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Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY



Remembering The "Devil" of the Mountains

The people of the Tennessee Valley had good reason to fear the man known as the "Devil of the Mountains."

William Monroe Evans, during a span of almost thirty years, terrorized the Tennessee Valley by killing, hanging and burning anyone or anything that dared to stand in his path.

Not even the Yankees, under General Mitchell's command, would be guilty of such savagery and cruelty.

***Also in this issue:* David Milly Lights the Stars; Winemaking; Monte Sano Railroad; Tom Sawyer and the Space & Rocket Center; Chataqua in Huntsville; Pratt Avenue Stories; Natural Gas; Southern Summer Recipes; Pet Tips and much much more!**

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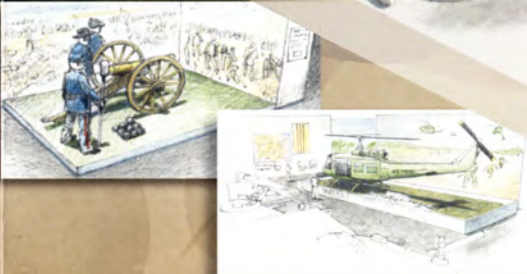
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The Legend of "Devil" Monroe Evans

by Tom Carney

The people of the Tennessee Valley had good reason to fear the man known as the "Devil of the Mountains."

William Monroe Evans, during a span of almost thirty years, terrorized the Tennessee Valley by killing, hanging and burning anyone or anything that dared to stand in his path. Not even the Yankees, under General Mitchell's command, would be guilty of such savagery and cruelty.

Evans was born on the Madison-Marshall county line around 1842 to a family that history has forgotten. From the few accounts available it seems as if his family eked out a living on a few acres of land where they worked halfheartedly at growing a garden and raising a few pigs. The farm,

if it could be called that, was located in the mountains now overlooking Lake Guntersville.

Evans learned at an early age that the mountains, almost completely inaccessible and hidden from prying eyes, was a perfect place to hide any livestock that happened to become separated from their rightful owners.

Finding the life of a brigand more to his liking than working on a hard scrabble farm, he quickly embraced his newly chosen career. Gathering about him a few other miscreants and establishing a base camp in the hills, he soon established himself as the leader. The years preceding the Civil War were good ones for the band of budding desperados. Money had no real meaning to them as there were few places to spend it in the hills. They were content to rustle an occasional steer, and driving it back into the mountains, slaughter it when they were hungry. The remainder of their time was spent lolling about the crude shacks and lean-tos they called home and drinking the cheap homemade whiskey they concocted.

If ever the need for hard money arose, all they had to do was to sneak into the outlying areas of Huntsville, New Hope or Guntersville and burglarize someone's home.

At first, the citizens were content to post guards, but try as they might, they could never

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James Henley



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catch the outlaws in the act.

Evans seemed to find this highly amusing. Repeatedly, after confiscating some beef from its hapless owner, he would appear in town the next day as if daring someone to speak out against him.

Showing up in New Hope one day, after a particularly successful foray the night before, Evans began to taunt a farmer whose cattle he had stolen. The farmer was afraid of Evans, and as the outlaw realized this, the more brazen his abuse became. Finally the farmer, unable to take anymore, mounted his horse and left town.

The whole incident might have ended there if Evans had left town too, but instead he chose to stay, along with his comrades, and spend the day drinking.

Late that afternoon with the sun still shining brightly, the brigands wobbled out of the saloon and staggered to where their horses were waiting, when all of a sudden their drunken revelry was interrupted by a loud shout.

"Evans, I want my cattle back!"

It was the farmer and in his hands, pointed straight at Evans, was a shotgun.

Evans made a sudden move, and when he did the farmer blasted away. Although the shot missed Evans, it tore a gaping hole in the shoulder of one of his men. As Evans stood there unharmed, a cruel and vicious sneer spread across his face when he realized the farmer's gun was now empty. Slowly raising his pistol toward the defenseless farmer, Evans was heard to mutter, "self defense," as he cold-bloodedly killed his first man.

Whereas before Evans had been a troublesome thief, now he was a killer. Many people later said that with his first taste of blood he had become the devil incarnate. With his hideouts in the surrounding mountains it was not long before he became known as the "Devil of the Mountains."

At first Evans seemed to relish his newfound notoriety. The people in the surrounding communities, never overly fond of him, now shunned him completely. Men

that at least had tolerated him before, now hung their heads and made excuses to leave whenever he entered a building.

This only served to enrage Evans and drive him to further extremes.

With no friends except his motley gang of brigands, Evans became embittered, some people claimed, at the whole human race. A person could look at Evans in a quizzical manner and find his barn burned the same night, a bartender who refused to serve him might end up with a load of buckshot in his back.

The law was helpless. With no witnesses or evidence there was little the sheriff could do. Anyone who spoke up against Evans was destined to feel his vengeance.

When the Civil War broke out there lived in the northern part of Marshall County a man by the name of John Dickey; a man who was known for his hatred towards his neighbors. After federal troops took control of the area north of the Tennessee River, Dickey offered his services to the union commander. Dickey's hatred for his own people was wrongly



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"When you're in jail, a good friend will be trying to bail you out. A best friend will be in the cell next to you saying, 'Damn, that was fun.'"

Groucho Marx

interpreted as patriotism to the Union, and so the Yankees commissioned him a captain of scouts with the power to organize a company to operate in North Alabama.

This new company was composed mostly of men who had deserted the Confederate army or had been dodging conscription. Many of these men were also wanted by the law.

Lured by the opportunity to pillage and plunder at will, Evans joined the company and found to his pleasant surprise that he was in his element. John Dickey and "Devil" Monroe Evans cut a swath of vengeance across the valley that would terrify even their own band.

Men were dragged from their homes and murdered, some of them in the presence of their families. Volney Eliot was shot in the back, Alfred Clark was hung near New Hope, Davis Russell was shot and his body cruelly mutilated. Fletcher Lewis was found hung a few miles outside of Huntsville.

For most of them, their only crime was crossing paths with "Devil" Monroe and John Dickey.

The Confederate army was powerless to stop these atrocities and the Federal government refused to help. Evans, Dickey and men like them, the federals reasoned, were helping the northern cause by keeping the rebel sympathizers in check.

By war's end, Evans and Dickey were the most hated men in the Tennessee Valley. Although legally operating under the auspices of the federal army, they had committed no crimes. The ex-Confederate soldiers returning home saw things differently.

John Dickey, deciding discretion was the better part of valor, pulled up stakes and

moved to Texas. Evans, with his small band of cut-throats, retreated into the hills above New Hope in anticipation of impending retribution.

An uneasy truce seemed to prevail for a while. The people in the valley stayed out of the mountains and Evans rarely if ever went to town. When he did, he was always carrying his shotgun.

Again, the whole affair might have ended there if Evans had not become smitten by a comely young lass on the outskirts of town. Soon he became a regular visitor to the young lady's farm in an attempt to woo her hand. The girl's father had no use for Evans. He repeatedly told his daughter that he would never stand for Evans marrying her as long as there was any life in his body.

To Evans, that was talk he could understand.

Riding up to the girl's home late one afternoon, he killed the father and carried the girl off into the mountains.

The good folks of New Hope were outraged. A mob began

to gather and there was talk of bringing Evans to justice. The sheriff brought them back to their senses. "No one witnessed the shooting except for the daughter," he said, "and if Evans is married to her now that means she can't testify."

In public, the men agreed with the sheriff but in private they had other ideas....

It wasn't long before Evans and his wicked ways came to the attention of the local, night-shirted gentry known as the Ku Klux Klan.

According to popular legend, the Klan placed a two hundred dollar bounty on Evans' head and within days, he was playing dodge the bullet whenever he wandered down from the hills.

This was more than Evans' pride could bear. Calling his men together he laid plans to dynamite the Masonic Hall and the Methodist church, both strongholds of his enemies. Fortunately for the townspeople of New Hope, word of the scheme leaked out and before Evans could



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act, warrants were obtained for his arrest.

After several long and hard days in the saddle the posse cornered Evans and his men near the present-day city of Arab. The pack resisted arrest and in the ensuing gunfight several gang members were shot to death.

Evans escaped, though severely wounded. He hid in the mountains until his injuries had healed sufficiently enough to allow him to travel. Deciding that both Madison and Marshall counties were dangerous to his health, he moved his wife and what was left of his gang to the mountains of Morgan County.

Cast out of the hills that he called home and with no friends, Evans began to look for other means of solace. It didn't take him long to find what he was looking for.

Cloaked in the veil of religion and casting himself as a modern-day Gabriel out to rid the world of wickedness, Evans proclaimed himself a converted man ... a prophet of God.

Of course, cattle and hogs kept disappearing and he still carried the same shotgun wherever he ventured.

Traditional religion must have weighed too heavily upon his shoulders. Instead of spending his time in church spitting hell, fire and brimstone, he began to have visions.

"God," he said, "has told me to punish the non-believers."

This punishment usually took the form of larceny, to the delight of his slovenly gang.

Next he had visions of many wives.

"God," he said, "has instructed me to take more wives so that our truth might be spread."

"Devil" Evans believed in practicing his newly discovered religion and it wasn't long before there were seven wives living in his shanty, with a multitude of miniature devils playing in the yard.

It would be satisfying if we could, at this point, record that "Devil" Evans became a changed man, but

alas, if anything, he became even more cruel. Despite his many wives (or maybe because of them) he began spending more time with his gang of brigands.

And now, with a Bible in one hand and a shotgun in the other, he considered any livestock that wandered his way "donations for the Lord's work."

Evans would call on some hapless farmer, and with his shotgun lying across the saddle in front of him, inform the man that he would surely die and go to hell unless he saw it in his heart to make a sizable contribution.

Every grand jury that was impaneled between 1875 and 1891 tried to indict Evans for his many crimes, but through perjured testimony and intimidation of crucial witnesses he managed to overcome their every effort.

Many people began to think that the "Devil" was truly invincible. In the summer of 1891, Evans and his son John were once again out collecting "contributions". Unfortunately Pierce Mooney arrived in time to catch the duo burglarizing his home.

Mooney pulled a gun and began firing as father and son headed for the hills. The following morning Mooney was ambushed as he was feeding his livestock. Although in

"I don't think twice about picking up after my dog, but if another dog's poop is next to it, I think, 'Ewww, dog poop!'"

Jillian Goldberg

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critical condition he was able to crawl back to the house, where his wife sent for the doctor.

Evans knew Mooney was in critical condition so he waited in hiding for the doctor on the way to the patient's house.

The physician, after being warned not to attend the wounded man, made as if he was going back to town. Instead, he cut through the woods and returned to the house by another route.

Next Evans and his son tried to run Mooney's wife off. Hiding in the woods they fired their weapons at the house and in a loud voice warned her that if she did not leave, she too would be shot.

Meanwhile word had reached town of the dastardly attack and the "Devil's" attempt to silence the witness. That same afternoon Evans' son rode into town to pick up some supplies and was promptly arrested and carried to Baileyton for trial.

When Evans received word of his son's arrest he mounted his horse and carrying his shotgun, rode into town. For once his shotgun was of no help. He was seized by an angry mob and placed in an empty store building under guard until the authorities could decide what to do with them.

Late that night, August 15th, 1891 a mob of almost two hundred people approached the store and demanded custody of Monroe Evans and his son.

The guards offered no resistance

The condemned men were tied up and marched outside to the nearest tree limb.

Devil Evans departed this world with a curse on his lips and the gleam of a fanatic in his eyes. His son, John, began crying and begging for mercy as the noose was placed around his neck.

According to one account, seconds after the hanging took place a violent thunderstorm swept over the valley, with horrendous claps of thunder and solid sheets of rain pulverizing everything in its path.

"The Devil," they said, "is taking his due."

The next week the following item appeared in the "Alabama Tribune" newspaper:

"Rube Burrow was shot down by Carter and his name was lauded to the skies as a hero. Ford, in a most cowardly manner, shot and killed Jesse James but the state of Missouri paid him large sums of money. Both of these men had some redeeming qualities. They were true to their families and true to their friends. But this man had none."

"He was not true to his country or his family. But the men who relieved North Alabama of the presence of this man are called by some misinformed persons, brutes and murderers."

"Evans' poor wife is in a better condition. The man who wrecked her life and educated her son for the gallows is gone. She will no longer be insulted by the presence of her husband's harem."

"His gang is scattered to the four winds and peace and order have taken their place. The last stronghold of the devil in the Tennessee Valley has been destroyed and the people say 'Amen'."



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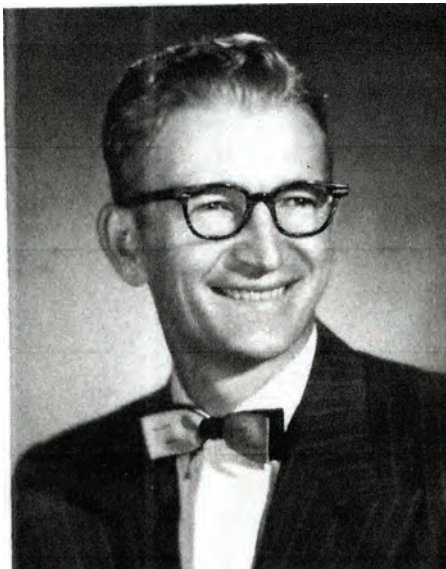
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MY FATHER'S DAUGHTER



by Sue Cross

If any of you regular readers read the May issue (Mother's Day) that contained a true story about my Mother (Emma Jean Jones), I felt it only fair to honor my Daddy (Herman "Frosty" Jones) on Father's Day with a true story about him that took place in my wonderful magical childhood during the late 50s in my cozy little town of Junior, West Virginia. Here's my story:

I was in the third grade. It was late October and Halloween was fast approaching. All of us kids were planning our outfits and the best houses to go to for the best treats. Some families gave away 5-cent candy bars!!! We were all so excited and full of plans. The week before October 31, I came down with chicken pox and I was covered from head to toe, fevered, so sick, and itching so bad I thought I'd go crazy - yet still begging Mother and Dad-

dy to let me get dressed up and go with my friends. Of course, that was not possible - but to an 8 year old, I still tried.

My wonderful Daddy came up with a plan - he would dress up and go door to door for me and explain how sick I was. I still remember watching him get "all dolled up". He pulled up his pant legs and hid them under one of my Mother's housedresses, a pretty pink floral shirtwaist under which he had stuffed several pairs of his socks in the bodice area for a full affect. Then he put on one of her aprons, her Easter bonnet on his head, several colored beaded necklaces to match the dress around his neck and big clip earrings under the hat.

Then came the make-up: black eyebrow pencil, face powder, bright red rouge on each cheek and ruby red lipstick to complete the look. He looked like a clown, but he was my clown and I loved every minute of this adventure. I for-

got all about feeling so bad. I was one happy little girl, absolutely thrilled to death that my Daddy would "fix the problem" no matter how humbling it was to him (as he always did my entire life). He took a purse of Mother's and collected lots of goodies for me as he explained my situation to our neighbors.

Everyone got a good laugh. As I look back on all the Halloweenes in my childhood, that is the only one I remember as being so special - all because of my Special Daddy. He was a wonderful, kind and loving man who left this earth and me on December 26, 1993.

There is still and always will be a big hole in my heart that only he could fill. I proudly say that I am truly my Father's Daughter. Thank you Daddy.

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Turn to the experts

The Birthday Party



by Iolanda Hicks

This story begins around summer-time and at the end of a school year, at the later part of the 1950s. My Mom, Dad, sister and I were living in a post WWII house on Hastings Road in what is today referred to as Mayfair. This two bedroom home was a few houses down from Dunegan Lane, two lanes of gravel and pot holes. Over the many years, this two-laner was slowly metamorphosed into Drake Avenue. I have many memories of well-spent years in that little house, which now no longer exists, replaced a few years back with a two-story, modern home. I don't know how that house, twice the size of the original, got squeezed into that tiny lot, but it was done!

I had several friends I played with who lived throughout this small neighborhood and I never lacked for entertainment. In fact, sometimes I would forget to check in with Mom, while playing outside somewhere and would get into big trouble! Almost directly across the street from our house, a family lived there with two children: Angela (slightly older than me) and her younger brother Randy. I enjoyed going over to Angela's house and playing. She had such great toys!

One particular year, she was going to have a very special birthday party, inviting a bunch of kids and I was one of them. I couldn't wait for the day. I should have known, though, that something was going to happen that would burst that bubble. Of course, it would be the fault of my younger sister, Dianne. I was always getting into more trouble because of her than the trouble I got into by not checking in with my Mom and Dad. Dianne always did the opposite of what she was told to do and was ALWAYS touching things that she wasn't suppose to touch!

Just a few days before the anticipated, fantastic birthday party, Dad asked me to watch my little sister and to make sure she didn't get into anything mischievous, devious or destructive. Well, I got busy straightening up some of my stuff in the bedroom that she and I shared. Dianne was quiet and busy. I could hear her humming. Time seemed to fly and about an hour had passed since Dad has turned over the reins to me as "the sister watcher". Suddenly I heard my Dad yell my name (and it wasn't in a loving tone). As I walked out of the bedroom towards the living room, I saw Dad standing over my sister, looking straight ahead at the hall wall. Along 4 or 5 feet of that wall, Dianne had taken her crayons and had drawn a magnificent mural of some kind of landscape using all of her crayons!!!

My Dad was so angry. He looked at me, teeth clenched, very beet red and told me that now his weekend would consist of painting the hall wall. He would not be relaxing from his week of having to work overtime! He looked at me and said "Since I am being punished because you did not watch your sister as I asked, you will have to accept the consequences of your actions. You will not be allowed to go to your friend's birthday party. Maybe next time you will do as I ask."

I was broken-hearted. I said to myself that it just wasn't my fault. I started crying and couldn't stop and for solace, ended up behind the corner couch in the living room. I fell asleep. As if I wasn't in enough trouble already, hours later, I woke up, hearing someone crying. I slowly raised my head to the back, top of the couch, and saw a fireman standing, talking to two people on the couch. The two people happened to be my Mom and Dad. Mom was the person crying. The fireman was talking about someone that just couldn't be found but his men would keep searching. That's about the time I opened my mouth and said "Momma why are you crying? What happened?" My Mom let out a scream, grabbed my shoulders and pulled me up over the back of the couch. She smothered me with hugs, kisses, saying over and over again "My girl is OK, my girl is OK!!"

I suddenly realized that I had caused "a lost kid search" and no telling how many people were involved in that search. I must say, though, for a while after that fiasco, Mom and Dad sure treated me nice. I didn't have to worry about my sister for a while either. Actually, it really turned out to be a most rewarding time in my young life even though I DID miss the birthday party of the year!

Ginger Ale (1965)

by Bill Alkire

I feel compelled to introduce you to something I like, with hope that you will also. What I am referring to, from my limited understanding, is a product developed from the War Between the States, in short, the Civil War. Now my intentions are just, not a rehash of who did what, or whom to place the blame.

The Civil War officially ended April 9, 1865, with General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia surrendering to Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant at the McLean house near the Appomattox Courthouse, in Virginia. My intention is not to labor with discussing this further. The message I want to proclaim is something I have developed a taste for, and I want to encourage you to like as well.

The Confederate Army doctors discovered, on the battlefield of the Civil War, the healthful properties of a tonic made with ginger. This tonic was used for war-weary soldiers; it was a popular drink for those men.

Ginger root is the underground stem of the ginger plant. It has a long history of medicinal and health uses; especially problems related to the digestive system. The Confederacy had issues with food spoilage and dysentery, and the Ginger tonic helped greatly.

Ginger's anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties help aid in relieving headaches, upset stomach, severe migraines, nausea and has heart health properties. This is due to the natural compounds found in ginger. Ginger Oil is a natural source of antioxidants compounds that protect cells from damage that can lead to disease. The best type of Ginger Ale for you depends primarily on your personal tastes. Ginger helps your health, and varieties of Ginger Ale have more ginger. To choose a healthier Ginger Ale, you must be assured that the product is made with real Ginger, not artificial. Concentrate on the ingredient listings for the sweeteners used and the content. When looking for the best Ginger Ale, the bold flavor is important to maximize its healthy properties.

As with innovative ideas in the early 1900s, Buffalo Rock Ginger Ale was born at home, in the basement of a Birmingham Alabama Grocery Company. Grocer Sidney Lee concocted the gingery beverage in 1901 from a tonic formulated by Selma, Alabama, pharmacist Ashby Coleman to soothe upset stomachs.

But it was Lee's addition of carbonation to the tonic's sweet spice that soon made it popular as

a zesty refresher in the sweltering heat of an Alabama summer, a spicy mixer in a Prohibition Era full of illegal liquor and a delicious beverage. The drink was so popular at the turn of the century that the Buffalo Rock Company was launched in 1901 (just 36 years after the war ended).

I have found this Ginger Ale to have a bold flavor, legendary Southern Spice, and crisp refreshment of the classic southern formula. My personal research has shown more than a century worth of Ginger Ale connoisseurs agree that Buffalo Rock Ginger Ale offers the sweet fiery kick that sets the standard for golden Ginger Ales.

The unique southern flavor has been referred to as "the fire-baton-twirling majorette of Ginger Ales". It is a sweet, spicy, audacious brew like no other. It does not taste like lemon and lime sodas with a hint of ginger. This is authentic - spicy, crispy, fiery, refreshing brew, straight out of Alabama.

To answer the questions about "Where and When", let me explain. The first time I drank Buffalo Rock Ginger Ale was in 1965 (100 years after the War Between the States).

I worked for an A & P Food Store in Virginia, and we received a delivery of fifty cases of pony bottles of Ginger Ale and Cream Soda. I was mesmerized by its taste.

The next opportunity was a double treat; I ate breakfast at Aunt Eunice's Country Kitchen on Jackson Way in Huntsville, Alabama and she served this bold, spicy drink.

A southern tradition that will make your eyes light up, and your tummy say "It IS that good!"

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From 1877 Newspaper



A local paper relates this interesting story. During one of the last summer's thunderstorms, lightning struck a barn near the town of Pensacola, Florida. A stork's nest, in which there were some young fledglings, was threatened by the flames.

The two parent birds contemplated the horrible situation from a distance with evident distress. At last the mother bird darted down upon the nest, and, seizing one of her young family with her beak, bore it off to a safe spot upon a meadow. The father followed her, and settled down to keep watch over his offspring.

When the mother returned to the scene of danger the fire had reached the nest, in which one bird still remained. But while she was flying around it, preparing for a descent, the young one fell through the charred nest into the burning barn. There was no moment for thought. Down darted the mother into the smoke and fire, and, coming up with the fledgling in her beak, flew off, apparently unhurt.

On the next day a wounded adult stork fell to the ground in the marketplace. She was unable to stand, and the policeman who found her carried her into the guardhouse, where it was discovered that both legs were sorely burned, and she was recognized as the heroic mother who had done the brave feat of rescue at the fire in the barn. A physician was sent for, and the policeman found her a temporary home.

Meanwhile, the spouse of the sick she-stork had discovered her whereabouts. He attended diligently to the two young ones, and paid daily visits to the mother, as if to inform himself how the patient was getting on, and to assure her that their children were doing well.

The school children of Pensacola readily charged themselves with the task of finding food for the patient, bringing her everyday far more than the necessary number of living frogs. The Mayor paid an official visit every day to the sick guest or to the municipality, to make sure that the doctor's orders were duly carried out, and in less than a fortnight the bird was sufficiently hale to fly away to her mate and children.

"Last week my house caught fire. My wife told the kids, 'Be quiet, you'll wake up Daddy.'"

Rodney Dangerfield

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HOT. HOT. HOT. This is a summer to remember with the heat index over one hundred so many times. Thank goodness for air conditioning and fans. Growing up in Huntsville with no air conditioned cars or homes, I don't remember it ever being so hot. It helps to have a sun-shield to cover the dash and steering wheel in your car. Plain cardboard works, but those silver-on-one-side reflective things work better. I forgot mine the other day and the heat from the sun hitting the steering wheel was so hot it burned. Better to run errands before the heat of the day.

With school starting back this month be sure to watch the speed limit signs and slow down, having no reminders we seem to forget to slow down. The crossing guards are there to help our children cross the busy streets and they do an excellent job working rain or shine. They are always there.

Thinking of schools starting back, the children these days don't know how lucky they are for air-conditioned classrooms. No schools, including East Clinton where I went, were air-conditioned, and there were no fans in the rooms, so it could get sweltering inside in September. I often wondered why each teacher didn't bring her own fan to her classroom. That's what I would have done. Unfortunately, windows didn't open up, they

pushed out, so air circulation was minimal.

Recess was the highlight of our day. Outside in the shade or a tree was cooler. But we still enjoyed activities like the monkey-bars and jungle-gyms. Some swings went really high, and the small and large slide gave our stomach thrills. Most fun of all was the metal merry-go-round. When I go to schools these days, all that fine equipment has been taken away.

They are afraid of injuries and lawsuits. I don't ever remember anyone ever getting hurt at recess, unless a skinned knee. Oh well.

With football season starting up and the weather so terribly hot, make sure your child has plenty of water and sport drinks available. The heat can cause all kinds of health issues.

Free to Teach needs school supplies for teachers this coming school year. When you are out shopping, please pick up an item or two to help our teachers. They really appreciate all the items donated.

With school starting back on August 4th and not as much traffic at the beaches it is a good time to plan a vacation if you are a couple with pre-school children. The rentals are less expensive and the lines to get into restaurants take less time and can be much more restful.

Enjoy the rest of your summer and keep cool.



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David Milly - "We Light the Stars"



by John H. Tate

One of five children born to aerospace engineers - his mother an aerospace specialist and his father a civil engineer - David Milly grew up surrounded by science and precision. All four of his siblings became engineers or top-tier scientists. David, however, chose a different path.

He isn't an engineer or a scientist, but he lit up all of Huntsville. He gave the Jackson Five dance pointers and lit Taylor Swift's performance at Big Spring Jam in 2007. (As legend has it, Taylor was paid \$1,000 to open for LeAnn Rimes. After her set, a large portion of the crowd left.)

But let's not get ahead of ourselves. Who is David Milly, and why should you know him? David has been part of several successful businesses in Huntsville, with products and services distributed nationwide. David has helped shape Huntsville's multi-entertainment landscape for decades, and his influence reaches far beyond the city - our focus here is on how he lit up his hometown.

David's first job was at Winn-Dixie/Kwik-Check in Haystack Square when he was sixteen. That experience laid the groundwork for his leadership style and his approach to managing people - principles that guided him as he went on to employ thousands.

One Saturday, he was assigned to clean the store bathrooms. Hours passed. The manager checked in, wondering what was taking so long.

"Three or four hours later, I'm still cleaning," David said. "The manager asked, 'What in the hell are you doing?' I said, 'You told me to clean the bathroom, and it's dirty.'"

It's a funny story, but to David there was a deeper lesson: "I would tell everyone I hired, that's how I want you to approach your job. If I say clean the bathroom, clean it the best you possibly can. If you overdo it, I'll let you know - but if you under-do it, I'll definitely let you know."

David learned two key lessons: He had high standards, and employees will work hard for a boss they respect. Over the years, more than a thousand people worked for him - and most remembered that bathroom story.

When asked about not following the engineering tradition in his family, he quipped, "I knew I wanted to be a boss, a businessman - and if I needed an engineer, I'd hire one."

David earned a business degree from the University of Alabama in Huntsville (UAH), working multiple part-time jobs along the way. One of those jobs turned into his first real business success and would leave a lasting impression on Huntsville.

While active in the Student Government Association at UAH, he managed the campus Entertainment Series - booking speakers, and performers, and coordinating events. Part of his responsibility was ensuring the lighting, sound and staging were in order.

For this, he hired a local company called Luna Tech, run by Tom and Amanda DeWille. The DeWilles were impressed with David, and David was fascinated by their work. After graduation in 1975, he joined Luna Tech as a partner.

He didn't have money to invest, but his strong work ethic




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(remember the bathroom?) earned him a sweat-equity stake. He became a 25% owner of Luna Tech, Inc., a growing pyrotechnics, staging, and lighting company. Luna Tech built a name for itself in the entertainment world. The list of shows they supported is extensive - just to name a few: Johnny Cash, Jimmy Buffett, The Oak Ridge Boys, Parliament, Earth Wind & Fire, Blue Oyster Cult, Kiss, Michael Jackson - and many more.

A favorite story is when David gave the Jackson Five dance pointers. He tells it like this:

"In 1976, we met the Jackson Five at Boutwell Auditorium in Birmingham. Our Luna Tech company had created handheld devices so each of them could shoot flames from their fingers at a specific point in the show. I had one for each of the brothers. The manager had everyone gather around me on stage."

David stands as he tells the story. "So I'm showing them this thing. I showed how the button worked to shoot the pyro. Then I started dancing around to demonstrate. I said, 'You'll dance like this - and then boom, you push the button!'"

"When I looked up, they were all laughing. Michael was rolling on the floor. That was the end of my dancing lessons for the Jackson Five."

In 1981, Luna Tech split. The company continued with pyrotechnics, while David founded Theatrical Lighting Systems (TLS, Inc.). He opened his office on Church Street, near the old Dilworth Lumber site. TLS stayed there until 1989, when the 1-565 project forced a move to Meridian Street.

TLS lit shows for major acts who visited Huntsville. Just a few names: Dr. Hook, Dixie Chicks, Ray Stevens, Hank Williams Jr., Mercy Me, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Percy Sledge - and many others.

While David is proud of all the stars TLS lit for, his greatest pride comes from how he lit up Huntsville. With passion, he recalls:

"We worked with all the local arts groups - Fantasy Playhouse, the Arts

Council (Panoply), Huntsville Little Theater, Huntsville Ballet, and many more. We lit all five stages of Big Spring Jam - all nine years. We lit the outside of the bank building in Big Spring Park, the water tower at Lowe Mill, the Early Works Museum, and hundreds of high school theaters."

Among the thousands of lighting projects David and TLS, Inc. completed, three shine brightest for locals. First, the Living Christmas Tree at First Baptist Church. Second, the Christmas Rocket at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center. And third, the lighting of the bank building overlooking Big Spring Park - one of his final major projects before selling TLS, Inc. to 4 Wall Entertainment in 2012.

David married his current wife DeAnn in 2015. When asked what impressed her most about him, she shared a sentiment echoed by many:

"He's always willing to help," she said. "He's supported so many groups in Huntsville. The most touching thing is when people stop us - on planes, in restaurants - just to thank him."

When asked if he had a message for readers of Old Huntsville Magazine, David thought for a moment and replied:

"Huntsville is home to some of the most intelligent people in the world. Yes, I've had a small impact on the city - but it's a community, with everyone doing their part."

TLS, Inc.'s slogan was "We Light the Stars." And indeed, David Milly and his teams lit up events, venues, and buildings - but most importantly, they lit up the hearts of the people in Huntsville.

Thank you, David Milly.

"I made some good deals and some bad ones, but really went into the hole with this one."

Seen on gravestone in Scottsboro

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Albie

by Cathy Bridges

Reading so many cute stories about pets made me want to share my story of the sweetest cat that became all mine when he was 13. Albert (Albie) was a city cat that became a New Market cat. He belonged to my good friend the late Dr. John Higginbotham and various members of his family. I remember when Albie was a kitten. Although they had other pets, Albie was my favorite. He had a sister named Daisy. He witnessed Daisy being killed by a coyote when they were still quite young. Albie managed to run home, and I was told he was begging to come in and did not want to go outside for a longtime after that.

Albie was a gray and white Maine Coon with a few light brown spots here and there and he was a big boy, long and weighing around 16-18 pounds. Albie was such a handsome cat and quite a little gentleman. He would always greet our friends by rubbing against their legs and sometimes he would enjoy getting his ears scratched and some petting. Afterward, he would go to his favorite spot on the end of our bed. At night sometimes he would make his way up be-



tween us or on my pillow behind my head.

He did not like to be picked up but loved to stretch out on my legs when I was in the recliner reading. I am sure his arthritis was as bad as mine. I had noticed that he was walking slower lately. Sometimes he would scare me by wobbling around a bit unsteady. I have always loved animals. They are so much more loyal and loving than a lot of people.

I remember Dr. Higginbotham saying that Albie was a lover, not a fighter, and he was so right. Albie was the sweetest cat I have ever been around and he had such a soft little meow. Albie was a "talkative" cat. He would "talk" to me all the time. If his food bowl was empty, he would remind me

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just in case I forgot. Yes, he was quite a cat and I was so glad the day he came home with me. I enjoyed him so much.

One day when I was at the Higginbotham home, Albie somehow got a plastic grocery bag hung around his neck. He ran through the kitchen scared to death because of the noise being made by the bag. The bag was flapping behind him as he ran. The more it flapped the faster he ran. He did not like the sound of those bags after that. He would run if you were using a plastic bag for any reason. It was quite comical, but Albie did not think so.

After I brought him home it took a while for Albie to get used to my family and not being allowed to go outside. He had been de-clawed (front claws) as a kitten, so I did not let him go outside at all. There are a lot of dogs in our neighborhood, so he spent a lot of time in the windows looking out. Eventually, he got accustomed to not going out. He did not seem to get into playing with toys much, but he did love catnip and would roll around in it.

One day I caught him with his front legs down in a large glass jar we used for loose change. He looked so cute. First, all I could see was his furry hind legs and long gray tail. And what a sight he was, after almost halfway climbing into the jar. He was on a mission after a lizard that had gotten in the house and was in the jar of coins. Albie was trying his best to get it and he finally did, after having slapped it around so much. The poor lizard never made it out of the jar. His adventuring was over.

Albie passed away when he was 19. I stayed right with him until the end. I had enjoyed him at my home for about 6 years. He was a very special, one-of-a-kind cat. I miss him very much.

"I have learned that only two things are necessary to keep one's wife happy.

First, let her think she's having her own way. And second, let her have it."

Lyndon B. Johnson

Huntsville Chess Pie

8-inch unbaked pie crust
1/2 c. butter, room temp
1 c. sugar
2 eggs, separated
1-1/2 t. white corn meal
2 T. heavy cream
1 t. vanilla extract
Dash salt

Bake pie shell in very hot oven (400 degrees) til baked but not browned. Cream butter, sugar and egg yolks together. Add cornmeal mixed with the cream and vanilla. Fold in egg whites beaten with salt til stiff. Pour into pie shell and cook at 400 degrees for 5 minutes. Reduce heat to 350 and bake 10-12 minutes longer and filling is just set. If top browns too much put a piece of foil over top and finish baking. Serve pie while warm.

This is the actual recipe from an old Huntsville restaurant that was here in the early 1900's. It was reported that people would make special trips to Huntsville for it.

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Heard On the Street

by **Cathey Carney**



Our hidden item winner for July was **Robin Layne** of Trenton, TN. She was the first to call after she found the tiny cane I hid on page 45 in **Tom Carney's** ad for his book. Right bottom corner, see it now? I know many of you tell me the first thing you do when you get your new issue is to try to find whatever I've hidden, and it's not easy right? But there is only one first caller, and Robin was it. She is originally from Gurley, AL but taught school for 25 years in west Tennessee. She comes back to visit this area often though because she has friends and family here. Her sweet Mom is **Jean Layne** and Miss Jean loves reading about the history here too! Congratulations to you Robin.

The 4th of July turned out to be so devastating for so many Texas people. **Kerr County and Camp Mystic**, the young girls and counselors who were just celebrating and camping out. We have all seen what happened with the rising water and flooding and our hearts are just broken for the families and friends of those who lost their loved ones. So proud that Alabama through Kay Ivey was one of the many states who sent rescue and recovery teams to help in finding the missing children and

adults, an ongoing and difficult process. Prayers and love going to the families.

Thank you to our loyal readers who've kept us going for the past 36 years. As we cut back on the number of printed copies, they will still be at the same locations but there won't be quite as many. At the same time, digital subscriptions have increased quite a bit and these go all over the U.S. We've been through alot together over the years including a years ago recession, many postage increases, financial ups and downs, Covid, etc. but you've hung in there with us! Thank you for helping us to keep on going and as a small Huntsville company our goal is to keep it up!

Happy birthday to **Susan Coulter** of Truist Bank. Her big day is Aug. 21 and her grandson **Beau** celebrates his on Aug. 8. Her granddaughter **Vivian Clair Santos** turns 12 in August. And **Coulter T. Clark** had a birthday on Aug. 24th and turned 12. Lots of partying in that family during this month!

A good tip I heard from my plumber lately, if you want to save \$\$ on plumbing repairs, ditch the soft cushy toilet paper and get standard quality. The thinner TP goes down when you flush alot faster than the thick paper, with much less blockage.

Billy Lawrence would have been 81 on August 26 this year. Sadly he passed away last August and his wife **Phyllis** misses him so much. There's more about Billy and Phyllis in this issue.

My handsome son-in-law **John Troup** has an Aug. 15th birthday and it happens to be the same day that he will celebrate his wedding anniversary with **Steph Troup**, my daughter. Then my grandson **Hayden Troup** has an Aug. 25th birthday and he will be 25. So proud of them, including sweet grand daughter **Evan** who lives in Murfreesboro with Mom and Dad and a tiny dog named Charlie!

Dry eye management can be as simple as changing your habits and giving your eyes a little more love. Try the following dry eye-relieving techniques:

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Happy Birthday to **John Joseph Gerdeman** who has an Aug. 1 birthday. His sister is **Jane Gerdeman** who works at Truist Bank in Huntsville on Church Street, and she sends special love to her baby brother, the youngest of 11 children.

Many have experienced **leg cramps at night**, with severe pain and soreness hours later. It could be caused by anything from lack of calcium, or magnesium, or dehydration but it sure hurts while it's happening. I have heard recently that many oldtimers swear by pickle juice and say that as soon as they drink an ounce or two of it the cramps go away immediately. You can find just pickle juice in small containers now (I found some at Publix recently) and it may be a good idea to keep one of the tiny containers by your bed. It helps with digestion as well and you don't have to drain your pickle jar to get the juice!

My mom years ago taught me a way to see if you or someone else is **dehydrated**. On the top of your hand just below your finger knuckles there's a flat area. With two fingers pinch some of the skin that covers that area on your hand. If your skin stays in a pinched shape you're likely dehydrated and need to drink some liquids. If the skin is more elastic and gets back to normal shape you're OK.

Another tip that many don't know was given to me by my daughter Steph, the nurse. When you are to have **blood drawn** for any reason, be sure and drink a cup or two of water before the event. What happens is your veins puff up and are not so shriveled up (which happens as you get older) and it makes it much easier to get the needle in to get blood. It has worked great for me even if I have to fast before the bloodletting.

Many of us are still missing **Lewter's Hardware** downtown and just browsing through their store. Loved seeing the two cats who were always there and that's where I would get my flowers and vegetable plants for my spring and summer planting. The folks who worked there were the best and could always help you find what you were looking for. I have no doubt that there's a Lewter's in heaven so we'll be seeing them

again. In honor of Lewters I am hiding a **teeny tiny screwdriver** somewhere in the pages of this magazine. If you find it and are the first to call, and haven't won before - you win a \$50 year's subscription to Old Huntsville Magazine. Delivered to your door each month! So look for it but I'm pretty sure it'll be so well hidden by me that you won't find it.

August will be a HOTTTT month so take care of yourself, stay cool and drink lots of water. Check on your older neighbors, too.

It just occurred to me that I am now one of those older neighbors, so check on me too!

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Southern Summer Sweets

Apples & Cream

- 4 small, sweet apples
- 3 T. brown sugar
- 1 T. plus 1 t. butter
- 1/2 c. evaporated milk
- 2 t. vanilla extract
- 1/2 t. ground cinnamon
- 1/3 t. ground nutmeg

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Take apples and peel them, core and slice into 1/4" slices. Place slices in a shallow baking pan that you've buttered. Sprinkle with half the sugar and dot with butter. Combine the milk and vanilla extract, drizzle evenly over the apples. Sprinkle with cinnamon, nutmeg and rest of the sugar. Bake for about 30 minutes.

Cherry Cheese Pie

- 1- 9" graham cracker crust
- 1- 8 oz. cream cheese, softened
- 1 can Eagle Brand condensed milk
- 1/3 c. lemon juice
- 1 t. vanilla extract
- 1 can cherry pie filling, chilled

In a large bowl beat cheese til fluffy. Gradually beat in the Eagle Brand til smooth. Stir in the lemon juice and vanilla. Pour into prepared crust and chill in fridge for 3 hours or set.

Top with cherry pie filling before serving (good when mixed with a teaspoon of almond extract - makes the cherries taste better.)

Cathey's Crusty Toasted Coconut Pie

- 1/4 c. milk
- 1 c. coconut, sweet, flaked
- 3/4 c. sugar
- 1/2 stick butter
- 3 eggs
- 1 t. vanilla or lemon extract
- 1 c. pecans, chopped and toasted
- 9" pie shell

Preheat your oven to 350 degrees, as it's warming up place your unbaked pie crust in the oven. Spread your coconut on a piece of aluminum foil, put in toaster oven and toast til light brown. Cream your butter and

sugar, using electric mixer, add eggs one at a time. Add milk, then the toasted coconut, mix well. Add the pecans and extract.

Remove pie crust, pour in batter and carefully return to oven, it will be rather liquidy. Bake at 350 for about 40 minutes, remove and cool completely before serving.

Granny's Squares

- 1 can Eagle Brand Milk
- 1 c. chopped pecans
- 1 c. chopped dates
- 1 c. coconut, shredded

Mix all ingredients together in a bowl. Pour into a 9x9" square pan. Bake for 45 minutes at 350 degrees or until edges along side of pan are golden brown.

Best Banana Bread

- 2 c. all purpose flour
- 1/2 t. salt
- 1/2 t. baking soda
- 8 T. butter
- 1/2 c. brown sugar
- 2 T. honey

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- 2 eggs
- 2 ripe bananas, mashed
- 1/2 c. chopped citron -Optional
- 1/2 c. chopped walnuts

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Butter and flour an 8 x 4" loaf pan. Sift together flour, salt, and baking soda. Beat the butter and brown sugar in an electric mixer til thick and creamy. Stir in the honey, fold in the eggs alternately with the flour mixture. Fold in the bananas, citron and nuts.

Put the dough into the prepared loaf pan, bake in oven for 1-1/4 hours, and a straw comes out clean. Remove the bread from the loaf pan and cool on a wire rack. This is great slathered with real butter.

Sally Lunn

- 1/2 c. butter
- 1/2 c. milk
- 3/4 c. sugar
- 2 c. all purpose flour
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 2 rounded t. baking powder

Beat the butter to a cream, beat in sugar and eggs. Sift flour with the baking powder twice, then add milk.

Add to egg mix and bake in a greased 9x9" pan at 350 degrees about 25 minutes until done, serve with butter.

Sweet Mandarin Cake

- 2-11 oz. cans mandarin oranges
- 2 eggs
- 2 c. sugar
- 2 c. all purpose flour
- 1/2 t. salt
- 2 t. baking soda
- 3/4 c. brown sugar, packed
- 3 T. milk
- 2 T. butter

Beat eggs and drained oranges. Sift flour, soda & salt together, add sugar. Pour mixture into greased 9 x 13" pan. Bake at 350 degrees for about 35 minutes. Bring brown sugar, milk and butter to a boil and pour over the hot cake.

English Cream Dessert

- 1 pint heavy cream
- 1 c. sugar
- 1 packet unflavored gelatin
- 1 pint sour cream
- 1 T. vanilla extract

In a saucepan, heat the cream but don't boil. Add sugar and mix til dissolved, add gelatin and dissolve.

Remove from heat and add mixture to sour cream. Stir in extract, beat til smooth. Pour into serving mold and refrigerate at least 4 hours. Serve with fresh summer fruit.

Pomegranate Margarita

Lime Sugar:

- 3 T. granulated sugar
- 1-1/2 t. lime zest

Margarita:

- 1 oz. fresh lime juice
- 2 oz. premium tequila
- 2 oz. pomegranate juice
- 3/4 oz. Triple Sec
- Ice
- Lime wedge for garnish

In a small bowl combine the sugar and zest. Use your fingers to rub the sugar and zest to release lime oil. Pour sugar onto plate wide enough for your glass.

Rub lime wedge on glass rim and dip in the sugar mixture, set aside.

Fill a cocktail shaker with ice. Add lime juice, tequila, pomegranate juice, Triple Sec. Cover and shake well for 30 seconds. Strain the mixture into your serving glass, garnish with lime wheel.

If you want a sweeter version increase the Triple Sec to 1 oz.

Fresh Watermelon

For a different treat try sprinkling some ground cinnamon on your cold juicy watermelon chunks - It's good and different!

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The Chautauqua in Huntsville

by Jim Vann

It was about 50 years ago that Ed and Dean Mitchell came to our house one Sunday evening after church for some dessert.

We had developed a friendship by attending the same church although Ed was quite a few years older than me.

I had always admired him for his work with the city and the county. He ended up his working time serving as the commissioner for the Huntsville/Madison County Airport authority. He was responsible for the building of the current Huntsville International Airport at its present location.

Ed was a native of Huntsville and knew a great deal about the history of Huntsville and Madison County.

During the conversations that evening, Ed brought up the subject of an event that occurred in Huntsville called the Chautauqua.

None of the rest of us had ever heard of such an event. Our daughter was in the 5th grade at Blossomwood Elementary School and her teacher had assigned each student the responsibility of writing an Essay for their class. With some encouragement from

all of us she decided to write her Essay about the Huntsville Chautauqua.

A little history about the Chautauqua would be helpful at this point. I got most of this information at the Huntsville Public Library. There were some articles about the Chautauqua in the Huntsville Mercury newspaper in 1916. By 1925 the paper was called The Huntsville Daily Times that had articles about the Chautauqua that year.

The Chautauqua was an adult education and social movement in the United States that peaked in popularity in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Chautauqua assemblies expanded and spread throughout rural America until the mid-1920s. The Chautauqua brought entertainment and culture for the whole community, with speakers, teachers, musicians, showmen, preachers and specialists of the day.

U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt is often quoted as saying that Chautauqua is "the most American thing in America". What he actually said was: "it is a source of positive strength and refreshment of mind and body to come to meet a typical American gathering like this—a gathering that is typically American in that it is typical of America at its best." Several Chautauqua assemblies continue to gather to this day.

First Chautauqua

In 1874, Methodist Episcopal minister John Vincent and businessman Lewis Miller organized the New York Chautauqua Assembly at a campsite on the shores of Chautauqua Lake in the State of New York. Two years earlier, Vincent, editor of the Sunday School Journal, had begun to train Sunday School teachers in an outdoor Summer School format. The gatherings grew in popularity. The organization Vincent and Miller founded later became known as the Chautauqua Institution. Many other independent Chautauquas were developed in a similar manner.

The educational "summer camp" format proved popular for families and was widely copied by several Chautauquas. Within a decade, "Chautauqua assemblies" (or simply "Chautauquas"), named for the location in New York, sprang up in various North American locations. The



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Chautauqua movement beginning in the 1870s may be regarded as a successor to the Lyceum Movement from the 1840s. As the Chautauquas began to compete for the best performers and lecturers, Lyceum Bureau assisted with bookings. Today, Lakeside Chautauqua and the Chautauqua Institution, the two largest Chautauquas, still draw thousands each summer season.

Independent Chautauquas

Independent Chautauquas (or "daughter Chautauquas") operated at permanent facilities, usually fashioned after the Chautauqua Institute in New York, or at rented venues such as in an amusement park. Such Chautauquas were generally built in an attractive semi rural location a short distance outside an established town with good rail service. At the Chautauqua movement's height in the 1920s, several hundred of these existed.

Circuit Chautauquas

"Circuit Chautauquas" (or colloquially, "Tent Chautauquas") were an itinerant manifestation of the Chautauqua movement founded by Keith Vawter (a Redpath Lyceum Bureau manager) and Roy Ellison in 1904. Vawter and Ellison were unsuccessful in their initial attempts to commercialize Chautauqua, but by 1907 they had found a great success in their adaptation of the concept. The program was presented in tents pitched "on a well-drained field near town". After several days, the Chautauqua would fold its tents and move on. The method of organizing a series of touring Chautauquas is attributed to Vawter.

These "Travelling Chautauquas" started coming to Huntsville in the late 1800s and continued until the early 1900s. One article about the Huntsville Chautauqua was in the Huntsville Mercury newspaper dated 1916 and another in the Huntsville Daily Times dated June 1925.

Some information I read said that the Chautauqua popularity started to decrease as entertainment on the radio increased.

All of the Huntsville Chautauquas took place on the grounds of what was the location of the East Clinton Grammar School property.

Chautauqua 1979 revived the tradition of the Huntsville Chautauqua.

An article in the Huntsville Times newspaper dated 1979 stated: "A pleasant day in early fall such as might have been enjoyed here many years ago will be offered next Saturday by Chautauqua '79. The Chautauqua that began in the late 19th century provided the people in small town America with some unaccustomed cultural opportunities. Townspeople flocked to tents pitched in school yards or fairgrounds so that traveling performers could acquaint them with some of the attractions offered in great abundance in large cities.

Although Huntsville has outgrown the small town status it occupied when the last

Chautauqua was held in the 1920s, Chautauqua '79 is designed to revive the same spirit of neighborliness and enjoyment that characterized the originals."

One of the offerings for Chautauqua '79 was a "tour of homes" that had been built back when Huntsville was first founded. Another feature was a presentation of antique cars provided by the "Antique Car Club of Huntsville".

A listing of local talent scheduled to perform included "The Sweet Adelines, Bama Ramblers (square dancers), Snappy Tappers and Rock of Ages Band. Tony Mason was to perform as well as the Twickenham Repertory Company, The Village Singers, The Madkin Mountain Opera Company, the Community Ballet Company, Neil Flowers and Len Bullard and Vision".

An article in the Huntsville Times newspaper dated in 1981 stated: "Seven hours of continuous entertainment, arts and crafts, exhibits, games, home tours, antique car displays and other events will be presented at Chautauqua '81. The neighborhood fair in and around the East Clinton Elementary School recalls the Chautauquas meeting on the site during the first three decades of this century." A list of the entertainers accompanied the newspaper article.

An article in the Huntsville Times in 1982 produced the same information as the article in 1981. The program was conducted on the East Clinton School grounds as well.

Another article in the Times dated August 21, 1983 told of the '83 Chautauqua scheduled for September 24th at the same location at East Clinton School with essentially the same format as the previous years. Essentially the same pattern for the Chautauqua was held again in 1986 and 1987. Those two events were the last I could find about Chautauqua in Huntsville.

These later years Chautauquas only lasted one day whereas the originals usually lasted a week.

My daughter's essay was a hit with her teacher, Mrs. Engle and she passed it on to her husband who was a Professor at UAH. We never got the original copy returned.



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Remembering A Proud Graduate of Butler High School on His Birthday: Billy Lawrence, Class of '62



Billy in 1956



At 18, a Senior at Butler H.S.

I would like to honor my late husband and his Butler High School classmates during this month, August 2025, on what would have been his 81st Birthday.

In addition to Butler HS, Billy attended St. Mary's of the Visitation Catholic School, University of Alabama, Baldwin Wallace University and Middle Tennessee State University.

He is sadly missed by me and his son Dave Lawrence. He passed away August 30, 2023.

Since Billy and I read Old Huntsville magazine for many years before his death, I want to honor him by buying an ad in Old Huntsville Magazine, to commemorate him and his Butler High classmates. He loved his years at Butler and playing football there, along with his brother Frank and many friends.

He graduated in 1962 and his class had its reunion the last weekend in May, 2024.

Phyllis Lawrence



My Life with Billy explain.

He was our rock and will forever be in our hearts.

by Phyllis Lawrence

Robert William (Billy) Lawrence Aug. 26, 1944 - Aug. 30, 2023

This story is about my husband and best friend Billy Lawrence. We were married for 47 years when he passed away and our 48th anniversary would have been April 27th this year.

But my Billy passed away two years ago, Aug. 30, 2023 at 79 years old.

We had been reading Old Huntsville magazine for years and each time we had an anniversary or birthday or just a story, we'd send it in to be published. So I felt it was appropriate to commemorate Billy in this way.

Billy was born Aug. 26, 1944 and attended St. Mary's of the Visitation Catholic School. He then went to Butler High School where he played football along with his brother Frank. Many remember his football playing years, and Billy always said that those games at Goldsmith Schiffman Field were some of the happiest days he had. He went on to attend University of Alabama/Huntsville, Baldwin Wallace U., and Middle Tennessee State University. We married and had one son.

How I met Billy in March 1971

It was my first year teaching. They had just built a new YMCA in downtown Chattanooga. My brother liked racquet-

ball and I liked swimming, so I stopped by one day after school. I paid seventy-five dollars for a family membership. I went home, had supper, and picked up my friend Yvonne. We went down to tour the facility.

We enjoyed a leisurely stroll around the building and ended up in the racquetball/handball courts. In a flash this handsome boy playing handball came over and introduced himself as Bill Lawrence and asked me if he could call me.

I was going to Florida for Spring Break but I'd be back in a week. I said to call when I returned. I never went back to the Y and he never played handball again. I think he was afraid to!

We married and our son, David Lawrence, was our pride and joy.

Dave and I miss Billy more than we can



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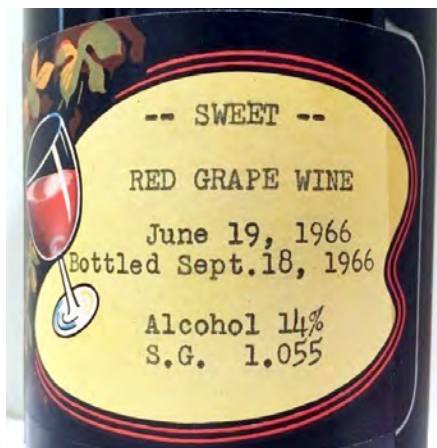


EXPIRES AUGUST 31, 2025

Some restrictions may apply.

Winemaking - Don't Touch the Cork

by M. D. Smith IV



In the early 60s, I learned it was okay to legally make up to 50 gallons of wine at home yearly. Sounded good. I bought a book from the same place I ordered several gallons of red grape concentrate for wine making and several packages of 'wine yeast.'

I was going to save a ton of money (eventually), by brewing my wine at home and having the pleasure of serving my label to friends, bragging I had made it myself – with my label on it.

I bought four dozen dark green wine bottles, two 5-gallon jugs (one to ferment, other to transfer wine for aging), 100 wine corks, 100 blank colorful labels, a 'corking machine' which was a pair of handles that squeezed the dampened cork together, then rammed it down on one end into the wine bottle, a hydrometer to measure alcohol content, and other assorted wire bottle tops and colorful red foil top covers.

I'd now invested a considerable amount of money to start. Several hundred dollars in the early sixties was a lot, but almost all the expensive stuff was reusable including bottles, so after my first batch, the cost would be much lower, and the more I made in years to come, the lower my 'per-bottle' price would become.

A must-have item is an 'air-lock.' That is a small glass, S-shaped thing that is about one eighth inch in diameter and fits into a rubber cork, the size of the five-gallon jug mouth. It has a glass bubble near the top open-

ing to hold the rising water as the carbon dioxide generated by the growing yeast (which is making alcohol as a by-product) builds up and it would explode if it couldn't escape. AIR is the enemy and will ruin wine if oxygen gets to the brewing yeast mixture (or aging wine for that matter). The wine will oxidize and taste absolutely terrible. Cautions were everywhere I read. This little 'air-lock' with water, similar to a trap under your kitchen sink, will let the CO2 bubble out but prevent any oxygen from getting back into the brewing wine.

You mix water with concentrate, add yeast, then sugar to increase potential alcohol yield. Then wait.

By afternoon, I could see the yeast growing, releasing CO2 to the surface, and the air-lock with water fill, bubbling like a percolator. I smelled some of the air re-

leased. It had the odor of both the grape juice and a hint of alcohol.

When son Dee was in my hobby room where I was making it, I wanted him to smell the brewing alcohol, and just for a moment, I pulled out the cork and airlock from the jug to let him smell a large dose, which he backed away from. I quickly replaced the airlock. I knew a five-second exposure shouldn't harm the wine. Dee saw how the cork came out.

I go about my merry way, dreaming of all those bottles of the "MD's" wine on shelves – my personal home-made treasure to consume or give away. (You can't sell it legally).

The next afternoon, home from work, I went to check my brew and horrors. The cork airlock was lying beside the jug with plenty of exposure of my wine to air. I quickly replaced it, added a bit of water to fill and then went

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storming through the house bel-
lowing like the giant in "Jack and
the Bean Stalk." Can't print what
I said. My wife heard me roaring,
"Who in bloody hell took the cork
out of my jug of wine?"

It seems Dee wanted to show
younger brother, Scott, what I'd
demonstrated. He managed by
the hardest to remove the cork,
but either didn't think to replace
it, or couldn't. He was frightened,
"I'm sorry, Daddy."

"Sorry doesn't help, and if it
ruins, it's your fault," I bellowed.

With my wife, Judy, saying,
"Dear, dear, he didn't know what
he was doing, and he was just cu-
rious after you showed him how
to do it." That calmed me because
she was right.

Two weeks later, after fer-
menting ceased, racking or si-
phoning off the wine above the
layer of visible dead yeast was
needed. Completing that, I let it
age for three months with the air-
lock on top to keep air out.

When it finished, I tasted it,
and it was strong with alcohol,
about 14% as I wrote on the label,
but it was bitter. Needed sugar.
I believe I added several pounds
of sugar to that slightly less than
four gallons before it tasted sweet
enough to me to drink. Not great,
almost bad, but I sure had made
wine, and maybe the air didn't
completely ruin it. Enough sugar
can make vinegar taste good. I
bottled, corked, labeled them and
put some in my newly acquired
wine rack.

Saturday afternoon comes, I
chilled several in the fridge and
was ready for my first bottle of
home-made wine. I pulled the
cork, sat down in my hobby room,
and sipped. First swallows caused
me a sour face—shaking my head.
It wasn't nearly as good as the
"MD-20/20" in the stores, but it
was mine. The next glass went
down—not nearly as 'rough' as
the first one. By the end of the
bottle, it tasted great. Perhaps I

hadn't done such a terrible job after all.

Dinner and I went to bed, having a dull headache.

The next morning, I couldn't even turn over in bed
without my head feeling that it would split in half. Be-
sides that, when I went to rise, my stomach felt like
some horrible mixture was churning down there, feel-
ing nauseous.

My friends, I had one of the worst hang-overs I had
ever had in my life. If you have ever had one, I don't
need to tell you. If not, let's just say it's about as sick as
you can feel and not go to the hospital. That day was
painful, long and endless.

Yep, wine does not like exposure to air. Bad things
DO happen. I can attest to that. It did have a high per-
cent of alcohol—14% about max from the hardiest yeast
before it dies from its waste product, alcohol.

I still have a single bottle made in 1966. I had six
at one time a few years ago, but as I parted with an-
other to a grown son, he reported the same thing to me,
"Dad, it was sweet and went down pretty good, but I
never had such a bad hangover."

Well, that's what I tried to tell him. These bottles do
NOT mellow with age.



OPENING THE HIGHWAYS TO ALL MANKIND

Back of all the activities of the Ford Motor Company is this Universal idea — a whole-
hearted belief that riding on the people's highway should be within easy reach of all the people.

An organization, to render any service so widely useful, must be large in scope as well as
great in purpose. To conquer the high cost of motoring and to stabilize the factors of production —
this is a great purpose. Naturally it requires a large program to carry it out.

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growth, that has been incentive in developing inexhaustible resources, boundless facilities and an
industrial organization which is the greatest the world has ever known.

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culty 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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which is contributing in so large a measure toward making life easier, pleasanter and more worth
while has been made available to millions.

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than with sincere and sober realization of new and larger opportunities for service to mankind.

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**"Save a boyfriend for a
rainy day, and another, in
case it doesn't rain."**

Mae West

Natural Gas

by L D Rogers

You wouldn't think natural gas would mean much to a twelve-year-old boy. When I heard they were going to put a natural gas line in our neighborhood I couldn't believe it. The first thing I asked my dad is if we'd be able to get natural gas. He told me just as soon as they had the line installed, we would look into it.

We had a Warm Morning heater that we used to heat most of the house, and it was fueled by coal. Mother had a big kitchen stove, and it burned wood and coal. Every morning you had to build a fire in it to cook breakfast. Me or my brother or both of us had to chop some kindling wood, fill the coal buckets, and put them on the back porch to be used in the heater and the stove.

In the summer, my mother had a three-burner coal oil (kerosene) stove that she cooked on, so it didn't get too hot in the kitchen. She had a little metal box that she put on top of one of the burners and that's what she used to bake with.

We were all excited about getting natural gas, so the first thing Daddy did was get out the Sears Roebuck catalog to look for gas ranges, heaters and water heaters. I just couldn't imagine having all the hot water you wanted - just turn on the faucet. That would be wonderful. Before that you had to heat the water to take a bath and that only happened on Saturday night.

Then the big day came and the city started to lay the gas lines. I spent as much time as I could watching the men work and talking to them about what we had to do to get gas. I found out we had to put in the line from the street to our house and get the lines hooked up to all the appliances we had in the house.

Next, we had to put a pressure gauge on the end of the line at the street and pump it

up to a specified pound pressure. We had to make sure it didn't leak and then we could call the gas company, and they would come and check it out. Then they would put in a meter and hook us up to the main line.

I told Daddy everything I learned. I think he already knew but he didn't let on like he did. We had to figure out how much pipe we needed, how many cut off valves and what kind of pipe glue we had to use. It was my job to get the measurements from the meter to each appliance which required me to also measure under the house. We had to use 3/4 inch black pipe.

Soon a big delivery truck came to our house and unloaded the water heater, kitchen stove and heating stove. Boy, what an exciting day that was. They were beautiful. I remember that the pipe came in 21-foot sections and we had to cut and thread the pipe. Daddy was a machinist and worked for the Illinois Central Railroad building steam locomotives. He had all the tools at home that we needed.

We finally got all the pipe in place and hooked to the kitchen stove, living room heater and the water heater. We called the gas company to come and inspect our work and turn the gas on. It was a very happy day for me when they came to install our meter and show us how to light the pilot lights.

A day or two later one of our neighbors came over to see what we had done. The man asked daddy if we would put his gas pipe in for him. That was the start of my first paying job. I don't recall how many neighbors we helped but I know I stayed busy most of that summer helping Daddy put in gas lines.

As far as the coal buckets were concerned, there is nothing I was so glad to get rid of in all my life.

"Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered."

Seen in local church bulletin

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Old Fashioned Superstitions



- It's bad luck to sweep out trash or carry out ashes after sunset.

- Sweep the feet of your baby with a broom and he will walk early.

- When you get up out of a chair, make sure you don't leave the chair rocking, or you will get very sick within the year.

- If you spill a jar of face powder, a bad quarrel with a friend will ensue.

- If you desire to become a good seamstress, allow a lizard to run across your hand.

- A young woman seeking a husband should stick seven needles into a lighted candle while praying to the Virgin Mary, until the wick is consumed. By doing this she can obtain the love of the man of her dreams, while rendering him impotent with other women.

- Never invite thirteen guests to dinner, or one of them will suffer very bad luck.

- If a hen is set in the light of the moon, the eggs will hatch roosters who will refuse to leave the henhouse.

- Should a man and woman pour tea together, they will have a baby within the year.

- Always plant peppers when you're good and mad at your wife, and give your gourd seeds a good cussing or they will never come up.

- If you have a wart and can't get rid of it, go to the home of a lady friend and steal her dish towel. Rub the towel on the wart and place it under your friend's front porch or step. Don't let her know you did it, walk away and don't look back. The wart will soon disappear.

"If you really want to help the American theater, don't be an actress. Be an audience, dahling."

Tallulah Bankhead

- If a family has black cats, the daughters will all be old maids. Also, a girl who rides a mule will never marry,

- To prevent nightmares from recurring, before bedtime soak both your feet in very warm water. Take half a lemon and thoroughly rub your feet with it, don't rinse but pat dry and hit the sack.

- Have bags under your eyes? Try mother nature - slice up a raw potato and place a slice on top of each bag for 10 minutes; supposedly the chemical composition of a potato draws out water.

- To help lower your blood pressure, get some Crayola Magic Scent crayons. They're meant to calm you down - get a good coloring book that you love and settle in for a night of coloring.

- Don't plant onions and potatoes close to each other - the onions will put out their eyes.

- If you thank a friend for a gift of seeds, they will never grow right.

- If you have a raging impulse to get some dessert, get out your nail polish and paint your fingernails. It takes awhile to dry and by that time your urge may have passed.

- Check your cup of coffee in the morning. If the bubbles on the surface float in your direction, you will soon come into some money you didn't expect. If they float away from you, expect a bill that will shock you.

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Benzene is a chemical in many of our drugs we take and can cause many types of cancer, including brain cancer.

The herbicide Paraquat is sprayed nationwide on crops to kill pests. It gets into our systems when we eat these foods.

Caffeine gets metabolized by our livers, which eventually produces 3 molecules in our body, one of them toxic. Soft drinks that are caffeinated are not good for us.

It is a highly complicated issue and you can read for yourself the very serious health risks to you that many of these chemicals present that are used on crops and food items you use everyday.

Go to www.atsdr.cdc.gov/ToxProfiles/tp203.pdf or just do a search for acrylamide. I can be contacted at (256) 970-4814

Delbert Parkinson

"HE AIMED AT THE STARS"

*by Placide D. Nicaise,
April 2003 - an Excerpt from
"Huntsville and the
German Rocket Team"*

One trip to the green mountainsides of Huntsville, Alabama convinced the Germans that this was a place they could live in comfort and rebuild lives shattered by war. It was much more like the home they had known than the desert of West Texas. The Army's Redstone Arsenal was nearby that could provide the security and room for growth that a high priority military program would require. They would also be close to the new test range that was to be opened up at Cape Canaveral, Florida. So in the spring of 1950, the renowned German Rocket Team moved to the sleepy, mill town in North Alabama known as the "Water Cress Capital of the World."

Huntsville has always held itself a bit above most of the towns in the state. After all, its pioneers had included aristocrats from Georgia and the Carolinas. They came in and displaced the original ruff-neck settlers around the Big Spring. They built their big mansions up on Echols Hill and large plantations out on the north edge of town. Throughout its history Huntsville seemed to have more status, more money and more visionaries than most towns. It prides itself on a rich history that seems graced with good fortune. It didn't suffer any major destruction during the Civil War. It had no major upheavals during the Civil Rights demonstrations. It attracted industrial development but these were not like the smoke stack industries that blighted Birmingham.

It has the benefits of the nearby mountains, the encircling Tennessee River and cheap TVA power. Huntsville citizens seem to be more broad minded and tolerant than others in Alabama. Many were as dismayed by the image of segrega-

tion, as were the citizens of Michigan or Illinois. The politicians and city planners were capable, ambitious people that had long dreamed of making Huntsville a modern city of the Old South.

It is hard to imagine how the residents of even this liberal-minded Southern town would accept these strangers from an alien culture. Old men still sat on benches around the Courthouse Square, whittling away their Saturday afternoons. The Confederate Soldier on this same Courthouse Square was a reminder of another bitter war that they had fought generations before. They still despised the Yankees.

No one could predict how these people that had lost brothers or sons so recently fighting the Germans would accept these strangers from an enemy nation. How could the Germans who had suffered such devastation and loss ever be comfortable living among their former enemies?

Perhaps Huntsville city fathers recognized this as a golden opportunity to build the city of their dreams. Perhaps Wernher von Braun and his team were determined to start anew in this adopted land. Perhaps the Army felt that this project was so vital to national security that they had to make it work. Whatever grave doubts existed beforehand, this may have turned out to be one of the most successful social experiments in history. The Germans settled in qui-

etly, many of them on Monte Sano, and others in established neighborhoods in the valley. Huntsville provided the relaxed, small-town environment that the Germans had not seen in years, and their adopted city came to enjoy fame and fortune like it had never seen before.

The dissension that developed in the coming years was not between the Germans and Huntsvilians, but between the Army, Navy and Air Force who fought savage turf battles over who was to control the development of inter-continental ballistic missiles. The Army had a strong hand because Wernher von Braun was a magician when it came to promoting his projects and grabbing funds from his competitors. He and his ideas about space flight were in a national magazine almost every month. He and his team even put out their own magazine titled, "The Space Journal".

He was an advisor to Walt Disney. A movie was made about his life titled; "I Aim at the Stars". Of course his critics quipped, "He may have aimed at the stars, but he hit London!" None of the snipping mattered because he was untouchable. He could walk into Congress and they would shower him with more money than he could carry away. His big, handsome head was constantly in view in newspapers, newsreels and on TV.

The Navy and Air Force burned with jealousy that the ABMA (Army Ballistic Missile Agency) could sit out in the middle of a cot-

Life in the 1800s

- 95 percent of all Americans lived on farms or in towns of less than 2,500 people.
- Half of the women could write their names, while 2/3 of the men were literate.
- Most women married at 23 or 24 and most men at 26.
- About a third of the women who married were pregnant on their wedding day. They could expect to become pregnant every two or three years thereafter, having 5 to 10 pregnancies in a lifetime. So many young children died of disease or infection that a mother could expect to have three to eight surviving children.

ton patch in North Alabama and hog the national spotlight.

The Army recruited young military men and engineers from local state colleges to expand their in-house civil service team to learn from the Germans and follow in their footsteps. This team designed, built and tested their own rockets in their own way.

In contrast, the Navy and Air Force turned their design, building and testing over to the giant Aerospace corporations with thousands of employees stretching from the Northeast to the Far West.

The Air Force initially decided to build a couple of air-breathing cruise missiles, which were bigger versions of the original German V-1. They felt that ballistic missiles would never have the range and payload capacity of these rockets with wings. These short-lived creations were given the fanciful names of Snark and Navaho. The Rocket Team would chuckle about "the Snark infested waters off the Cape", and "the Never-Go Navaho." It drove the "Blue Suits" into frenzy when a Redstone Rocket would go thundering down range, but the citizens of Huntsville loved every minute of it.

Von Braun and his rocket team reported to General John B. Medaris, the commander of ABMA. Medaris fought the other services day and night, but it eventually became clear that he was losing the war. Even with von Braun's charisma and the most successful rocket program in the country, political power and money were winning the war.

The Army belatedly realized that many contractors and widely distributed contracts had overwhelming influence on congress. Also, the powerful aerospace corporations opposed the German approach of doing their own in-house design, then specifying how the equipment was to be built. They preferred to tell the military what

they needed, how to build it and how much they should be paid. With the German team, it was either their way or they would build it themselves.

It was difficult for the Army to make much of a public case for their rocket program because most of the comparative data was classified. Although they felt their missiles were more reliable and more accurate, they were not permitted to release the numbers. Perhaps in frustration, Col. John C. Nickerson, who worked for the Army at ABMA, released some classified information and a memo critical of the Defense Secretary's decision to restrict the Army's role to short range missiles.

Instead of making his case, Nickerson received a general court martial in Huntsville on June 25, 1957. He was found guilty and given a relatively light sentence, but was transferred to the Canal Zone where he could not get his hands on any more rocket test data. He never came back to the team and was killed in an automobile accident in 1964. (History of Rocketry by Cliff Lethbridge)

(<http://www.redstone.army.mil/history/chron2b/1957b.html>)

In the late 1950s Eisenhower was still President and understandably may not have had a lot of fondness for Germans, or for Colonels that didn't follow orders. Whatever the case, national policy shaped up with the Air Force getting responsibility for developing all long range

ICBM's (Inter-continental Ballistic Missiles).

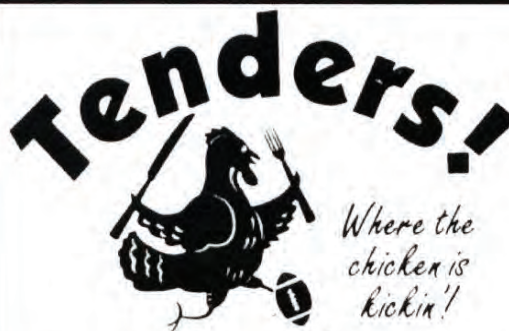
To make matters worse, the Navy got the go-ahead to develop a completely new booster for launching the first artificial satellite. This left the Army and their German team only with battlefield missiles of 200 miles or less. This was a devastating setback. Simpler, solid propellant motors had obvious advantages for these shorter-range missiles. It seemed that the Army was sure to lose the liquid propellant engines that were the German's forte, and the key to von Braun's dreams for space travel.

Huntsville had been expanding dramatically, but its hopes for becoming a shining metropolis of technology were beginning to fall apart. It was a single industry town, and that industry was severely threatened by decisions made in Washington DC. There was even talk of Germans leaving the team and going to work for higher paying jobs in industry. However, Wernher von Braun held them together even in the darkest days. Perhaps they had been through so much together for so long that they had developed an intense loyalty toward him. Yet, even the young American engineers showed this same loyalty.

He was a natural leader who earned the respect of his entire team by his ability, his consideration for them and his single-minded determination to build the machines to take man into space.

"If you don't have time to do it right, when will you find time to do it over?"

John Wooten



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Three Coins in a Fountain



by Shawn Parikh

As I drive past the intersection of North Memorial Parkway and University Drive, I inevitably glance over at the last remnants of a place that played a big part of my childhood. I am referring to "The Mall." This once proud structure housed many fine establishments and served as a shopping mecca for the city and surrounding area from the 1960s to the 1980s. Almost like a dip into Aladdin's famed magical lamp, practically whatever one wished for, could be found in the many stores ensconced inside the mall. The phrase often heard repeatedly during The Mall's heyday was, "I'll Meet You At The Fountain."

The fountain, of course, referred to the beautiful cascading flowing wall of water shooting out of the structure centered in the middle of the mall. In addition to the countless pennies tossed in the water, possibly harkening back to the wishes from the genie's lamp; many friends and family found it the most convenient place to meet one another.

The stores, of course were the most integral part of The Mall's existence, it was its bread and butter.

"Today I'm wearing pale pink to raise awareness for people like me who forget to separate their white laundry from the red laundry."

Serena Britz, Arab

Oh, what shopping places this building housed. Being an avid and voracious reader all my life, my favorite store was inevitably "Bookland." I could, and often did, spend hours perusing all the cornucopia of books and magazines this bookstore had. For me, as soon as I saw a favorite movie, or television show I was at "Bookland" in search of these novelizations.

My dad, being at the time a fashion plate, would often have cause to visit "Bill's London Transit". While he was trying to plan his wardrobe for what seemed to my mind the next twenty years, I took this time to run up and down the Tiger Skin rug adorning the stairs.

I clearly remember saving my money up to buy 45 record (Kids those are simply LP albums shrunk down with one song on each side) versions of the theme from "Dukes of Hazzard," Sheena Easton's theme from the James Bond film "For Your Eyes Only," and her song "Morning Train" at "Camelot Records".

The two anchor stores that were situated on opposite ends of the mall were "JC Penney," and "Lovemans". These once mighty department stores could fulfill almost any shopper's dream. After a day of shopping, one's basic instinct of hunger would kick in. The food, like the other stores, did not disappoint. One could dine buffet style at the once famed "Picadilly". Or if one craved lighter fare, the "Walgreens Cafeteria" had cuisine that would fit less discriminating diners' taste. To top off a meal, one had to visit the ice cream and lemonade stand near one of the exits; with convenient restrooms upstairs. A visit to The Mall would not be complete without a sojourn to "Hickory Farms," my favorite being the scrumptious biscuit cookies.

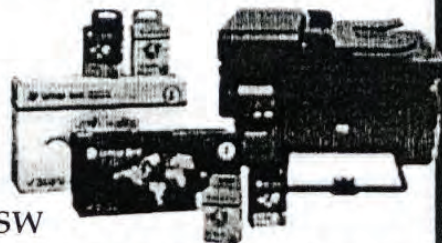
The Mall always seemed to be hosting events for it's many shoppers. As a child, I can remember me and my brother sitting on the lap of the most realistic and authen-

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tic version of Kris Kringle I had ever seen or have seen since. I also have fond recollections of visiting the Easter Bunny and Cookie Monster from Sesame Street. A fun and interesting experience for me was getting a baby lion to lay in my lap at the petting zoo.

Johnny Evans would hold his annual "Cerebral Palsy Telethon" at The Mall. Often in the parking lot, in later years (near the "Alabama Theater") both circus and carnivals were often held. These were all happy events for myself. One not so happy occurrence happened to me when I was five years old while my mom was shopping in "Lovemans"

Being the curious kid with a typical sparse attention span, I grew bored and subsequently wandered away. I ended up lost and frightened out in The Mall. I was convinced I was destined for eternity to roam The Mall alone, never seeing my mom again. I recall ending up in a shoestore sobbing my eyes out, giving my tearducts quite the workout. But thanks to some kind shoe store associates who went above and beyond their normal duties, I was reunited with my mom. Besides getting back with her, the second best thing to happen that day; she was so relieved to have me back, she did not lay a hand to my backside. My rear and I were grateful.

So when I'm in the area where a piece of The Mall still exists, or I view the lone surviving sculpture from the original fountain that resides near 'Home Depot;' I don't see what reality is in the present time. No, my mind's eye returns to my childhood days spent enraptured by all the places, things and events that The Mall provided.

I forlornly recall the death knell to this establishment, the 1984 opening of Madison Square Mall In 1997 watching this once mighty Phoenix being torn down, but alas not rising from the ashes; was tantamount to bidding an old friend goodbye. But although the physical place is mostly gone, my memories of 'The Mall,' meeting at the fountain, and all a visit entailed will remain forever in my mind and heart.

**"I don't suffer from insanity.
I enjoy every minute of it."
Anon**

ORIGINAL ORANGE PIE

Line a 9" pie plate with pastry; flute edges. Partially bake pie shell in 400 degree oven 5 minutes.

BEAT: 3 egg yolks

ADD: 1/4 cup cream

**BLEND: 1 cup sugar, 2 tsp. plain flour,
1 tbl. butter**

ADD: the egg yolk mixture, beat well

MIX IN: 1 tbl. grated orange rind

1/3 cup fresh orange juice

Pour into partially baked pie shell. Bake in 325 F. oven 45 minutes; or until custard doesn't wobble in the middle. Cool. Cover pie with meringue made with whites of the three eggs, sealing to the crust edges. Swirl top. Bake in 300 F. oven 15 to 20 minutes or until brown. Cool and serve.

**Don't Hold Grudges. That argument
you had with your friend won't seem
so important in time.
Your friends are treasures!**



**With Love to ALL the graduates
of Huntsville High School**

Oscar Llerena, HHS Class of 1966

Marriage Advice and the Boat

by David M. Stephens



My Grandmother and Grandfather

In May of 1950, a few days before my parents were to be married, my father's future father-in-law pulled him aside and asked him to take a walk to the barn. Nervously, my father went, not knowing what to expect. When they arrived at the barn, my grandfather proceeded to give my father the marriage advice my family has passed down for generations:

"Milton, if you ever come home and Willie Jean is mad at you about something, don't fight with her; just get your hat, go to the barn and check your livestock. If you give her time to calm down, cooler heads will prevail. If you go toe to toe with a mad woman, you will always lose!"

My father remembered this advice, and before my wedding day, he passed it on to me. Many years later, I passed it on to my sons-in-law in my Father of the Bride speech at each of their wedding receptions. I was afraid if I told them before the wedding, it would scare them away. To be honest, this marriage advice has served our family well for many decades.

Let me provide you with a great example of this marriage advice in practice.

My grandfather loved to fish. When he was young, he didn't have the money to splurge on a store-bought boat, so being a lifelong woodworker, he built his own. He constructed it out of 3/4" marine grade plywood, sealed all the joints, and painted it dark green. It looked like a modern-day metal Jon boat except for the plywood construction. It floated as well as a manufactured boat, and it carried him around his favorite fishing areas in South Saulty, North Saulty, and Town Creek. These were the lakes near his old home place in Langston, AL. Paw Paw and this homemade boat provided many meals of fried fish for his family. It was an extremely heavy boat, and he had a friend weld a homemade trailer to fit the boat. He hauled this combination many miles behind his old International pickup truck.

He took my older cousins fishing in his boat several times, but I never had the opportunity to go with him. However, I did spend many hours playing in this boat while it was in the barn on its trailer. With my vivid imagination, I navigated this boat through numerous rapids in wild rivers and caught some large fish.

It was this boat that inspired me to try building my own boat out of some salvaged plywood from my neighborhood. I put it together in my parents' garage, and my father hauled it to Hazel Green for me. Daddy even helped me launch it into Paw Paw's pond, where I found out very quickly my boat-building skills were not on par with Paw Paw's. I ended up more than a little wet when it sank to the bottom of the pond.

When I was ten years old, Paw Paw was already in his seventies. His health was beginning to decline, and he could no longer handle the heavy wooden boat, so he decided to sell it. There was no internet to post it on, so he began telling his friends he wanted to sell his boat. The Hazel Green grapevine took over after that, and word got around about his boat for sale.

When Paw Paw decided to sell his boat, it just happened to be during a week I was staying at their house.

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My friends attended church camps or established summer camps in the area; my summer camp was always a week or two at my grandparents' house.

One day, while I was there, a man knocked on the door and wanted to speak with Paw Paw about his boat. Paw Paw put on his hat, as he always did, and led the man to the side of the corn crib where it was parked. Being the nosey kid I always was, I went with them. I was always the dreamer, and while they were talking and negotiating, I was playing and listening.

I quickly became bored and began my stroll back to the house. I went in through the back door, and when I walked into the kitchen, my grandmother immediately asked me if the guy had bought the boat and how much Paw Paw had gotten. I told her the truth; he gave Paw Paw \$150 for the boat, which I thought was a considerable amount. Then, I sat down at the kitchen table and began playing with some toys I had. A few minutes later, Paw Paw came in the backdoor and walked into the kitchen.

As soon as he entered the room, Maw Maw pounced on him like a mad hen. She was letting him have it for selling the boat so cheaply, and she told him he should have gotten a lot more money for the boat. It all happened so quickly that it startled me, and I figured it startled my grandfather as well. It also scared me. It scared me because I felt as if I had caused the attack. It also scared me because I thought Paw Paw was going to be mad at me for telling on him.

I finally slid out of my chair, slipped around the door frame, and headed for the living room. My grandfather always had a recliner,

and my grandmother always had a chair that rocked and also spun all the way around. I climbed into Maw Maw's chair and spun it around to face the corner. I thought if Paw Paw came looking for me, he would not find me in the chair if it was turned away from him. However, I shouldn't have worried; he didn't come into the living room; instead, he headed out the back door.

When I heard the back door slam, I sat up and looked out the window. What I saw was Paw Paw, with his felt hat on his head, walking straight to the barn to check his livestock.

A little while later, Maw Maw called me to come in the kitchen for supper. I was dreading having to face my grandfather because I was still certain he was mad at me, but that was just the innocence of a child. I should have known he would not be mad and supper would be fine. The boat was never mentioned again.

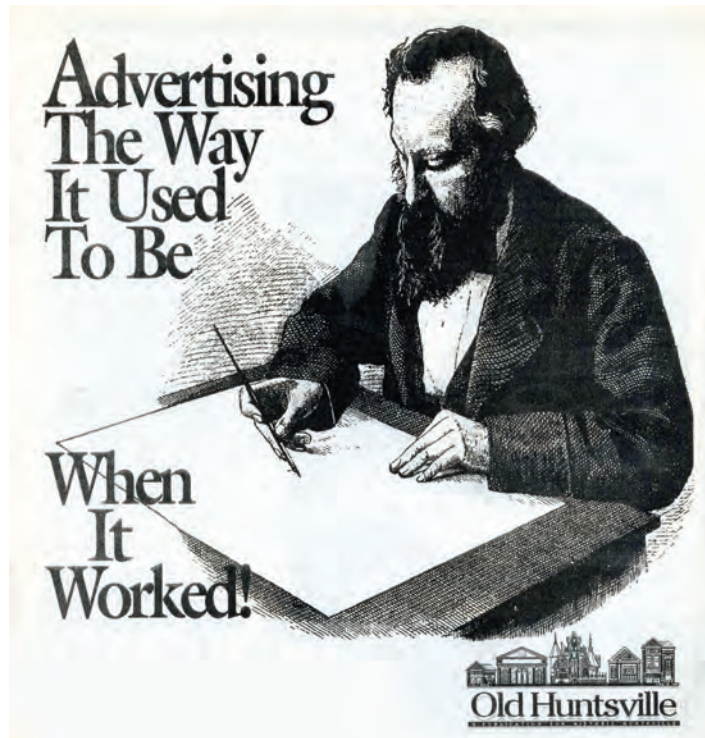
I guess Paw Paw was right; cooler heads will prevail. Looking back on this little episode, I realized my grandfather always practiced what he preached!

Advice for Men

If you are getting backaches and don't know why, try moving your wallet to a different pocket. Many men get backaches from sitting on wallets all day. Also, loosen up that collar - a tight one can reduce your circulation and restrict breathing. Worn, untied shoes can cause knee, ankle and lower back problems.

"One thing no one ever talks about when it comes to being an older adult is how much time we devote to keeping a cardboard box because it is, you know, a really good box."

Jeb Brewster, Scottsboro



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Remembering

by Bill Goodson, Aug. 2023

On a hot summer Thursday I found myself with a little loose time. Daughter Cindy Holliday was visiting Huntsville for a few days to celebrate birthdays of her grandson, Mark Holliday (3) and daughter-in-law, Lauren Holliday (?). She and my wife Elise were shopping while I was doing some errands and visiting with Bob Stewart. We were to meet at Walton's for lunch at noon.

As it turned out, I completed my duties early and had time to kill. Bob lives on Eustis Avenue, so I was already downtown. Without really planning to do so, I proceeded to tour that old section of East Huntsville, beginning with a look at what was happening to my old Huntsville High School.

And, WOW, is it happening! After the building, situated between Randolph and Eustis, was abandoned as city school administration headquarters, it had lay dormant for several years, only a fond memory for those of us who had been lucky enough to have attended high school there. Dormant, that is, until city officials decided it should be sold and put to good use.

Thus it came to pass that private developers made an offer, with plans to convert the historic building into a private apartment/condo complex. As I left Bob's house and turned east on Eustis, I viewed the early site work. Twickenham Historic District regulations will not allow the structure to be revised without approval. So what I saw was the stark back side of the old high school, the later additions (gym, workshop and wings) having been approved for removal. I almost shed a tear, surveying the bare, red earth and recalling my glory days (!!) playing basketball in that gym.

Ah...progress... (sigh)

I turned on White Street to see with relief that the front of the building was, by regulation, intact; long, wide stretch of concrete stairs leading to the front door.

Only a little further, covering an entire city block, stood East Clinton Elementary School, just as it was in my early years. Of course, it is no longer a public school, but functions as a private Christian school. Through grades 1 to 7, this was the seat of my education, as it was also for my two sisters. We lived at 1308 East Clinton Avenue, an easy walk or bike ride away. (Interestingly, until the 1950s, our address was 1205 East Clinton Street. Then the city modernized, renumbering the blocks, and renaming the North-South roads as Streets, and East-West roads as Avenues.) Ah... progress...

White Street ended at Holmes Avenue, and I found myself in the Old Town Historic District. Turning right, Five Points was only a few blocks, distant. That renowned section of Old Huntsville held a host of memories for me. The main thoroughfare is Andrew Jackson Way, the north-south street whose earli-



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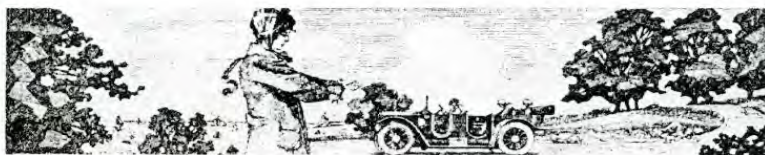
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er name was Fifth Street. The others that converge are Holmes and Pratt Avenues.

That intersection became home for some of the iconic businesses in that part of town: Star Market, Propst Drugs, Service Cleaners, Goodson's Variety, and Zesto Drive-In (my dad's establishment famous for Dipped Dogs, Zesto-burgers, and tall tales.)

Moving north on Andrew Jackson, past Ward Avenue, I came to Beirne Avenue. There stands a white, wood-frame building that is the original Goodson's Trading Post, my dad's first venture into business. Houston Goodson had decided that he couldn't raise a family as he would like to on a teacher's salary or working for someone else. Small neighborhood grocery stores were common in those days, before A&P and Kroger appeared on the scene. The Trading Post competed with Star Market for business, Dad enjoying the friendly competition with Chick Russell and Delbert Williams, owners of Star.

That building was originally L-shaped, but the arm of the L is no longer there. It was in that space that we called home for two or three years - my mother, father, sister Mary Lou, and I. This was very close to what was known as the Dallas Mill Village, where both of my parents grew up. We attended the Epworth Methodist Church, which has since moved farther away.

As the family income grew, we moved to our "permanent" home on East Clinton. I was five years old. I turned left on Beirne and stopped at Goldsmith-Shiffman Field, home to many a high school football game. On the Ward Avenue side, I recognize nothing. Huge apartment buildings and parking garages are rising from the ground where once stood neighborhood houses. DO NOT ENTER signs everywhere, Ah... progress...

Leaving that behind, I traveled

east on Ward, across Andrew Jackson and into the heart of the Five Points Historic District, the last of the three such residential districts to be so designated by the city. Early owners of these homes are named on the historic markers in the front yards, making it easy to look for familiar names. There are some names that are well-known, like Cummings and Lewter. I looked for the Laughmiller house, but didn't find it. (Not all of the houses have markers.) Linda Laughmiller was a brief flame of mine at about age twelve.

I toured through those streets - Ward, Pratt, and Clinton - spotting the homes of Marshall Keith and David Turner, two of my best buddies. Marshall had a crush on my sister and would find any excuse to visit us. David had a basketball goal in his back yard, and I would ride by bike there to shoot hoops with him. He and I were the only freshmen to make the team.

I had to pause in front of my old home at 1308 Clinton. The huge pecan tree still stands in the side yard. Later that day, I took Elise and Cindy on the Tour, and as we came to that place, we saw a lady coming out of the front door and walking down the sidewalk. We stopped to talk, and found that she is Claire Purinton, current owner of our house. Elise and I had met her several years ago, not long after she and husband Dave had bought it from my sister Pat. Claire was eager to re-aquaint with us and we swapped stories. She is emphatic that she will never live anywhere else. She loves it, even though the pecan tree loves to shed limbs.

I concluded the tour with Elise and Cindy with an excursion into neighborhoods closer to the center of town. Elise's memory for details - people and places - is much better than mine. She was able to point out where Buddy and Sue Kinzer, Willa and Poppy Brown, the Crowsons, and many others lived. The downtown area has changed so much over the years, but the First Methodist Church, where we were married and Cindy was baptized, stood tall. As did the Episcopal Church of the Nativity, our current church.

This turned out to be a memorable day, brought about by the happenstance of my having time on my hands, waiting to have lunch with Elise and Cindy.

Isn't that the way good things happen - on God's Time?

Seen on Decatur bumper sticker:
"Make love, not war. See driver for details."

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"You know how you buy a bag of fresh salad and in no time it gets all brown and soggy? Cookies don't do that, buy cookies!"

Jimmie Strickland, Gurley

PHILOSOPHICAL "MATERS"

by Gerald Alvis, *The
Poet of Greenlawn*



Our back patio is multipurpose; it provides a brief respite to chill and reset, but it's also a place where Ann and I like to greet the day. Oh, it's not quiet; nature is doing its thing. In full disclosure, I often bid good morning to the birds that gather near the Greek fountain we call Katina. As you suspect, I get lost in thought. It's amazing when we let go of the mind and relax, what we see allowing it to go wherever it may.

Today, I saw tomatoes. Since they have "come in," we have been enjoying tomato sandwiches for breakfast. You know, there is something about growing your own food. For those of my generation, it was a necessity, and our moms and grandmothers did something called canning. Communities and families were stronger then; they had to be, it was more than a convenience, it was survival. They were veterans of victory gardens, and they told stories of rationing and helping your neighbor; they lived through the Great Depression.

So, this particular morning, I was kind of proud that I did it "all by myself" and began feeling all independent over four plants. But then I pondered the process. I visited a nursery and purchased baby plants, along with some soil to ensure they received the best nutrients. I then watered them using a built-in sprinkler system. This hot, glowing object in the sky converted 600 million tons of hydrogen to 596 million tons of helium per second, sending a few photons of this enormous amount of energy onto this rock I'm riding that's hurtling through space. So, what did I actually do?

Hush, my consciousness said, you are overthinking this one. Yes, I put the things together in a conducive environment and am reaping the benefits, but someone put these garden physics into motion. My focus shifted up the blue sky that was yielding to some of those big, poofy clouds. If I get enjoyment out of watching it grow, imagine what it must have felt like to create it. In my backyard view, there is a joy our creator feels from watching us discover his design and purpose.
I believe God smiles!

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* Using metal water dishes outside in winter may be a risk, because your pet's tongue could stick to the frozen metal. In the summer, metal bowls can get very hot and burn your dog.

* If you have a puppy that urinates on your carpet: after soaking up most of the mess with a paper towel, sprinkle a generous amount of bicarbonate of soda (baking soda) over the area and leave it to absorb both the traces of urine and the odor.

* If your dog runs away from you and you finally catch up to it, no matter how angry you are at the dog, do not yell or smack it or he will never come to you when called for fear of being punished.

* Do not leave your dog unattended on a choke chain. The chain could get caught and strangle the dog.

* Do not leave your dog in the car unattended on hot days. Even with the windows open, temperatures in cars WILL reach deadly levels. It only takes five minutes! If you see a dog locked in a very hot car do something to try and help it before it's too late.

* Do not make your dog walk on extremely hot or cold asphalt, cement, etc. The pads of their paws are not made out of steel. If it is too hot for you to walk barefoot, then chances are that it is too hot for your dog also.

* To keep your dog busy, buy toys with little holes in them (such as a Kong), put both big and small pieces of kibble in the toy and give it to your dog. This will keep him busy for quite a while, presuming he has a few small ones that he gets out quickly. You can also wedge dog biscuits in the holes with a smear of peanut butter.

* When your dog is teething, instead of having him chew on couches, walls, etc., buy a few (cheap) washcloths. Soak the washcloth with water and put it in the freezer. When fully frozen, give it to the dog to chew. It will thaw out so have another one ready in the freezer. (Be careful when doing this with very small dogs, as they may get a chill. I have heard of small dogs getting too cold too quickly when chewing on ice).

* Another for teething puppies, mix chicken or beef broth (look for low fat, low sodium brands) with 1/4 cup of water. Pour the mixture into ice cube trays to make broth ice cubes. They are tasty treats on hot days.

* Do not leave your pet in an area with dangling phone cords, drape cords or other items that it may strangle itself on. Be aware of electric cords that may be chewed by the pet.

* I have a dog that used to love to dig. When I'd fill the hole and re-seed, he'd just dig it up again. One day I was watching him wander around the yard, and I noticed he took extra care not to step in his droppings. So, the next time I filled up a hole, I buried a little dung at the bottom and left some dung on top. He avoided the freshly-seeded grass, and his droppings made excellent fertilizer. This won't work for all dogs...I also have another dog that loves to dig. This trick does not work on her, as she does not care where she steps.

Please note: the feces of dogs or any other meat-eating animal are NOT SAFE to use as fertilizer on plants that will be eaten by people, such as veggies, fruits or herbs. The feces can spread disease, even if it comes from a healthy dog.

* Is your dog digging? Try putting cayenne pepper in the holes — they don't like the sensation when they go back to dig again.

* Dog urination burns your lawn? Try giving them some tomato juice every day (either in a bowl or on their food) and it should solve the problem.

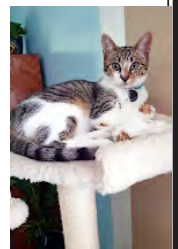
* After soaking up the majority of urine or picking up the poop on your rug, baby wipes do a great job and pick up all smells with no stains left behind.

* Remember to check your outdoor gates and fences when you've had yard service or mowing because many dogs escape through opened gates that you assume have been closed back.

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From the Desk of Tom Carney

Monte Sano Railroad

by Tom Carney



Near the intersection of Tollgate Road and Bankhead Parkway in northeast Huntsville are several entrances into the western slope of Monte Sano Mountain. Take any one of these trails and you will find yourself going back into another time, a time of long ago, a time when Huntsville was much simpler, and life was not the complicated reality that it is today.

Yet, people then, as today, had dreams and ambitions. The dream that once existed on these now quiet trails on the western slope of Monte Sano Mountain took the form of a railroad – the Monte Sano Railway.

The year was 1888 and with the ever growing popularity of the grand hotel on top of the mountain, it became clear that better transportation up the mountain was needed.

The Huntsville Belt Line and Monte Sano Railway Co. employed engineer Arthur Owen Wilson to construct the railroad to the hotel. The line started from the Union Depot and ran south along Jefferson Street. At Clinton, it turned east towards the mountain and eventually down into Fagin's Hollow, where it began a circuitous route, gaining altitude all the time. Winding and circling to the rim of the mountain, the route rose so steeply that the grade seemed impossible for an engine to ascend. The remainder of the way lay directly across the top of the plateau to the back yard of the hotel. Half an hour was required for the entire journey when the line was finished.

In the construction of the Monte Sano Railway, more than 300 persons were employed on a regular basis. The weekly payroll was approximately \$10,000. Mr. Wilson, himself, designed the three coaches that comprised the train and the St. Charles Car Co. manufactured them. The engine was of standard gauge, although smaller than those used on the trunk line. The size of the engine was the reason the line was called the "dummy line," as the undersized locomotive resembled a trolley car. Of course, some Huntsville wags called it the dummy line because "only a dummy would ride that steep and perilous route to or from the mountain!"

Sure enough, not long after the railway opened, there occurred an incident that seriously damaged the popularity of the railway. Returning from the hotel, the train's sand-pipes clogged as the engineer tried to check the speed of the locomotive down a steep incline. The train went out of control and left the tracks. Happily, no one was injured, but people were now somewhat nervous about taking this precarious path to and from the mountain.

Luckily, this accident had no lasting affect on consumer confidence and the Monte Sano Railway was successful in bringing visitors to the mountain, and business to the hotel continued to flourish.

Unfortunately, by 1895 the hotel was suffering financial problems and the railroad had to be shut down. Tracks were torn up and sold as scrap to pay off debts.

Now, with the passage of time the old railroad bed and stone foundations of the trestles are all that remain. Older residents of Huntsville say that as late as the 1950s there were still railroad ties stacked up near the area known as the "button hole."

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In Local church bulletin

From the Porch on Pratt Avenue



"School's Out for Summer"

by Collier Bouldin
Hundley, PN

Old meets new and youth returns to this sexagenarian man as Alice Cooper revisits Huntsville. I can vividly recall the shock rock icon screaming, the vibrations pulsed through my Pioneer sub-woofers as we raced away from the confines of our High School campus, "SCHOOL'S OUT FOREVER"!!! Well at least until the all too brief summer and sudden return to the next level of our life's education.

It was a race from the blistering heat to cold spring fed quarry that lay beyond and below the dusty limestone cliffs that kissed the edge of "MUNI", the old Huntsville Municipal Golf Course.

Stripping shirts, shucking our socks and shoes, then donning cut-off jeans, we parked atop Golf Road at the now defunked Plush Horse and took the trail through the woods where we emerged to the clearing and upon the precipice that held the sumptuous view of our summer oasis.

70-80 foot walls climbed up to meet our feet as we stood at their edge.

Down below was once an active quarry with humongous earth movers and powerful jackhammer behemoths smashed and removed the rock for roads and such until they broke through into the aquifer and ceased operations yet afforded us the "FREE" swimming pool.

They left us a road constructed for the machinery to enter and exit the giant pit that some opted to walk with flip flops slapping down to the water's edge, but some like my crazy cousin, Henley, would be so daring and bold as to take the extremely elevated heights imagining themselves as some Acapulco Cliff diver's on ABC's Wild World of Sports, (trying not to be the "Agony of Defeat").

There they perched adorned with Chuck Taylor high-tops to protect our little piggies waiting our turn to take the exhilarating plunge into the cold water that waited for us below.

Our target point lay between the carved walls and some gigantic monolithic stones staged precariously on edge with lintels across that provide both a sunbather's island and underwater corridors to swim through and emerge upon the other side to splash the unsuspecting sun-worshiping girls with the coldness of the water. Water is a necessity for all living things and Huntsville was founded upon the waters of the Big Spring, and we found this our necessity for our fun and adventure in our teenage years.

The youth is gone and the heavy equipment returned and began a new project to load this grand quarry with refuse to become the City's Land Fill. Though buried beneath these high mounds of dirt and debris, it can never bury my memories of that summer's swim and my youth.



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MEMORIES

*by Nolan Myrick,
Feb. 2006*

I spent most of my early life with my grandparents, Acklin and Annie White, who lived on the Old Rescue Road and their farm bordered on Kidd Creek.

I don't know when electric power was available or when they got power but they didn't have it in the early fifties when I was there. We sat around and played rook by the light of the fireplace and kerosene lamps in the winter. In the summer we usually didn't stay up late at night because we had a lot of work to do and most of the time we went to sleep about dark.

I remember we had old Army cots in the yard with metal springs and we slept in the yard under an old white oak tree where it was cool. I remember the darkness because no one else on the mountain had power either. Cars were scarce and no one hardly ever came down the road after dark. It seemed like the lightning bugs were twice as bright then. Sometimes on a clear night you could see the glow of the lights in Huntsville, but I believe being homesick for east Huntsville made me see the glow better.

When I wasn't at Morgan City I spent my time at 1312 Beirne Avenue. That's where my parents lived and where I stayed when I had to go to school at East Clinton Elementary and grew up with some of the best people on earth.

We also went to church at Fifth Street Baptist where Brother M.G. Wilson was the pastor. You could learn a lot in East Huntsville in the fifties.

Now back to Morgan City and my grandparents' farm. We had two mules, John and Blue were their names. We owned 30 acres and row cropped about 12 acres and the rest was woods and pasture. As best as I can remember we had about five acres of cotton and seven acres of corn. We also had about an acre in the vegetable garden.

We did everything by hand or mule labor. Today we could have advertised our operation as being total organic farming. We put the manure from the animals back on the land. Hoes were used for weed

control and we picked the bugs off by hand. Most of the time in the summer we were up before daylight and milked the cow by lantern light and listened to the battery powered radio for the weather. Sometimes we got to listen to the Lone Ranger in the evening.

Grandma listened to the soap opera nearly every day and she made me sit on the couch so she could keep an eye on me while she listened.

When the produce got ready in the garden Poppa and I would pick a big load in the evening and load it in the 1953 Chevrolet pickup and cover it up with wet burlap sacks (toe sacks) so it would stay fresh. About four the next morning we would be up and headed down the mountain for Huntsville. In those days it was a two lane road and there was a sharp curve at the foot of the mountain.

I always felt better when we got around the curve because Poppa wasn't the best driver in the world. I didn't enjoy the Whitesburg Bridge either, but you had to cross it to get to Huntsville.

We rode up and down the streets blowing the horn selling our produce. That's how we lived until the cotton came in.

My poppa White and grandma White were the best friends I had on earth. I learned how to work at Morgan City, Ala. What I know about farming came from those times and now I am grateful for the time my grandparents gave me.

Now the old house is falling down and kudzu has eaten up the sheds and old barn. The old farm still lives in my memories, just like it was in the fifties.

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To Your Health

- Avoid Cola drinks
- Jump rope
- Get some dumbbells, do 2 sets of 8-10 reps a day

To slim down:

- Keep a food diary, you'll be amazed what you eat
- Drink peppermint tea, it decreases your appetite
- Decrease your portions
- Eat slowly, enjoy each bite
- Eat more tuna to recharge your brain.

Do yoga for all types of improvement, including the function in the brain's cortex.

Do your normal chores with your left hand if you are right-handed, and vice versa if you are typically left-handed.

Take Omega 3 fish oil supplements - (avoid the Omega 6)
- I take one in the morning and one at night and my arthritis pain is nearly non-existent.

Boost your metabolism:

- Eat smaller meals throughout the day, go easy on the sugar/fats.
- Eat oranges & other citrus - can help to prevent obesity.
- Add an avocado and olive oil to your diet - will keep you full longer.

Some safer foods to eat:

- Bottled tomatoes rather than canned tomatoes. The acidity of the tomatoes can eat into the lining of the tin cans and can impact your health).

- Popped popcorn rather than microwave popcorn - this version contains chemicals in the lining of the bag that have been proven to be unhealthy to people to breathe in.

- Organic potatoes rather than regular - root vegetables readily absorb herbicides, pesticides & fungicides that wind up in the soil and even thorough washing won't help.

- Organic apples rather than regular - apple trees are among the most doused with pesticides, which stay in the apple even after washing.

- Grass fed beef rather than corn-fed beef; farmers feed cows for market to fatten them up with corn & soybeans. However the grass fed cows have much greater levels of beta carotene, vitamin 3, Omega 3s, calcium and is lower in saturated fat that is linked to heart disease.

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and play. A unique thing about me is that I was born without a tail. I don't know why I became homeless but I am a good sweet boy who would love to have a forever home of my own. If you are looking for a loyal companion to add to your family won't you consider coming to see me at the Ark Animal Shelter? I will be so glad to see you! Ask to see Sparkie, that's me.

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The Secret Life of John Wilkes Booth

New Evidence Claims Booth Survived Under New Identity

From Old Newspaper article

For years rumors have persisted around Huntsville that John Wilkes Booth visited here long after the Government had declared him dead.

Another rumor concerns a certain young lady who appeared on the stage here under the banner of "The Daughter of John Wilkes Booth." Although people agreed

that she looked like the famous actor/assassin and generally accepted her as his daughter, she was born a decade after Booth was allegedly hanged.

Some say that these are not mere rumors.

There's a good chance textbooks and encyclopedias may have to be rewritten to set the record straight on what may be one of the biggest government cover-ups in United States history — the Abraham Lincoln assassination.

Such is the thinking of Arthur Ben Chitty, historiographer at the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee. He is not alone.

It all concerns the controversy surrounding the facts in the capture and death of Lincoln's assassin, John Wilkes Booth. Was it really Booth who was caught and shot in Richard Garrett's tobacco barn? Dr. Chitty says no, a view shared by Nathaniel Orlowek, a religious educator at Beth Shalom Congregation in Potomac, Maryland. Both scholars have independently collected enough research to refute the claim that the man buried as John Wilkes Booth was indeed Booth.

But, even if the two researchers should be proven wrong, they agree that the public has a right to know, and the only way for that to happen is to have the body exhumed and examined by forensic specialists. Chitty and his colleague have secured a lawyer, George LaRoche of Washington, D.C., who is willing to seek a court order for the exhumation at the Green Mount Cemetery, Baltimore, where the Booth family plot is located.

John Wilkes Booth is recorded as one of ten children born to Mary Ann Holmes Booth and Junius Brutus Booth, a celebrated Shakespearean actor who had moved to the United States in 1821 and settled on a farm near Bel Air, Maryland. Dr. Chitty says there is evidence to suggest that John may have been the illegitimate son of Edgar Allen Poe, who was a guest in the Booth home when his legal father was touring.

That might also explain the discrepancy in varying accounts of his birthday, which was either May 10 or Aug. 26, 1838.

"If you are a dog and your owner suggests that you wear a sweater, suggest that he wear a tail."

Fran Lebowitz

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Memories of Lincoln Village

by Tony Thompson, 2006



In 1930, life in the Village was a lot different than today. Life was a lot simpler, but cash money was often short. Many families raised chickens in their backyard for food, eggs and as a cash crop. My dad, Erskine Thompson, was about 13 years old at the time. He was working on enlarging the chicken coop when he ran out of fence staples. My grandmother instructed Dad to take one of the hens downtown to the Tennessee Hide and Poultry Company and sell it, and then go next door to Lewter's Hardware Store and purchase the fence staples he needed to complete the job.

Dad caught one of their chickens, tied its legs together, and with two of his friends, Roy and J.T. Duncan, began walking toward downtown Huntsville.

Unknown to the boys, there had been a chicken thief at work the night before in the Village. Someone had stolen a "Rhode Island Red" hen. This was exactly what the boys had with them.

About halfway to town, near the railroad tracks known as "Miller's Crossing," Dad and his friends stopped to watch a marble game being played.

The local mailman, aware of the previous night's crime, spotted the rag-tag boys with the chicken and called the police. As they were watching the marble game, a touring car with curtains pulled up beside them. Two police officers jumped out and said, "We want you boys." Dad explained that they were not playing marbles but were on their way to town to sell the chicken. The officers said they were not interested in the marble players - they wanted the boys with the chicken.

All three boys were taken to the City Hall on Madison Street. There they were searched and taken to a cell.

As they were being escorted to their cell, they passed a desk

with a pistol on it. Roy told the officer, "If you think we stole the chicken, just take us out and shoot us."

The officer told them that they would not be shot, but they would go to reform school if found guilty.

An officer was sent to Lincoln Village to fetch my grandmother. She went to the City Hall and cleared the whole matter. The officer then took the chicken next door to the City Cafe and sold it for \$1.25. Dad took the money and went to Lewter's and bought the fence staples to complete his job.

In the end, all came out well except Dad's rear end. He was punished for not going directly downtown and completing his chore. All three boys were kidded a lot at school for being chicken thieves.

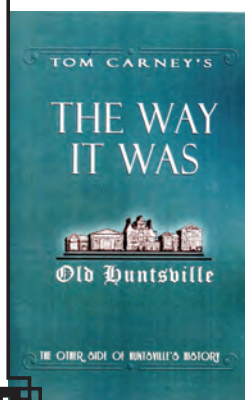
This was the only time my dad was ever arrested, and he became the infamous "Chicken Thief of Lincoln Village."

"Most people work hard enough not to get fired, and get paid just enough money not to quit."

George Carlin

"THE WAY IT WAS," THE OTHER SIDE OF HUNTSVILLE'S HISTORY

BY TOM CARNEY



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TOM SAWYER AT THE U.S. SPACE AND ROCKET CENTER

by ChatGPT with
John Michael Hampton

(JOHN'S NOTE: After hearing feedback from the previous story about Tom Sawyer seeing a television for the first time, which was written by ChatGPT, an AI program on the web, I decided to see if ChatGPT could put together a story about Tom visiting the U.S. Space and Rocket Center. That story follows:)

It was a day like any other in the town of St. Petersburg, though Tom Sawyer had just about had enough of the ordinary. The heat of the summer sun was a thick blanket over the town, and Aunt Polly was giving him the usual round of chores—scrubbing the porch, picking berries, and if that weren't enough, sweeping the yard. But there was a sparkle in Tom's eye, a restlessness in his bones that made him certain something big was afoot.

Then, out of nowhere, an opportunity arrived that Tom hadn't quite anticipated: a letter, thick with official-looking stamps, arrived for him. The letter was from none other than a group of gentlemen in a faraway place called Huntsville, Alabama, offering him an all-expenses-paid trip to a place called the U.S. Space and Rocket Center. Tom didn't know what a "rocket" was, but the word sounded like trouble—and adventure—and that suited Tom just fine.

He packed up his bag and found himself on a steam train, the whistle screeching through the countryside, taking him far from the lazy Mississippi to a land of unknowns. When Tom arrived in Huntsville, he was greeted by strange sights—tall metal structures that glistened in the sunlight, and people who looked just a bit too busy to notice a boy like him.

"Where are you headed, son?" the conductor asked as Tom stepped off the train.

"To space!" Tom said, puffing his chest out and grinning like a Cheshire cat. "I'm going to see rockets and things that fly higher than a rooster."

The conductor chuckled. "Well, you've come to the right place, boy. Just follow the signs, and you'll be there in no time."

Tom made his way down the road to the U.S. Space and Rocket Center, his shoes tapping along the pavement as he hummed a tune. When he arrived, he stood before the towering Saturn V rocket. He gaped up at the mighty structure, feeling the hairs on his neck stand up. It was the biggest thing he'd ever seen in his young life—bigger than any steamboat or church steeple. It was almost like the thing could reach up and grab the moon if it felt like it.

A guide approached, a tall, serious man with glasses that looked like they belonged to a professor. "Are you here to learn about space?" the guide asked.

"Space? No, I'm here to see some rockets," Tom replied. "Ain't that the same thing?"

The guide smiled in a way that said he had met many a curious boy before. "Well, rockets do travel in space, that's true."

Tom scratched his head. "Space... I reckon that's where they send people when they run out of room down here, huh?" The guide's laugh echoed through the courtyard. "Not quite, young man, but I can show you what it's all about."

Tom followed the guide through the center, his eyes wide at every new thing he saw. There were displays about astronauts, about the moon, about the stars. He saw replicas of space suits—strange, puffy things that looked more like the costumes worn by circus clowns. There was a simulator that made Tom feel like he was tumbling through the stars. It didn't make him feel scared, but more like he was about to jump out of a tree and see if he could fly without a branch to catch him.

By the time they reached the gift shop, Tom's pockets were full of souvenirs. He had a keychain shaped like a moon, a t-shirt that said "Mission to Mars," and a pin that said "NASA's #1 Fan." He was so charged up he could've gone to the moon himself, if only they'd let him hitch a ride.

But when the day was done and Tom was back on the train, heading back to St. Petersburg, he sat there thinking. He thought about those rockets, the people who wanted to reach the stars, and what it must be like to leave the ground behind and float out into the big, dark unknown.

"That's something I could do," Tom muttered to himself, a grin sneaking across his face. "Maybe not today, maybe not tomorrow, but someday. I reckon I'll be up there, making a name for myself."

And with that, Tom sat back in his seat, his mind already miles ahead of him, imagining the adventure that was sure to come. If there was one thing Tom Sawyer knew, it was that no place was too far, and no adventure was too big for him. Space? Heck, that was just the next frontier.



No. 292
June 2017

Old Huntsville
A HISTORICAL MAGAZINE

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of the Huntsville
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Keep sending in your family memories - we need them! We Appreciate You more than you know.

For Better or Worse

by Malcolm Miller



In the fall of nineteen fifty-five I went to work as a letter carrier for the Huntsville Post Office and after almost ten years working in the General Shoe Factory (later Genesco). With hard work and almost poverty pay, the Post Office was a real change for the better.

I worked as a substitute carrier for over a year delivering mail and parcels to what then was greater Huntsville. I think at one time or another I delivered mail on every street.

Finally I was assigned my very own route and it made work much easier because I would be walking the same long streets every day and going up on the same porches, meeting the same people and incidentally the same dogs. Knowing which were friendly, both people and dogs, and which were

not. I had one cocker spaniel that met me at the beginning of my route and followed me all day every day.

There were several special people on my route that I still remember till this day. There was Mrs. Fisk, an invalid, who lived on Humes Avenue. She told me to just open the front door and hand her the mail. There was Louis and Lillian Jennings also on Humes and on McCullough Avenue there was Marie Osborne, a lady I went to school with at Hazel Green, also on McCullough. I met Herman and Lessie Hunt, two of the finest people I ever knew.

When you deliver mail on those long neighborhood streets it sure is good to have a place to stop for a cool drink of water and use the bath room. I could always count on Lessie Hunt to provide this assistance with a friendly smile.

Herman worked at the Huntsville Fire Department when I first started delivering their mail but he soon started working for the Post Office delivering mail also, and I dare say Herman Hunt was the hardest working man I have ever seen. He was assigned a route in Dallas Village joining my route and at that time if you were carrying a mailbag you could ride the city busses free.

Herman would rush around his route as fast as he could and when he finished at the corner of Oakwood and Andrew Jackson Way, if it wasn't time for a bus, Herman would walk all the way back to the post office at the corner of Holmes and Jefferson Streets.

Unfortunately as the Hunts were raising fine children and enjoying life, tragedy struck. Lessie was hit with a stroke that left her wheel chair bound; this crippled her body but not her spirit. Even years later when I visited her she greeted me with a smile and a hug. When Lessie became disabled is when Herman proved that he had married her literally for better or worse. All these many years later he devoted his life to taking care of her every need and never once complaining.

Recently Herman reached the point where he could no longer take care of Lessie so they moved in with their daughter where she could help out with her, but Herman is still living up to those wedding vows that he made many many years ago, for better or worse, till death do us part.



"Why do married people live longer than single people? I think it's because married people make a special effort to live longer than their partner just so they can have the last word."

Janet Periat



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Thank you to our Police Officers, Fire-fighters, Paramedics, EMTs - We appreciate all you do to keep us Safe Every Day.

HUNTSVILLE HISTORY THROUGHOUT THE YEARS



When Star Market opened on Meridian Street, in 1942, it was the first grocery in Huntsville to have a frozen food counter. People were also amazed to learn that there were 2,782 motor vehicles registered in Madison County and that Sgt. Kent West, once an employee at the Arsenal, had shot down the first Nazi fighter plane.

Huntsville Times carriers also had reason to be proud when it was announced they had led the nation in the sale of defense stamps and war bonds.

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