive part of a fish was its mouth, and thought how much it must hurt before it dies.

He pulled up his pole, broke it down and removed all the line. He put the line inside his tackle box, and carefully closed the box with a snap. Walking to the end of the pier, he dropped pole and tackle box into the large, filthy trash can that stood on the far end. He just walked away.

Harry always remembered that day, and when anyone asks him about that story, he says that the bird came to him because it needed help, was starving to death and knew that he would help. As for his fishing, Harry says the last time he went back to that pier he just hung an empty line into the water, and read a good book he had brought along with him.

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**"Fun fact - alcohol increases
the size of the "send" button on
your computer by 89%."**

Heidi Jennings, Woodville

Uncle Bill, the Bootlegger

by Charles Martin

The first memories I have of my uncle Bill was when I was about nine or ten years old back in the 1920s. I remember spending the night with my cousins and being awakened at all times of the night when people would knock on the door. After a few minutes whispered conversation, my uncle would give them a bottle in a brown paper bag.

At the time I supposed I just assumed my uncle had a lot of friends. It was several years before I realized he was a bootlegger.

Uncle Bill sold moonshine. He would buy several gallons at a time and dispense it in half pint and pint fruit jars. Friday nights were always his busiest time and us kids were warned to stay out of the kitchen. Sometimes we would sneak and watch what was going on. I remember a bunch of men drinking and playing cards. I don't remember there ever being any trouble.

Uncle Bill had a small room built on the house, next to the kitchen, for a bathroom, only it wasn't a bathroom. There was a commode that fed into a wash tub under the house. When he got raided he would pour the liquor down the commode and after the law left he would retrieve it and bottle it again.

One time he got raided and he just barely had time to pour the booze down the commode. After the deputies had searched in vain and were about to leave, one of them excused himself, saying he had to go to the bathroom.

I hope Uncle Bill didn't bottle that whiskey again.

Another time he was walking into the house carrying a glass gallon jar of moonshine when deputies

sneaked up on him. Thinking fast, my uncle threw the jar with all of his might against a large rock. Instead of breaking it simply bounced off the rock like a rubber ball and rolled to where one of the deputies was standing.

As the deputy picked up the evidence, it slipped out of his hand and fell to the ground, shattering into a million pieces.

With no evidence they could not arrest Uncle Bill.

We all knew what he did for a living but, somehow, it just didn't seem that bad back then. I don't remember him ever saying a curse word or raising his voice.

Aunt Jemma never talked about her husband bootlegging. She always referred to it as "Bill's business." The only argument I ever recall them having was when Uncle Bill confiscated two boxes of canning jars that she had purchased.

Family legend has it that when he died Aunt Jemma put a half pint in his coffin.



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A DIFFERENT THANKSGIVING

by Jean Brewer McCrady

I remember a lot of things about growing up at Harvest but with one exception - I don't remember what most of our Thanksgiving Days were like. One Thanksgiving Day, in 1947 or '48 was different from all the rest, whatever they were, or were not.

It was a bright sunny day, and the land owner of the cotton field between the old Harvest Church of Christ and Mr. Clint Smith's house (directly across Wall Triana from the present new Church of Christ) took advantage of that fact.

In those days, when cotton was picked by hand, the harvesting took three stages. There was the regular season, September and October, when picking was at its prime. You could fill a sack without covering much ground, even if you packed 80 or 90 lbs into a 7-foot sack like my sister and I did. The prime season usually consisted of two pickings (three if all conditions were right).

Stage two was called scrapping. That's when the open boles were thinly scattered, and fast pickers like we were could almost rob the burrs of their fluffy locks without ever coming to a dead stop. The third and final effort to squeeze the last bit of value from the crop was called "pulling boles", a literal description of the process. By this time in the season, the crop had endured many rains, a few frosts and limited sunshine, and the burrs were too damaged or rotten for the cotton to be separated from them. So the pickers pulled boles and all because even in this condition, there was some salvage value at the gin.

On this memorable Thanksgiving Day, Mr. Shiny Tuck, the referenced land owner, made the Brewer family an offer that Mama and Daddy couldn't refuse. I don't remember how much per pound we were paid, but I do remember the promise that when that particular field was stripped clean, we could quit for the day

no matter where the sun was. The mission was accomplished and we were destined, we thought, to tackle other fields on Friday and Saturday. But someone else had other plans.

We awoke on Friday morning to a 3 or 4 inch blanket of snow. I don't know who was happier, Mr. Shiny because he got that large field laid to rest, or the Brewer Kids because we didn't have to do the other fields. I also don't remember how we filled those two bonus days, but you can be sure it was with some kind of productive work. There was not much idleness nor leisure around our house, except on Sundays.

That is not a complaint. I wouldn't change that approach to life even if I could, because learning the value of hard work from an early age has served me well. At age 86, I still find more satisfaction in work than in play – even if it's a job that needs doing on Thanksgiving Day! On this Thanksgiving Day I will be giving thanks that I am still able to work. Though I will admit, I'm happy that pulling boles is no longer among the tasks that I am called upon to do.

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1890 NEWS IN HUNTSVILLE

\$5000.00 for Flirting

John Turner, a thrifty grocer, has filed suit asking that Miss Etta Thompson, a pretty young lady in town, be required to pay him \$5,000 for flirting.

He had been keeping company with the young woman for some months, but she gave him up for another.

Referring to his suit Turner said: "This is not a breach-of-promise case, but a case for damages. I don't like flirting, and I am going to show people that this country is a very unhealthy one for that kind of business. I have been fair with the girl. I told her that I detested flirting and when I started keeping company with her I told her that I did it with the intention of marrying her. I had every reason to believe that she wanted to marry me, too. Now she has gone to flirting with other people and I intend to punish her for it."

Heard Around Town

- Henry Hone, white, who resides in the northern part of the county, had been lying in jail for sometime now on a charge of being unlawfully married - he having a living wife, was turned loose yesterday on bond for his appearance at next term of Circuit Court. Both his wives are expected to attend.

- Charlie (Buck) Monroe, after several months absence, has returned to the city and will in future be associated with his brother, D.C. Monroe, in the tonsorial line at the McGee hotel. Both of these young men are competent and skilled artists in their business and will please the public with their work. They extend their friends a cordial invitation to call on them.

"I know there are people who don't love their fellow man, and I hate people like that."

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"We'll be friends until we're old and senile. Then we'll be new friends."

One senior to another

Falling Leaves (1958)

by Bill Alkire



It was a cool late October morning in the lower eastern Appalachian Mountains. The air was crisp, the sky was azure blue and contained only a slight white puffy cloud. The sunshine warmed our souls as it heated the earth. If any place on earth proved there was a God, it had to be here.

The leaves were at their very peak color: God had provided us a magnificent palette. This was indubitably the best of nature. "Life is great" Myla panted next to me as we lumbered down the narrow path I had walked as a young boy. I love being here in the post-dawn hours, as the birds begin to awaken. We used this time to talk, laugh, share dreams, an occasional hug and make plans for our future.

We talked little as we walked briskly, mostly I panted from the effort to hasten the

pace she had chosen. There were many leaves on the ground. Leo would have been pleased. All at once we ran through what seemed a blizzard of falling leaves. The slightest wind creating swirls of leaves lifting them side to side, back and forth as they made their journey to the warming earth. Leaves fall randomly even when there is no wind as though they are waving goodbye to the hot summer.

During my sojourns as a younger man I had often tried to catch a falling leaf before it reached the earth, but my efforts had always been futile. I breathlessly wheezed out my tale to Myla. Always ready to accept a challenge, Myla ran ahead effortlessly and almost comically snatched a fluttering leaf from the air, using both hands. Grinning in triumph she looked over her shoulder at me and held her trophy high for me to see.

Myla waited for me to catch up, then honored me by presenting me with her hard-won prize, proclaiming;



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King Charles of England was convinced that his black cat brought him luck, and he carried his pet everywhere. When the cat died, Charles reportedly cried that his luck was gone; the next day he was arrested and later beheaded.

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Tony Guthrie, Owner

"You cannot wait for it to come to you Bill. You have to pick one out and go after it." I was struck by the profoundness of Myla's words realizing that her acclamation for success applied to life's challenges as well.

We already knew there would be challenges ahead, we were no longer children and not kidding each other. When you are young as we were then, the world turned slow and the obstacles we faced sometimes fade from view much like the transition from summer to fall. If only we could glimpse into the future, planning would be much easier, and we would be more successful.

I am generally known as an organizer and planner. I have always had plenty of dreams and ideas, some of which could possibly be fruitful, but the fear of failure always kept me from proceeding.

Myla's words made me realize that conquering fear by grabbing opportunities within my reach could change that. By breaking free of inertia and focusing on preconceived goals

and putting in that extra effort one could realize success.

Life is full of falling leaves that are ours for the taking, but we must exert a little effort to capture them; they do not come to us. They may come close, but you must use your abilities and talents to achieve your dreams.

This morning, I was walking alone over a similar narrow path and awed at nature's magnificent beauty. Leaves once again showered about me, and my mind wandered back to Myla's "leaf wisdom." I selected a fluttering candidate, focused, and after a couple of failures, managed to clumsily catch a vivid red maple leaf to my chest with both hands.

The leaf's journey had led me away from my original path, just as in life, but only a short distance. I held that leaf tenderly all the way home, cherishing my prize possession and success. God had provided me the opportunity to learn and develop in a setting that was as close to him as one could be.



"I don't fall asleep on the job. I over-think myself into a coma."

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Memories are Forever

by Bill Wright

My Mother would often say, "When you do fun things with your young children, you are building memories that last forever."

It was on a beautiful autumn day many years ago when I took my two young sons to their first college football game. The oldest son was eleven years old and the youngest was eight years old. We drove to Tuscaloosa to watch the University of Alabama play. It was a year when the legendary Paul (Bear) Bryant was the head football coach at Alabama.

We arrived in Tuscaloosa early that Saturday morning. Both sons were very excited to watch their first college football game in a stadium. Arriving early, I gave them a brief driving tour of the campus. I then took them inside Bidgood Hall where I had several classes years ago. We went inside one of the rooms where I had taken classes. It was a plain classroom with nothing fancy about it. The desks appeared to need replacing. However, the oldest son admired the classroom like it was a piece of art and said, "This is where I will go to college." He held to that statement seven years later when he enrolled as a Freshman in the University of Alabama.

After a lunch in Morrison's Cafeteria, we walked to the football stadium which was one block away. We probably arrived one hour before the start of the football game. Both sons were star-struck by such a large football stadium. Previously the largest football stadium they had been in was Milton Frank Stadium in Huntsville. I remember both saying "this is fun" although there was no activity on the field. Soon the stadium began filling with spectators, the players started warm-ups on the field and the band began playing as they entered the stadium. They were elated by the atmosphere.

Their favorite team won the game which added to the excitement. Once the game was over both sons said they wanted to wait outside the players' dressing room and watch the players as they exited the stadium. I was not thrilled by the idea because it would delay us leaving at least

one hour. However, something told me to do it, so I agreed to their desire.

While waiting for the football players to exit the stadium the eleven-year-old son said he was going to get Coach Bryant's autograph when he came out of the stadium. I explained to him that would not be possible because Coach Bryant would be surrounded by State Highway Patrolmen. Also, I told him he did not have a pen or paper for an autograph. He then reached into his pocket and pulled out a ball point pen and a small note pad. Obviously, he had planned this before we left home.

Soon Coach Bryant exited the football stadium and was surrounded by about eight State Highway Patrolmen. They had formed a circle around Coach Bryant with arms locked. As they were walking away the eleven year old son bolted towards the moving circle, dropped under the locked arms of the Highway Patrolmen and was walking with Coach Bryant inside the circle. Coach Bryant gave him an autograph as they continued walking. My son then dropped below the locked arms of the Highway Patrolmen and returned to me, saying "I told you I would get his autograph".



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We Get Electricity

by Robert French, Jr. P.C.



It was a milestone day when TVA ran electricity through the small houses on the property. The big house, barn, pump house and other necessary places had electricity, but the small houses that had been vacant, or used by field hands, did not

have service.

There were three TVA electricians who came to our house. They took green and yellow cloth-covered wire, drilled a hole in the side of the house and ran the wire through. They came inside and stapled the wire up the wooden walls, across the ceilings and left enough for a drop cord and light bulb. A socket was wired on. They screwed in a bulb, and put a large brown switch near the door where the wire ran up the wall. They did this in all four rooms. Now you might think this was unsightly, but to us, those wires were beautiful.

The men then went outside and put a meter where they had drilled the hole in the wall. One of the men went back into the house, turned a knob on the switch and we had light. We had electricity! It was a happy day in the French household. We no longer went to bed at sundown and got up with the chickens. It was a totally new freedom. Electricity was great!

Before the electricity, our greatest entertainment had been sitting on the small porch at night looking at the flashing light on the hotel in Huntsville.

The hotel had been built sometime during the 1920s and was pretty close to 12 stories high. It may have been the tallest building in Huntsville. "Russel Erskine," it would flash in red, then "Hotel," with a red arrow pointing down. My mother told me what the sign said as it flashed red for all to see.

I would say, "Russel Erskine Hotel," in cadence with the light, over and over again until I would tire of it, and then do it again the next warm summer night.

Now, we had lights! Soon we would have an electric stove, an electric iron and even a radio. With electricity, times were definitely improving.

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TIMELINE OF THE HUNTSVILLE TIMES

by Lawrence Hillis



I have often wondered how the newspaper got its name. Obviously, it came from something like new information in a printed form. Therefore, it should be new or recent information. Sometimes I don't read the paper until the next day so it is still recent news to me. We still receive the newspaper at our house even though you can find up to date news or recent information on the TV, radio, or the internet. However, most of their reporting is slanted or biased. I enjoy picking up the paper and reading a hard copy, but some of their reporting is also biased. I keep in mind who those reporters are and skip their articles most of the time. Sometimes when getting

halfway through a news article which is reporting about many people, I lose track of who they are, I have to go back to the beginning to recount their title or how they are involved.

The Huntsville Times was first known as Huntsville Daily Times and it's first newspaper was printed on March 23, 1910. They were in a building at the corner of Holmes Avenue and Greene Street which was Metropolitan Avenue at the time. The owner was Jason Emory Pierce who also was the editor and publisher. By 1917, the paper moved to a building on Washington Street.

Many local people would stop by the building to read the World War One news on the paper's bulletin board.

In 1925, Mr. Pierce published information that a new high-rise building would be constructed at the corner of Holmes Avenue and Greene Street. The 12 story Times Building was completed in December 1928 and the paper moved into the new modern high-rise building. To make sure it was the tallest building in town, they added a penthouse on top to make it taller

than the Russell Erskine Hotel. Pierce was proud to advertise that his new printing press cost \$100,000. Their printing presses were in the basement.

I remember walking down the sidewalk next to the Times Building on Holmes Avenue and looking into the basement through glass plates in the sidewalk. The building is an art-deco style structure and is now known as the Old Times Building and is on the National Register of Historic Places. Can you imagine how many rolls of paper were delivered to that building and how many newspapers were printed?

Due to the Great Depression when the sale of newspapers dropped sharply, the company defaulted on a \$200,000 mortgage payment and the Times was turned over to federal receivership in June 1931. By October 1931, Victor Hanson of the Birmingham News outbid the Anniston Star on the Madison County Courthouse steps for the Dailey Times. The Dailey Times flourished under the ownership of the Birmingham News.

In 1951, the new editor Reese Amis changed the paper's name from The Dailey Times to The Huntsville Times be-

"I'm very good at opening child-proof caps - if I have a hammer and a pair of pliers."

Karl Peters, Huntsville



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cause it was only printed six days a week instead of seven days a week. Back in the 30s and 40s young men called "paper boys" would pick up a stack of papers and walk around downtown and sell them on the street or step inside barber shops, cafes and other businesses to sell their papers.

In December of 1955, S. I. Newhouse bought the Birmingham News, Huntsville Times and a radio station for \$16.1 million. As the staff grew, the Times moved to a larger building located at 2317 Memorial Parkway in 1966. Currently the office building Times Plaza is located at that old location.

In 1960, the first Saturday edition was printed and circulation reached to 35,000 by 1962. In 1966 there was a large expansion and a new 96-page Hoe press replaced the old equipment.

On March 16, 1973, due to a huge rain and a historic flooding on the Parkway, the paper was printed in blue ink. Black ink which was stored in the basement was ruined, thus fittingly the paper was printed in blue. Delivery grew from 65,000 in 1970 to 80,000 in 1996.

The staff was so large that almost everyone in Huntsville knew someone working at the Times all the way from writers and reporters to proof readers and delivery people. When I was directing road races in the 80's and 90's, the Times was always very willing to accept articles about race results. But we had to immediately get the results to them, they didn't want old news. I remember talking to sports writers sitting in small smoke-filled rooms pounding on their typewriters. They gave us plenty of exposure about future races.

For a while, Jim Oaks with the Huntsville Track Club and former teacher, cross country and tennis coach at Huntsville High had a weekly column about running and racing.

For years, I especially enjoyed the human-interest stories written by Bill Easterling. He printed a collection of them in several books among them are *Voices On A Cold Day* and *A Locust Leaves Its Shell*. Mike Kaylor kept us in tune with what was going on in Huntsville. John Pruitt, Ron White and Skip Vaughan did a great job reporting sports. Currently, I enjoy columns by Beth Thames and Kelly Kazek which are not political and cover grass roots subjects. I don't know how they can come up with so many ideas to write about.

For 32 years, the Huntsville Times had a sister morning newspaper the Huntsville News which was located on Clinton Avenue. It closed down on March 15, 1996. On September 13, 2004 after 94 years as an evening newspaper, the Times transitioned to a morning delivery.

On October 1, 2012, after 102 years of continuous daily delivery, the Times changed to a Sunday, Wednesday and Friday printing schedule. The Times merged with 24-hour digital news AL.com and is now located in the former Central Bank Building at 200 West Side Square. Their process for printing newspapers is so streamlined these days that they print the papers in Birmingham and still deliver to our door step early in the morning in time to read during breakfast.

According to the Times website, its online edition AL.com is estimated that an average 97,708 readers view the paper and website daily. The average Sunday readers are estimated at 143,641.

In all aspects of life, a lot has changed over the years. We now read electronic media and get daily posts and trending stories on our cell phones. Past generations would not believe how easily we have instant access to all news, sports and weather. But to me it is always enjoyable to sit down and read from a paper copy newspaper or magazine such as the Old Huntsville magazine.

**"Whenever I go running, I like meeting new people.
Usually paramedics."**

Jeb Harris, 86 years old, Guntersville



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A FAMILY FUNERAL

by Thomas Frazier



It rained the day they buried my Grand-Daddy.

All the family was there, dressed in their store-bought clothes and smelling of Palmolive aftershave and Avon perfume.

His children stood at the gravesite, along with his grandchildren and great-grandchildren and in-laws and outlaws. He would have been proud of most of them, and ashamed of a few. The tears came easily to the women folks. Casting-subtle glances about them to make sure they were being observed, they let their bodies become racked with convulsions as the tears streaked the make-up they had applied an hour before. They clung to one another tightly, as if seeking refuge in their grief, and called one another brother and sister and cousin.

Over to the side stood the men, silent, feeling awkward at this strange display of emotion. With their hands jammed deeply into the pockets of the newly purchased clothes, they felt helpless while they watched the hired man shovel the wet red clay back into the grave from which it had come.

Finally it was over, the soil was back in place and the bright, garish flowers stood like silent sentinels next to the newly engraved tombstone.

There was nothing else left to do.

The men stepped forward, now with a purpose, this was something

they could do, and offered their worn, ruffled handkerchiefs to their wives and sisters and led them back to the waiting cars.

After the funeral the family gathered at the home of one of his daughters where they had cold-cuts and potato salad for lunch. The make-up was back in place now and the crying was over. The women all seemed to compete with one another as they talked about their children's schools and their husband's jobs.

Even the men seemed to have forgotten about Grand-Daddy as they squatted under a shade tree and talked about cars and jobs in Chicago and Mary Ellen's boy getting sent to jail.

No one paid much attention to me except to tell me to fetch them another soda pop or hand them the ash tray. I was only thirteen years old and pretty unimportant. I was too young to tell stories with the men and the women kept telling me to go on outside and play.

"Pull those new britches off," my aunt said, "and change into some old ones before you go outside to play."

I walked out to the barn and when I was sure no one could see me, I began to cry. At first it was softly, silently. And then, in an almost uncontrollable fury, my whole body was seized by the pent up emotions of that morning.

I cried for the memories that I had, and the memories that would never be.

He was my Grand-Daddy and no one cared.

EVERY MINUTE COUNTS



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GOING TO
BE GONE
ONE DAY.
MAKE THE
MOST OF
EVERY
MINUTE
YOU HAVE
WITH YOUR
FAMILY &
FRIENDS.

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OSCAR LLERENA

Tips from Friends

*These are presented for your reading entertainment
- always check with your doctor before taking
anything new.*

* If you have a hard time finding your home door key on a key chain full of other keys, just use some bright red nail polish and paint each side of the key (not on the part that goes into the lock) and you'll save time!

* Tiredness collects on the insides of one's elbows and the backs of one's knees. Wake up your body by slapping both those areas.

* If you feel sluggish in the morning it may be your gallbladder. Try drinking 3 tablespoons of fresh lemon juice in half a glass of warm water, a half hour before breakfast - do this for a week and see if you feel better.

* Add radiance to your red hair right after you shampoo by pouring a cup of strong Red Zinger tea through your hair, leave it on for 5 minutes & rinse.

* It has been proven that people who eat 2 apples a day have fewer headaches than those who don't eat the fruit.

* White grape juice is said to absorb the body's acid, which adds to arthritis & gout. Drink 1 glassful in the morning and one before dinner.

* Instant reviver for hot flashes - rush to the fridge and open both the freezer and fridge side. Put your face inside til you feel normal again.

* If you suffer a bruise, peel a banana, discard the fruit and place the inside of the peel against the bruise and tape it down for the night. This really will help.

* Positive energy is inhaled through the right nostril. Put a piece of cotton in your left nostril and breathe through your right nostril for an hour. You will be revitalized and your brain will be working again!

* Keep wipes in your car to clean your steering wheel frequently.

* Get out in the fresh air and WALK - get exercise - BREATHE.

* Throat pain? Gargle with warm salt water, red wine or white vinegar. DONT swallow. It might prevent it from going down to your lungs.

* The Doctors say to make sure to get Vitamin C, zinc and magnesium.

* Put a wet wipe that has at least 60% alcohol in a sandwich bag -put in purse or pocket - anywhere you go to eat wipe fingers after using menu and before you eat

* Watch the Weather Channel - it really helps to lower your blood pressure.



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**My wife makes the budget work.
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really don't need.**

NOVEMBER MEMORIES

by Elizabeth Wharry

My husband and I were married in November 1986. We met the previous February and were engaged by Easter of 1986.

Our wedding day dawned bright and sunny. For northern Ohio, especially in mid November, that was quite remarkable. That wasn't the only unusual occurrence that day. Most wedding days are a bit of a blur, but this day stands out clearly, even now.

To begin with, my mother and I refurbished a hat she had. The morning of the wedding,

the glue wasn't quite set. I ended up styling her hair around it! I had told her earlier that morning not to mess with the hat.

I had brushed some of the feathers with a final coat of fabric glue about an hour before. My mother insisted on trying the hat on. She was reluctant to let me see the dress she was wearing.

When I saw it, I understood why. The dress was a kelly green and black print. The black was much more predominant than the green.

When we got to the church, we were informed that we were between two funerals. A black dress, a feathered hat and now this? I'm not superstitious, but alarm bells were quietly chim-

ing. And where was my maid of honor? She was supposed to be at the church by 11:30!

She got caught behind the funeral procession heading for the same church! She arrived with 5 minutes to spare! Fortunately, the wedding went off without any more drama.

When we got to the reception, my new mother-in-law pulled us aside. She handed us an envelope with the words "deed" and Rob on it. Both of us were curious. When we opened it up and read it, it was a deed to two grave plots adjoining theirs! How does one respond to that?

I muttered a weak thanks.

35 years later, despite all that life has thrown at us, we are still hanging in there.

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PET TIPS FROM ANGEL

Winter Safety



Along with proper nutrition, several factors will help ensure the health and comfort of pets during the winter. Pets of all ages should be in good body condition prior to and during winter months to withstand colder temperatures. Providing the special care your pets need during cold weather may require extra work, but helping ensure their well-being and comfort makes it well worth the effort.

As the temperature falls, cats and dogs need more food. On the average, dogs require about 7.5% more food for each 10 degree drop in temperature. Feeding your pet twice a day may help ensure that he gets enough food. If you do change from once-a-day to twice-a-day feeding, do so gradually over a 7 - 10 day period.

During cold weather, pets should have fresh, unfrozen water available at all times. Adding warm water to a dry dog food diet can help make sure the dog's water intake is sufficient.

Even animals acclimated to the outdoors have trouble during the winter. Please do not leave a dog or cat who has become accustomed to a warm house outside. If you are uncomfortable, certainly your pet is as well. Older animals and nursing mothers and their babies need special attention and, if possible, should be brought inside.

For animals who must spend any time outdoors, adequate shelter is a must. Keeping pets dry and protected from winter winds is essential. Dog houses should face away from the wind, have warm, dry bedding such as clean straw, and have a doorway that is covered by a rug or some burlap.

Our animal friends give us so much, the least we can do for them is provide the necessities to ensure their safety, health and happiness - not only in winter but all year long.

Tips and Reminders

* Antifreeze poisons small children and pets. Wipe up spills promptly. If you suspect poisoning, seek medical attention immediately.

* Warm auto engines attract cats. Remember to bang on your hood to scare away any furry friend who may be inside.

* Talk to your veterinarian about vitamin and oil supplements to help keep down your cat's dander due to dry indoor heating. Long coated breeds of

dogs should be groomed all year round. Coats should be kept a little longer in winter.

* Keep holiday lights, decorations and tinsel out of the reach of pets. Parts of these holiday traditions can be toxic if eaten, and may harm pets who become entangled in them. Ornaments can break into tiny sharp slivers.

* Resist the urge to give too many rich treats to your pet. Feed your dog before guests arrive and give him a big nylon bone to keep him engaged.

* And very important - Please don't give a pet as a gift unless you are sure the animal is wanted. Heartache can be spared animals and humans alike if the recipients have the opportunity and joy of choosing their own pet.

Birds Must Breathe!

Please remember to keep your feathered friends in mind when you are entertaining during the holidays. Scented candles, plug-in room fresheners and smoking can all be harmful to birds. Most pet birds are confined and cannot escape if their breathing space becomes dangerous. Remind your guests to be considerate of your feathered family members. I never realized that those oils that you burn in vaporizers can actually smother indoor birds.

Be kind to your outdoor birds and scatter around a bit of sunflower seed or bird seed when the weather gets cold!

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Across from Books A Million

The Miracle Worker

by Tom Carney

In the late fall of 1958, a strange caravan pulled into Huntsville. After erecting a large tent on an empty lot near Washington and Pratt Avenue they immediately began passing out handbills throughout town.

"Religious Revival," the handbill read, "Come see the sick healed and miracles performed before your eyes."

Traveling revivals were nothing new to Huntsville. Almost yearly, miracle workers or religious healers would appear in town to stage week long revivals promising to heal the bodies and save the souls.

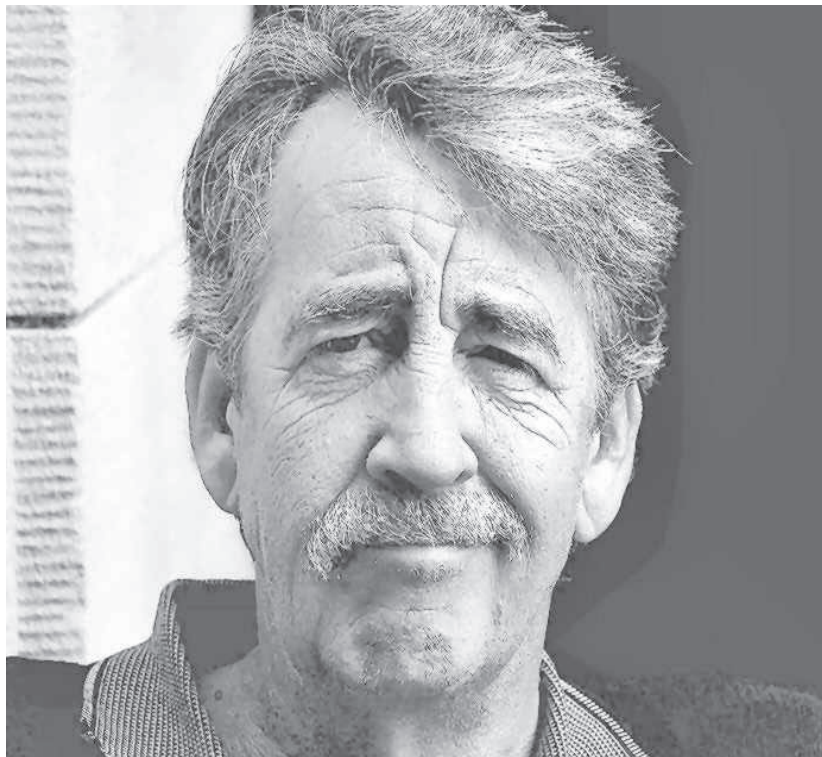
This revival troupe, however, was different. Just how different soon became apparent when Huntsville got a good look at the newest miracle worker.

A tall man, slim with dark hair, Preacher Ramone was clad in a stylish suit, crafted from light burgundy satin, heavily inlaid with gold brocade. According to the hand bills handed out, he was known all across the country for his miraculous healings and there were also testimonials from people claiming to have witnessed the events.

He was just different enough to stir the curiosity of Huntsville's natives. The first night there were maybe 15 or 20 people scattered throughout the large tent, waiting to be healed, saved or amused.

The revival opened with Preacher Ramone giving a passionate plea to the faithful. After working himself to a feverish pitch, he motioned to his helpers waiting in the wings. Slowly, with a chorus of singers clad in bright red costumes singing softly in the background, the helpers rolled a coffin onto the stage.

Just as the choir finished and with everyone in the audience waiting to see what would happen next, Preacher Ramone raised the lid of the coffin to reveal a body. "Folks," he cried out. "I promised you a miracle and I am going to show you one! We're gonna pray over this body for



7 days and 7 nights and on the 7th night the body will rise from the dead."

Needless to say, the next night the tent was almost full of expectant and curious people staring at the body lying on stage.

Of course, Preacher Ramone did not neglect to take contributions. Every few minutes a plate would be passed, with the preacher exhorting the people to help him continue in his work.

The tent was full on the third night, and overflowing by the fifth. On the sixth night, police had to be called to help with traffic control. The plates that had been passed around the first nights were now replaced with dishpans, then buckets, and even they were not large enough to hold the money donated by the thousands of people who were now showing up each night.

Photographs of the coffin, with the body, were sold for \$2 apiece and for an extra donation, one could actually go up on stage and place their hands on the coffin. For another \$1 the people could have their picture taken with Preacher Ramone, in all of his burgundy glory.

Early on the morning of the seventh day, people began flocking to town from points all over North Alabama. Eagerly they gathered in the field around the tent, waiting, and talking about the miracle scheduled to happen that night. By 5 o'clock in the evening the crowd waiting was estimated to be over 4,000 people.

And they waited.

Finally, around 8:00 p.m., a small delegation took it upon themselves to enter the tent to see what was holding up the revival. The chairs were still in place, the coffin still sitting on the stage, propped in an upright position ... but the body was gone!

So was the choir, Preacher Ramone and thousands of dollars that had once belonged to Huntsville's citizens.

The following week, a creditor from Louisville, Kentucky, showed up with a court order to repossess the tent. Preacher Ramone was never seen in the area again and no one ever knew what actually happened to the body.

WINTER IN THE COUNTRY

by Charita Smith Avery



Let me begin by saying I am a city girl, I grew up in Lincoln Village in northeast Huntsville, where I lived until I married at age 19. My husband, Buddy, had lived in the country for several years and really liked it, so we bought a house in Harvest. During some of the winters there, we had frozen water pipes; and, more than once, we ran out of propane gas for our gas floor furnace. I can recall our being closed up in one room for days, using a small electric heater to keep warm because they could not deliver our gas.

In 1972, just after the birth of our only child, we built a house closer to town but still in the county. Buddy did most of the work to build us a beautiful two-story home on a hill surrounded by woods. His dream house had been a two-story on a hill. He always declared that you could take the average house from the city, move it to a hill in the country and it would look 100% better. A house on a hill is nice, however, the hill can be, and was in our case, a problem in winter. Our concrete driveway was about 100-125 feet long and, when covered with ice, it could be a real challenge to drive on. Our son had a sled so he loved the hill when frozen because it was a perfect place for sledding.

“You can’t win. When you finally get too old for pimples, you go right into wrinkles.”

Bessie Malone, Athens

When we first moved to our new home, we had a drilled well with a pump house, which we called our barn. One winter the water pipes coming out the back of the barn froze and Buddy used a blowtorch to thaw them. In the process, he caught the back of the barn on fire. After extinguishing the fire, he came in for lunch, and when he looked out to check on it, the fire had flamed up again. It was such a blessing when the county ran water lines down our road. I don't recall having frozen water pipes after that.

When Buddy died in 2014 (our son had died in 1990), I was left all alone in our home of 42 years, completely surrounded by woods; and, it became a very lonely, scary place for me. That winter we had a fairly large snowfall and the driveway froze, so I was stranded. Even if I slid down the drive, I wouldn't be able to get back, except to walk. A close friend decided she would rescue me, so she drove to my house, stopping at the bottom of

the drive. Wearing boots, I walked through the snow on the grass to get to her car because there was no hope of walking on the icy drive. I stayed at her house a couple of days, which was a good break from being stranded on that hill. After arriving back home, a friend's son came over to help me work on cracking and clearing the ice from the driveway. It didn't take me long to decide I never wanted to spend another winter there alone — and I didn't.

After much prayer and help from my nephew, I found the perfect house for me in the city near where I had grown up. Even though I lived in the country for 53 years, I still classify myself as a city girl and feel right at home where I now live. I realize there are some people who would live nowhere but in the country; but, as for me, I have no desire to ever live there again.

As they say, you can take the girl out of the city, but you can't take the city out of the girl.

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Memories

*by Mrs. Lola Henley
Recorded in 1995*



I was born in 1898, in a two room log cabin near Paint Rock. My Daddy grew cotton and tobacco. One of my earliest memories is my Mother carrying me to the fields and placing me on a blanket in the shade of a tree while she helped Daddy in the fields.

By the time I was 6 or 7 years old I had to help in the fields, too. Daddy made me a cotton picking sack out of old pillow cases and I helped pick cotton. My other job was fetching water for the field hands. My cousin and I were both expected to pick a certain amount of cotton each day. One day, realizing we didn't have enough, we decided to put some heavy rocks in our bags to make them weigh more.

When Daddy got home from the gin he took a belt to both of us. We learned later that the rocks had torn the gin up.

Daddy also raised honey bees. After he robbed the hives every fall he would take the honey to Huntsville where he would trade it with Mr. Harrison (Harrison Brothers Hardware). We also dug ginseng to trade in town.

Going to town was always a big event for us. The night before Daddy would load the wagon with crock jars

full of honey packed with straw so they wouldn't break. The next morning we would get up before daylight and after Daddy had hitched the wagon up, we would start for town. Mother always placed a quilt behind the wagon seat and I would curl up back there listening to all the honey jars rattle.

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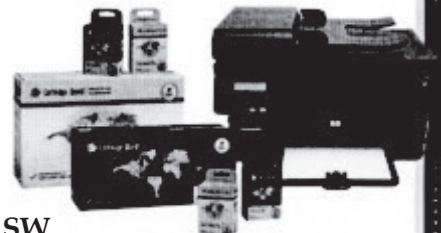
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About lunch time we would stop at a creek to eat our biscuits Mother had prepared the night before. There was a wooden box nailed to a tree next to the creek where people would leave messages for other people. Lots of times people would leave a note asking you to pick up something in town.

Our first stop in town was at the Big Spring. All the people from out in the county camped out there when they went to town. Daddy had a piece of canvas he would make a tent out of, and that's where we spent the night. It was always great fun with all the campfires and everyone visiting back and forth.

The next morning we would hitch the wagon and take the honey up to Harrison's (Harrison Brothers). Daddy and the man who had the store would always argue and shout for what seemed like hours and finally they would make a deal. We got paid in half cash and half trade out.

Next we would look up a man by the name of Foster, who always bought our ginseng. He didn't have a store or an office, but was always hanging around the Courthouse Square. He would look at it real carefully and if he liked it, we would go to another place where they would weigh it.

While Daddy got supplies from Mr. Harrison, Mother and I would go shopping at the other stores. I still remember the first store-bought dress I ever had. Before that they were always made from flour sacks.

Someone later told me they had deer in the Courthouse yard back then but I don't remember it. The only thing I remember about any animals there is stepping in mule droppings and Mother washing my shoes under the pump. There were lots of pigeons too. I remember you could throw a piece of bread on the ground and hundreds of pigeons would fight over it.

Once Daddy carried us to a hotel for dinner and we had oysters. Daddy liked them but Mother and I got sick.

Most times, however, we just ate at the Spring whatever Mother cooked. The next morning, before the sun came up, we would start home.

"I found your nose. It was in my business."

One "friend" to another



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Ruby



Hello, my name is Ruby. The vet says I am about 2 years old and that I am a boxer mix. I have been at the Ark Animal Shelter since April 2021. A kind lady found me on her back porch and brought me here. She told the volunteers at the Ark that I was very friendly and loved to be petted. When I came in I had very red and sore feet but the Ark sent me to the vet who said I had a skin infection and an ear infection. The vet fixed me up and gave me medicine for my skin and ear and now I am ready to be adopted. I don't like other dogs much but I love people

and I know how to sit and shake hands, I really enjoy my baths. I am a very sweet girl. The people here are kind to me but I would love to have a family of my own. I'm sure we will get along well. Will you come to the Ark and see me?

A No-Kill Animal Shelter

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"I'm so old that when I go out to eat now they ask for the money up front."

Ron Eyestone, Madison

Games We Played

by L. D. Rogers

A couple of the best games that we played was Tag and Kick the Can and we played them in the street at night. Kick the Can became popular during the 1930s during the Great Depression because you could play with just an empty can from your mother's kitchen. A 15 ounce can was best.

There are several different ways to play the game and this is how we played it.

Boys and girls would gather in the middle of the street under a street light. Then you choose a person to be "it". Everybody runs and hides while "it" counts to a predetermined number. Then the person that was "it" would start looking for the players and when they saw one they would call out the person's name. Then that person is caught and would go to a holding pen that has been set up. But if a person could get to the can and kick it without being seen, everyone in the holding pen was set free.

My daddy and mother would watch us play from our front porch that went all the way across the front of the house with chairs and a swing. One thing I have to say about my daddy is that he was a fine story teller. So after we got through playing most of the kids would end up on our front porch. Mother would have made lemonade or Kool-Aid and everyone would enjoy that. Then one of the kids would say, "Mr. Rogers, tell us a story!" Then all the kids would join in wanting daddy to tell a story. And most of them would say, "Tell us a ghost story!" And that would set it off.

Daddy had several ghost stories that he had learned growing up in Alabama and he didn't mind sharing the stories with this bunch of eager kids. By the time daddy had told a couple of his ghost stories about half of the kids were afraid to walk home. That was the next thing we had to do, walk some of the kids home.

Another thing that all the kids enjoyed on our front porch were the sing-alongs. Daddy would lead us and some of the favorites were, "Old McDonald Had a Farm" and "Row, Row, Row, Your Boat". One of my daddy's favorites was "Go Tell Aunt Rhodie the Old Gray Goose is Dead". Looking back it was a lot of fun and I guess you could say this was one of the first "Mr. Rogers Neighborhoods".

"If you've never met the devil on the road of life, it's because you're both heading in the same direction."

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I Miss My Old Friend

by Stanley Mitchell



I don't know why but one day I decided to ask him to lunch. Guess it was because I knew almost everybody in his family. His son was my dentist and he was always there. His daughter sold me advertising and his grandson worked in the warehouse at my carpet store. He quickly accepted my invitation to lunch. He couldn't get into my truck, it was too high, so we always went in his old Cadillac. He had a new one in the carport but we never went in it.

I miss my old friend. We would go nearly every Wednesday. We would talk about anything and everything. He was very proud of his family. Always bragging on all of them. He would tell the same stories and I would listen like it was the first time.

Fireplace Tip

There will be less need to scrub your fireplace if you throw salt on the logs every once in a while. This reduces the soot by at least half and your kids will love the colors of the flames!

I miss my old friend. Always fussing about Publix doing away with senior discounts. "They are losing a lot of business," he would say.

I told him about washing the windows outside on the old Clinton Building and every time we passed it he would say, "There is ole Stanley out on that ledge." And he would say, "I don't know how you did that!" "Me either," I would say, young and dumb.

He was a child of the Depression. He always cleaned his plate. I told him when I was a child we always put our scraps in a slop bucket for our hogs. I told him a damn hog would starve to death around him!

I miss my old friend. He was a proud University of Alabama graduate and every year for his birthday one of his daughters would decorate his lawn with elephants and Alabama things.

Anytime someone would hold the door open for him at a cafe he would always say, "Your mother raised you right!"

I miss my old friend.

Rest in Peace, Dr. Sam Citrano



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THE RUMBA BOWL

by C. Lee Stewart

In 1937 the Great Depression was at its worst. Many well-to-do Americans took what wealth they had and moved to Cuba to survive the economic collapse. For a pastime they would hang out at 'Sloppy Joe's Bar'. It was a popular American gathering place in Havana. Ernest Hemingway also spent evenings at Sloppy Joe's enjoying a libation or two.

There was a lot of chatter at the bar about an upcoming football BOWL GAME that was to be played in Havana.

In 1936 after Auburn's last football game of the season (the Auburn team of 1936 won 7 and lost 2 games) they were invited to their first bowl game. They were invited to play Villanova in the Bacardi Bowl which was thereafter called the Rumba Bowl. The game was to be played at the LA Tropical Sta-

dium in Havana, a promotional bowl which was to last one day, New Years day, 1937.

There was a good flock of local Americans attending the game, but only a handful of Cuban spectators who had never seen a football game and were not at all impressed. The Cuban's favorite sports were: Baseball that started in the 1870s, Cock Fighting, Boxing and Bullfighting which was banished by the U.S. after the Spanish-American War in 1901.

Late in the game a donnybrook (fight) broke out between Auburn and Villanova. As the squads began swinging fists, the Cuban spectators became alive and were shouting and cheering the teams on. The Auburn Tigers and the Villanova Wildcats played to a 7-7 tie.

January 2nd, Birmingham News Sports Editor Zipp Newman reported: "Auburn and Villanova inaugurated the steaming Rumba Bowl game with a seven - all deadlock here on New Year's Day. Billy Hitchcock streaked 40 yards for the Plainsmen's touchdown in the first period. Auburn played in extremely hard luck and should

have won by two touchdowns. Someone observed that this occasion is the only one on record where two US teams played a bowl game on foreign soil."

The next season Auburn was invited to an established bowl for the first time. They were invited to play Michigan State in the 1938 Orange Bowl. Coach Jack Meagher (1934-1942) and the Auburn team were out to win after the Rumba Bowl tie with Villanova in 1937.

During the 1935, '36 and '37 seasons Shug Jordan was Auburn's line coach under Coach Meagher. Only one team managed to score more than two touchdowns on Auburn during that period.

Shug became Auburn's head coach in 1951. Auburn became the Orange Bowl Champions beating Michigan State 6-0. Although the score was low, Auburn completely dominated the entire Orange Bowl game. Michigan State only made two first downs. Ralph O'Gwynne scored the Tiger touchdown.

Source: Birmingham News, Sports Editor Zipp Newman "Soaring Eagles" by Tom Little



The Auburn Team



News from 1875

- Someone broke into the smokehouse of John Giles and stole all the meat he had, except just enough for one day's rations for his family. Not long ago some villain killed one of Mr. Giles' cows, skinned her, took the hide and left the meat. The culprits will most likely meet their fate one night when they rob the wrong person.

- Huntsville was left in total darkness last night, because of the flooded condition of the gas works.

- Building lot for sale - one of the most desirable lots in the city, adjoining the City Brewery and one block from the Huntsville Hotel. 80 feet front by 190 back. Price \$700. Well fenced, good stable, fruit trees and grapes on the lot. Terms -1/2 cash, balance in 12 months. Contact Christian Fromm at the City Brewery

- Public Library - S. D. Cabaniss Jr. has supplied a need long felt in Huntsville - a public Library. It is an elegantly fitted up room in the rear portion of his book store, in Col. Hundley's new building, opposite the Huntsville Hotel.

- Halsey's Carriage shop, corner of

Green Street and Meridianville Pike, has an elegant display of Phaetons, Rockaways, Spring Wagons and buggies.

- We hear of a couple living in Guntersville who have thirteen children, the oldest of whom is ten years old. Six pairs of twins are among the number and all the thirteen are girls.

- D. B. Young will open an English and Classical School for Boys at his residence on Franklin Street on Monday. Terms: \$4, \$5 and \$6 per month, payable monthly. Strict discipline applied.



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