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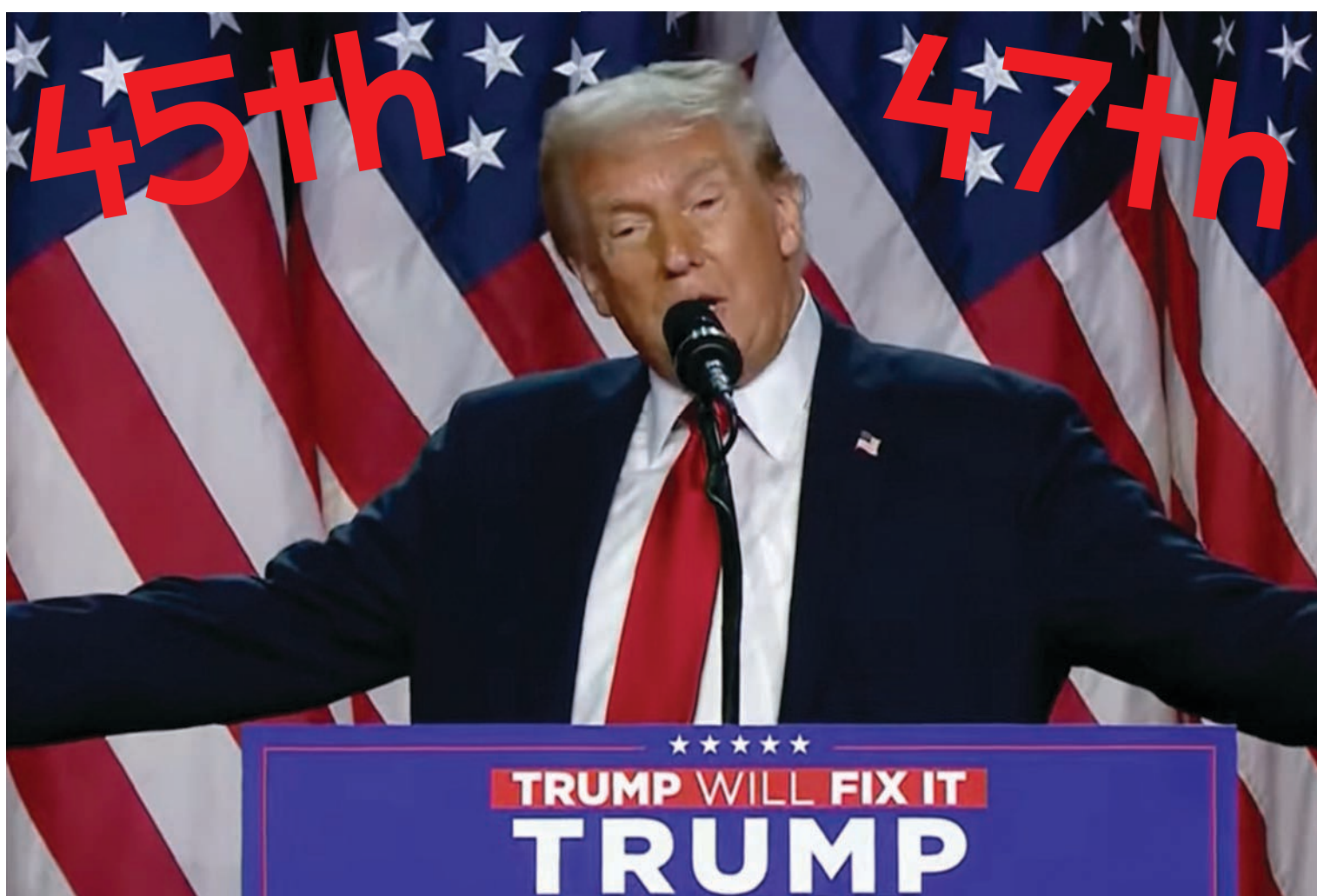


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**THE GAZETTE IS "THE VOICE OF REASON"!**



**AMERICAN Citizens have decided the future of their country!**

**Trump wins Electoral Vote - 312**

## Trump Triumphant

November 6, 2024 – PALM BEACH, FL – former President Donald J. Trump (R) asked the American people to put their faith in him and on election day they did. Trump crushed Vice President Kamala H. Harris (D) and the Democratic party.

**Trump won the popular vote and the electoral college vote 312 to 223.**

This was Trump's third presidential campaign, and this one was his political masterpiece. Trump correctly identified that he was secure in all the states that he had won in 2020, except North Carolina. Knowing that he needed 270 electoral votes to win Trump ran a campaign focused on North Carolina, which he barely won in 2020, Georgia, Arizona, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Michigan.

Four years ago Joe Biden won six of those seven states by the narrowest of margins in an election that Trump still believes was stolen by Democrat chicanery involving mishandled and fraudulent ballots. There would be no doubts this time around. Trump won all seven of the battleground states in 2024.

Vice President Harris conceded Alabama, Mississippi, Florida, Ohio, Iowa, Texas, and all the other states that Trump won in 2020, except North Carolina. Harris was the preferred candidate of the billionaires and she out-raised Trump by hundred of millions of dollars; but by focusing her effort on such a small portion of the country 7 of the 50 states it negated her money advantage from the start. Harris attempted to duplicate the election of 2020; but in 2020 Trump was President and was limited by the duties of his office and the COVID-19 restrictions that limited Trump's rallies and allowed Biden to run the 2020 campaign from his basement. This time Trump did not have any presidential duties to distract him, and there were no COVID restrictions, so Trump was free to do what he does best – Trump rallies where he gets to interact with the people face to face.

Trump, despite his advanced age, held four Trump rallies a day in the swing states. We watched him denounce his enemies in the mainstream media, criticize the Biden-Harris administration, reminisce on the success of his first term, publicly share his disappointments about the 2020 election, share his conspiracy theories, laugh, make jokes, play with his grandkids, share his music playlist, and even dance on stage. We watched in horror when he narrowly survive an assassin's bullet – it was the first of two assassination attempts against Trump.

The Biden-Harris administration unleashed the full powers of the federal government on Trump and his closest supporters. Trump has been indicted, he has been sued by partisan DAs, key Trump lieutenants including: Steve

Bannon, Paul Manafort, and Roger Stone have gone to prison for dubious offenses brought by partisan prosecutors. Trump is the only President in American history to be impeached – TWICE. Democrats who feared facing Trump at a ballot box sought to discredit him in court rooms, while their allies in the mainstream media engaged in character assassination on the 24 hour a day news platforms.

None of it worked. Trump is a professional showman who has hosted his own reality TV show, beauty pageants, sporting events, etc. He likes to be on stage and in front of the camera. All the lawfare did was put Trump on stage. The more the public saw of Donald Trump the more they loved him, and the strength of that relationship was on full display on Tuesday night as Trump beat every expectation.

North Carolina was the first swing state to fall to Trump. Georgia followed, then the most coveted prize – Pennsylvania (the state where Trump was shot in a field in Butler – a field he would return to in a mass rally that 100,000 attended. Then Wisconsin was called for Trump in the early hours of the morning. Trump came out on stage to address his supporters.

Over the course of the next day, Michigan, Nevada, and Washington all were called for Trump. Trump needed to win at least 270 electoral votes to be elected President. He took 312; while Harris finished with 224.

Trump also had coat tails. The Republicans picked up U.S. Senate seats in West Virginia and Ohio – while the three most vulnerable Republicans all won their races. As of press time the Senate races in Pennsylvania and Nevada, are still too close to call. The Republicans have a 52 seat majority; but that very easily could grow to a 54 seat majority in the next few days. The Republicans were massively outspent by Democrats with their billionaire allies in the Senate races; but it was not enough to hold the Senate. The fate of the House of Representatives is still much in play. Republicans lead having won 213 seats. Democrats have won 199 seats to this point.

In Alabama incumbents Barry Moore (R-Enterprise), Terri Sewell (D-Selma), and Gary Palmer (R-Hoover) all easily bested their opponents. In Alabama's redrawn Second Congressional District Democrat Shomari Figures easily bested Republican Caroleene Dobson. This means where Alabama had six Republicans and one Democrat in the House of Representatives; beginning on Jan. 1 the state will have five Republicans and two Democrats in Congress.

Harris conceded the race on Wednesday.

Trump was the 45th President of the United States. He will be the 47th President as well.

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**God Bless the USA**

**The Preamble To The United States Constitution**  
We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common Blessings of Liberty the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

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# Alabama Leaders Congratulate Trump on his Election Victory



**November 6, 2024 – MONTGOMERY, AL – former President Donald J. Trump (R) won both the popular and electoral votes on the way to his return to the White House. Tuesday's GOP victory by Trump was praised in statements by Alabama Republican elected leaders and Alabama's conservative influencers alike.**

**U.S. Senator Tommy Tuberville** (R-Alabama) went to the X social media platform to simply say, "Welcome back Mr. President!"

**Senator Katie Britt** (R-Alabama) released a statement.

"Tuesday was a tremendous victory for our nation. Working with President Trump, a Republican Senate majority is ready to deliver real results and achieve commonsense solutions for the American people," said Sen. Britt. "I'm looking forward to getting to work and putting America back on track. Together, we will secure our southern border, grow opportunity and prosperity for hardworking Americans, unleash U.S. energy dominance, restore peace through strength, and put our families back in the driver's seat. I am confident our best days are ahead of us."

**Alabama Governor Kay Ivey** (R) also congratulated Trump on the crushing win.

"The people have spoken!" said Gov. Ivey. "A Trump/Vance Administration is a win for every American, and I could not be more optimistic for our future. Now, let's all come together to make America great again. Congratulations to @realDonaldTrump & @JDVance on a decisive victory. Let's get to work!"

**Congressman Robert B. Aderholt** (R-AL04) released a statement on President Donald J. Trump's victory on Election Day 2024:

"I want to congratulate President Donald J. Trump on his decisive win on election night," said Rep. Aderholt. "It is a bright day for our nation and a bright day for families and communities across Alabama. The broad coalition of support for President Trump shows a nation that is ready to unite under the singular goal of once again realizing the American dream for all."

"The results of last night's election show the American people have entrusted President Trump and Republicans with a mandate to fix the issues left behind by the current Administration," Aderholt continued. "Families across our nation are hurting under the current, unsustainable policies. I look forward to working closely with President Trump, just as I did in his first term, to create a better and more prosperous future for all Americans."

**Speaker of the Alabama House of Representatives Nathaniel Ledbetter** (R-Rainsville) said on X, "Last night was a massive win for the future of the United States of America and the great state of Alabama."

**Alabama Senate President Pro Tem. Greg Reed** (R-Jasper) shared the news of Trump's win on his social media along with the statement, "Let's get to work to Make America Great Again and get our country back on track! God Bless America!"

"It is a brighter day in Alabama and across the nation for everyday Americans who love our country," said **Alabama Lieutenant Governor Will Ainsworth** (R). "Families won last night, businesses and the free market won last night, the economy and future economic prosperity won last night, girls wishing to keep boys out of their sports."

"I am thrilled to see our country rediscover tonight what my fellow Alabamians never forgot-our love for the US of A and what made us great to begin with! Alabama will now have a partner, not an antagonist, back in the White House! Let's go!" said **Alabama Attorney General Steve Marshall** (R).

Trump was elected President in 2016, lost re-election in 2020,

and has been indicted over 200 times by the Biden-Harris administration's partisan Department of Justice and Democratic district attorneys in New York and Georgia. Despite the legal lawfare and the incessant criticism from the mainstream media, Trump was vindicated by Tuesday's shocking victory.

"This was a comeback for the ages-a stunning example of resilience, grit, and the power of the American spirit," said **former State Representative Perry O. Hooper Jr.** (R-Montgomery). "Against all odds, Donald J. Trump pulled off a win that defied the polls, the pundits, and the Washington elite who counted him out from day one. This was more than just an election victory; it was a seismic rebuke to the elitist establishment machine that thought it could dictate the course of our nation. Trump's triumph wasn't just a win for him-it was a win for every American who's sick of business as usual, who wants real change, and who believes in the greatness of our country. This is history, the greatest political comeback we've ever seen. Donald J Trump will make America great again!"

Numerous Alabama Republicans journeyed to Georgia to go door to door for Donald Trump with the Mighty Alabama Strike Force.

Economic developer **Dr. Nicole Jones Wadsworth** knocked on 1,500 doors in Georgia with the strike force.

Dr. Wadsworth stated, "'Champion'" is an earned title. I am profoundly hopeful that we can work toward sound economic policy, national security, and better opportunities for Americans. Congratulations, President Trump!"

The state of Georgia went to Trump along with all six of the other swing states.

In addition to returning Trump to the Whitehouse, the American people gave Republicans control of the Senate.

**Sen. Tuberville** said that he was, "Excited to get to work for Alabamians and the American people in our Senate majority. We will get America back on track."

In vain hopes of holding their Senate majority the Democrats spent over \$60 million targeting Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas). Based on Tuesday night's election results, that money might have been better spent elsewhere.

"Congratulations to my friend @tedcruz on a dominant win! Texas remains Texas," said **Sen. Britt** on X.

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**Total Votes Cast for Donald J. Trump in Alabama 64.59 % of Vote 1,456,985**

## Shomari Figures wins Congressional District 2 race

November 6, 2024 – MONTGOMERY – voters in Alabama's Second Congressional District went to the polls on Tuesday and elected former Deputy Attorney General Shomari Figures (D). Figures defeated Republican attorney Caroleen Dobson.

Figures told AL.com that winning the race, "It means a lot to me. More importantly, it means we took advantage of the opportunity that this opportunity district created. That's not so much centered around race as its centered around the perspective of what you can bring to the district."

CD2 had previously been in Republican control; however Figures' victory was aided by redistricting that made it almost certain that the

candidate preferred by Black voters would win the seat. That outcome was largely predetermined by the district lines that were drawn by the court in Atlanta over the objections of the Alabama Attorney General's Office and the majority of the Alabama Legislature.

Figures is the son of State Senator Vivian Figures and the late Sen. Michael Figures of Mobile.

Figures win was a big victory for Alabama Democrats on a night where Republicans won nationally. As of press time, it is still too close to call as to which party will control the House of Representatives.

Figures means that the Alabama Congressional Delegation will be

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### Shomari Figures

**157,092 Votes  
54.52%**



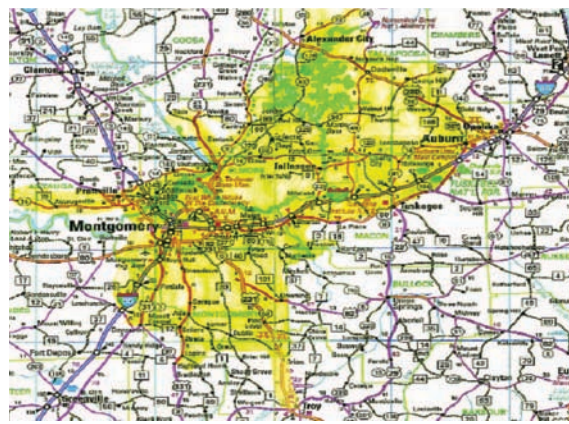
### Caroleene Dobson

**130,847 Votes  
45.41%**



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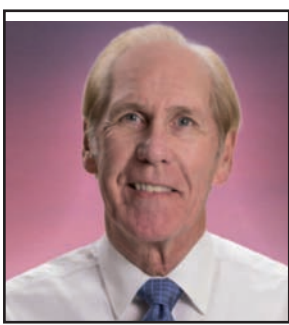
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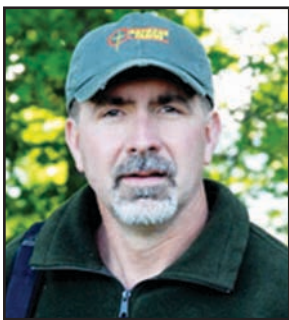
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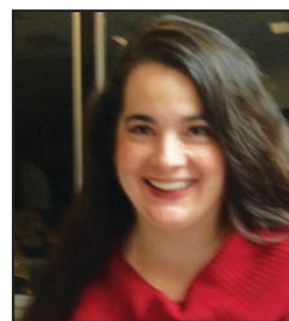
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STEVE FLOWERS

## INSIDE THE STATEHOUSE With Steve Flowers

Steve Flowers is Alabama's leading political columnist. His weekly column appears in over 60 Alabama newspapers. Steve served 16 years in the state legislature. He may be reached at: <https://steveflowers.us/>

### Alabama is a One-Party State



Alabama is a one-party, ruby red Republican state. This is a given in both state and national political races – especially presidentially, as you saw earlier this week.

The proof is in the pudding. With Republican Presidential nominee Donald Trump's triumphant conquest of our state on Tuesday, that makes 12 straight Presidential races in which the GOP candidate has carried our state. Trump has carried Alabama by more than 60% in the last three Presidential cycles – 2016, 2020, and now 2024.

Prior to the Civil War, conservatives in Alabama were Whigs. The Whigs were well-heeled former Virginians and were slave owners. They settled in the Black Belt around the Alabama river. These gentlemen, even though small in population, monopolized and controlled state politics.

The Republican Party came to power as the party that abolished slavery. They enacted an extremely vengeful and devastating reconstruction upon the white people of the South, both rich and poor, slave owner or yeoman farmer. The radical Republicans did not discriminate. They took their vengeance out on all white people. Reconstruction lasted 11 years, 1866-1876. It cemented an inherent hatred towards the national Republican Party. Alabama and our sister Southern states swore allegiance to the Democratic Party. Alabama became and remained a totally Democratic state for almost 90 years, 1876 to 1964.

This Democratic loyalty was instilled by the yoke of Reconstruction. This loathing towards radical Republican rule was handed down from one generation to the next. Many a dying southern grandfather told their children and grandchildren on their deathbed, "One, don't ever sell the family farm, and secondly, don't ever vote for any damn Republican." That is why you would hear old people saying, "My granddaddy would roll over in his grave if I voted for a Republican." That is how the term "yellow dog" Democrat began. It was said that if a yellow dog were the Democratic candidate, he would win. This Democratic solidarity really made Alabama a no party state because all the activity was in one party and primary.

Alabamians cared very little about national politics or presidential elections

between 1876-1964. They just voted for the Democrat in a perfunctory manner. The Democratic candidate for President carried Alabama in every election during those 90 years, but that all changed 60 years ago, today.

It changed presidentially and congressionally in the 1964 Southern Goldwater Landslide. We started voting Republican for national offices that year and have not looked back. The GOP captured the Governor's office in 1986. It has been that way for now close to 40 years.

Folks, when we change, we really change. We do not do things halfway. Sixty years ago, every statewide official was a Democrat. Every state judge was a Democrat. Our entire congressional delegation was Democratic, and our legislature was unanimously Democratic. We were a Democratic state more out of tradition than philosophy.

Today, we are arguably one of the most Republican states in America from top to bottom. Since 1964, there have been 16 presidential elections, and Alabama has voted for the GOP nominee in 14 of those 16 contests, including this year's Trump win in our state.

Jimmy Carter is the only Democrat that has carried Alabama in the last 60 years, and that was by a very slim margin in 1976, almost 50 years ago. George Wallace and his American Independent Party won the state in 1968. Therefore, the American Independent Party has won as many presidential contests in the Heart of Dixie as the Democratic Party has over the past 60 years.

Our Congressional delegation reflects a Republican dominance. Every statewide elected official in Alabama is a Republican. Republican control of Alabama politics today is so dominant that we can safely be called a one-party state, again.

The Republican Party nomination for statewide office, today, is tantamount to election. This Republican dominance of Alabama will continue unabated in the Heart of Dixie for the foreseeable future.

The more things change, the more they remain the same.

The views of submitted editorials may not be the express views of The Alabama Gazette.



Col John Eidsmoe

## MAY GOVERNOR IVEY FIRE WHOMEVER SHE PLEASES?

Landmark constitutional decisions often turn on local and specific sets of facts.

To some, Governor Kay Ivey's firing of the Commissioner of the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs may seem unimportant, although 400,000 Alabama veterans will likely disagree. But a deeper question is at stake: What kind of government do we have in Alabama – a constitutional republic in which even the Governor is under the law, or an all-powerful state in which the Governor is above the law?

The question is not whether you or I think the Governor should have unlimited power to fire state employees. The question, rather, is whether such power has been delegated to the Governor by the Alabama Constitution or by a valid statute?

As we examine this question, let's recount what has happened:

- In July 2024, Commissioner Kent Davis, a retired Navy Rear Admiral, filed an ethics complaint at the behest of his bosses the State Board of Veterans Affairs (SBVA) concerning state officials' handling of a \$7 million grant of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. He noted in the complaint 1819 that he was not certain an ethics violation had taken place but that he was required by law to bring it to their attention. The Ethics Commission concluded that an ethics violation had not been proven.
- On September 5, Gov. Ivey released a one-page letter to Admiral Davis demanding that he resign by 5:00 PM that day. Davis responded that he was refusing to resign because he had done nothing wrong.
- Under pressure from the Governor and because of false information provided by the Governor's aids and a member of the SBVA, Commissioner Davis reluctantly agreed to resign effective December 31.
- After leading veterans organizations, including the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the South Alabama Veterans Council, released statements supporting Admiral Davis and criticizing the Governor's action, the State Board of Veterans Affairs met October 10 and unanimously passed a resolution urging Admiral Davis to reconsider his resignation.
- The same day, Gov. Ivey demanded that Admiral Davis reaffirm his resignation. Davis took no official action in response to her demand.
- On October 18, Gov Ivey called an emergency October 22 meeting of the Board and demanded that the Board fire Commissioner Davis, stating as her reasons Davis's lack of cooperation with other agencies, mishandling the ARPA grant program, filing a "frivolous" ethics complaint, failure to respond to her demand that he reaffirm his resignation, and loss of confidence by the Governor.
- The Board met October 22, with many members absent, and voted 3-2 to reject the Governor's demand. (We need to examine this vote more closely. Of the two votes to remove Commissioner Davis, one was Gov. Ivey's own proxy. The other said all of the Governor's charges against Davis were false, but he was voting to remove solely because Davis had lost the Governor's confidence. In other words, the only Board member Gov. Ivey managed to persuade was Gov. Ivey herself.)
- Later the same day, Gov. Ivey issued an executive order removing Davis as Commissioner, effective immediately.

Does that mean the crisis is over? Not necessarily. Admiral Davis's attorney is exploring legal options, and these options include going to court to challenge the legality of the firing and filing a lawsuit alleging illegal retaliation against a whistleblower. Note that Gov. Ivey made his filing of the ethics complaint one of her grounds for firing him.

So was the firing legal? Does Gov. Ivey have executive authority to fire any state employee who incurs her wrath? If so, no state employee's job is safe.

But what does the law say? The Alabama Emergency Management Act, 31-9-8 (which this writer believes the Governor abused during the COVID crisis) gives her no such power, so she must look elsewhere. There is one section of the Alabama Code that gives the Governor limited power to fire state employees. Section 26-16-7 states:

"The Governor is authorized and empowered to remove from office and discharge from employment, with or without cause, any person who holds office or employment in any of the state executive departments and agencies by virtue of appointment by the incumbent Governor or any preceding Governor, except

those employees subject to the Merit System provisions."

Under this section, if Commissioner Davis had been appointed to his position by Gov. Ivey or a preceding Governor, she would have power to remove him.

But the Governor did not appoint Commissioner Davis. He was appointed by the State Board of Veterans Affairs, pursuant to Section 31-5-6(a): "The board shall appoint a commissioner to serve for a term of four years subject to removal by the board for cause."

Let's put these provisions together. The Governor's power to remove state employees is expressly limited to those who hold office "by virtue of appointment by the incumbent Governor or any preceding Governor." This excludes Commissioner Davis, because he was appointed by the Board, not by any Governor. And the power to remove him from office is expressly delegated to the Board, not the Governor: "subject to removal by the board for cause."

Any claimed general power to fire is limited by these provisions. If the Legislature had intended the Governor to have unlimited power to fire, they would have just said the Governor may fire "any person who holds office." They would not have added the qualifying language, "by virtue of appointment by the incumbent Governor or any preceding Governor." That language is added as a qualification or limitation, in keeping with the legal principle, *inclusio unius est exclusio alterius*, the inclusion of one is the exclusion of others. And by the same principle, providing that the Board may remove the Commissioner implies that no one else may remove him. And finally, providing that the Board may remove the Commissioner "for cause" implies that he may not be removed without cause. And as to whether cause exists, the Governor has thus far failed to prove her case.

The Alabama Constitution contains no provisions that I can find authorizing the Governor to fire at will, but it contains clear provisions establishing that the State of Alabama has only limited powers. **Article I, Section 35** declares:

**"35. That the sole object and only legitimate end of government is to protect the citizen in the enjoyment of life, liberty, and property, and when the government assumes other functions it is usurpation and oppression."**

Clearly, the Framers of the Alabama Constitution created a limited government with a limited chief executive, not a government of unlimited power.

This may be the reason Governor Ivey didn't fire the State Health Officer despite widespread criticism of his handling of the COVID crisis – until the law was changed October 1, the State Health Officer was appointed by the State Board of Health, not the Governor.

Many are urging Admiral Davis to contest his firing in court. I hope he does, for several reasons.

First, as a veteran myself, I know that Admiral Davis has done an outstanding job as Commissioner of Veterans Affairs and that Alabama veterans overwhelmingly support him and are outraged that this public servant has been removed from office.

Second, if Gov. Ivey's action goes unchallenged, it will establish the proposition that the Governor has carte blanche authority to fire anyone for whatever reason she chooses.

Third, a lawsuit would involve depositions, interrogatories, and testimony under oath that could reveal what is really going on here. Why is Governor Ivey – or more specifically, someone in her office – so determined to get rid of Admiral Davis? Are they hiding something? Is there someone they are trying to protect? I'm not making accusations, but I'd certainly like to learn the answers.

Finally, as a Republican activist, I urge Governor Ivey to step up to the plate and stop this bizarre firing. Please consider: Is it really a good tactic to make war upon 400,000 Alabama veterans, most of whom (at least up to now) vote Republican?

Colonel Eidsmoe serves as Professor of Constitutional Law for the Oak Brook College of Law & Government Policy ([obcl.edu](http://obcl.edu)) and as Senior Counsel for the Foundation for Moral Law ([morallaw.org](http://morallaw.org)). He may be contacted for speaking engagements at [eidsmoeja@juno.com](mailto:eidsmoeja@juno.com). A similar article by Colonel Eidsmoe was recently published by 1819 News.

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Rob Tate

## Robservations...

# TRUMP WINS! CLEAN UP IN AISLES 1-10

I woke up this morning to the news that Donald Trump had won the presidency yet again. I will be honest. Like I stated in a previous Robservation, I am not a "Trump can never do wrong" guy and there are many things about him that I do not necessarily like. Did I vote for him? Yes. There was absolutely no way I would ever vote for Harris. No Way!! If there had been a viable alternative out there, possibly. But there wasn't.

So, at one point I am happy that Trump won (actually several points), but at the same time there are several points that concern me. The points that please me are Trumps positions on the border, illegal immigration and deportation, the economy, abortion, drilling for oil, Ukraine, Israel and China to name a few. But guess what, these are the things that worry me about Trump's next presidency. The border, illegal immigration and deportation, the economy, abortion, drilling for oil, Ukraine, Israel and China.

Let's be honest here. Biden and Harris made a hash out of the last four years. It is evident they had no clue on how to handle any of these issues except for one. (For another day) From the disastrous Afghanistan withdrawal, the Chinese spy balloon, student loan forgiveness, the Israeli conflict, the Ukraine, the southern border, trans athletes competing against women and the economy in general, it looks as though we have been living an episode of the Three Stooges meets a fascist anti-American rally. I said it once before, if the current administration was trying to intentionally destroy this country, what would they be doing differently? So, no matter what happens under the Trump administration, and many bad things are poised to take place, it will all be his fault and by extension, the Republicans' fault. This is why, in some small measure, I would not have minded Harris winning because of what I have seen, she would have absolutely no clue on how to handle any worldwide problem that is facing this country. She would have been forced to deal with the problems she helped created. She would handle them just like she handled being the "Border Czar." Like a cartoon ostrich with her head shoved in the ground, totally oblivious to the reality around her. Let's take a look at just a couple examples.

### THE BORDER:



The border issue, in the big scheme of things, should be easy to fix. You draw a line and say, "Don't cross this line or else." Simple. That "or else" is for this country to decide. The countries these people come from DO NOT have a say in the issue. Venezuela for example cannot dictate to us that we cannot return their people. Really? Watch us.

The real illegal immigration problem, however, is the illegals who are currently here. Let's be honest. They never should have been allowed here in the first place - not illegally. Although Trump has mentioned mass deportations and a large segment of the American people want this, how exactly are we going to do this? Does anybody actually think that all of these people are going to peacefully line up for deportation? No way. Most of them I believe are going to fight the order tooth and nail. Why? Because they have already shown what little respect they have for our laws in the first place. I for one, do not want to see scenes reminiscent of Shindler's List, but is that what we will see? I certainly hope not. We are better than that. But I think there is no question that in order to effect mass deportations, violence will be the end result initiated by one side or the other, but it will happen. History kind of tells me this. Because the current administration allowed millions of illegals into every part of this country, they have created an almost unmanageable problem. It is much like a bratty kid. Straightening him up at 4 years old is infinitely easier than at 16. That whole ounce of prevention vs. pound of cure, thing. Ignoring a wound and letting it fester is never the answer. Yes, this is the real border problem we face now. How do we peacefully deport millions of people? Good luck there. At the same time, I do not believe letting them all stay is a viable answer either.

### Clean up on Aisle 1.

### WAR:

Whether it be the Ukraine and Russia, Israel and Iran (to include all their proxies), China and Taiwan, there is a lot to deal with. Although the Chinese situation is not a result of this administration, it is clear the Chinese do not respect our current willingness to face them in any measure. The Chinese spy balloon is infinite proof of that. But now that North Korea has sent troops to fight the Ukrainians and Chechnya has offered to send 80,000 troops to help Russia, things seem to be spiraling out of control. No matter what happens

there, this is an issue Trump will have to deal with and if it morphs into a greater conflict, a problem not of his making will become his fault in every way. The media will ensure that. The same thing with Israel. The day before the election, it was reported that Harris had two commercials, one shown in New York targeted at the Jewish population and one shown in Michigan targeting the Muslim population. These two ads contradicted one another showing that she had no real idea of how to handle that situation.

### Clean up in aisles 2, 3, and 4.

#### RACISM AND OTHER STUPID TALK:

Well, it didn't take long. The left has already launched its campaign to paint all conservatives as a threat to democracy.

I read this morning where one moron wrote that Harris lost because America is racist. Did this guy not see eight years under Obama? Was Obama not black enough for him? How about the fact that Harris had absolutely zero presidential qualities and no significant accomplishments to bolster her standing. As hard as this may sound to some, a person's sex or skin color, in and of itself, is NOT a valid qualification for the presidency. I have heard people say that people only voted against her because she was black. In some instances that may be true, but how about this little nugget. Many, and I do mean many, people voted for her ONLY because she was a woman of color. You wanna hear another little nugget? Blacks can be racist too. This despite what some people try to pontificate.

I for one am not looking forward to four years of uncontrolled, unbridled bs hurled around. "Trump's a racist." "Trump's a fascist." "All Republicans are evil." Hey, wasn't President Roosevelt (D) who turned away the MS St. Louis in 1939 and sent over 900 Jews back to Germany to later be killed in concentration camps? Internment camps for the Japanese? Rhetorical question. Of course it was. Should I continue? Just several hours after the election and I have read all sorts of stupidity. Comments from many people whose biggest challenge in life is leaving their homes in the morning and finding their way back home at night. Those who have no idea what bathroom they want use and those who actively argue that communism and socialism are better than our republic. The amount of propaganda and brainwashing that has poisoned the minds millions has been largely successful and predicted.

I was at a screenwriting conference back in 2007 and I was sitting next to this one black girl. We started talking and when I mentioned I had been a pilot in the Air Force, she proceeded to tell me how brainwashed I had been. I looked at this girl and shook my head in disbelief. This girl knew absolutely nothing about me. All I can say is that after about five minutes of me crushing her with beautifully crafted verbal abuse, she got up and sat somewhere else across the room. "Bye, Felicia." So many people on her side of the fence have way too many preconceived notions about us. To be fair, way too many people on my side make the same mistake about others. I have a brother, sister and several friends who help balance out the small things in my mind. The big issues, however, no chance.

I will concede that I am tired of the division in this country. Jesus clearly stated that a house divided cannot stand. It does not look good for the next administration because we are so divided. I for one cannot understand how any fool can argue that an illegal alien should be allowed to vote in this country. Yet here we are.

I cannot understand how people think that a boy should be able to compete against biological girls in sports. Yet here we are. Not only that, while my side is trying to protect women's sports and the athletes themselves, we are the ones who are continually called misogynists. While one side fights to protect children, another side sees little wrong with reading pornography to them in schools and starting hormone therapy on them without consent of the parents.

One side still sees nothing wrong with forgiving the college debt of students who signed a contract to pay their debt. So why are we on the hook for their college expenses? Although at one time a very ignorant Democratic congresswoman said we had a "moral obligation" to pay off these student loans. In reality, we do not. We have no moral obligation to assume another person's debt that was willingly accumulated. You signed a contract, deal with it. Sorry, not sorry. "But I will never pay this loan off." Perhaps you should have gotten a degree that would have afforded you the opportunity to pay it off. Again, sorry, not sorry.

In the end, and I could go on but am out of space, I am glad that Trump won. Four more years of a continuation of the previous administration's policies would have been disastrous. The economy, illegal immigration, migrant crime, wars around the world, student loan forgiveness, you name it. At the same time, this is not likely going to be a bed of roses for the next administration. There will be challenges and likely some dark days for Mr. Trump and Mr. Vance. Indeed, for all of America. But I do believe these two men are better able to weather whatever storms may be headed our way as opposed to a Harris/ Walz administration.

They all need our prayers.

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The Gazette, (now The Alabama Gazette) was created in the year 2000 for the people of Central Alabama with the intent of being a thought-provoking, non-partisan publication reaching over 20,000 readers monthly. Written comments, stories, advertisements, social and church events, as well as classifieds are always welcome. The publisher is not responsible for errors in text reprinted from other sources. Furthermore, this publication does not establish due diligence on authors or advertisers and cannot guarantee that their offerings or writings are correct or suitable. We assume no responsibility for errors or omissions. We reserve the right to print, edit or condense any and all contents submitted. The publisher reserves the right to refuse advertising and submissions at its own discretion. All articles, ads and photographs may be subject to copyright.



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support you have  
given to the Alabama  
Gazette in the past 25 years.  
May you and your families  
have a Blessed and  
Prosperous 2025.  
God Bless the USA.



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Ronald A. Holtsford

## Is There A Recent Interesting Alabama Legal Case?

Yes, there was a decision handed down from the Alabama Supreme Court just a few weeks ago. The occurrence was from November of 2018, so you can see how long even a civil suit might go on.

The case comes from Houston County and involves fatalities stemming from a collision between an automobile and a truck. Specifically, Raymond and Florence Trigger stopped their vehicle at their mailbox which was across the road from the driveway to their home.

Raymond was driving and after checking their mail he took a right turn across two lanes of the roadway and was hit by a truck driven by Benjamin Deese, who was driving home from work. Florence's side of the car was hit and she died at the scene of the accident. Raymond had injuries and died two months after the accident. The law suit was brought by Jerald Brown, the Personal Representative of the Estate of Raymond Trigger and Florence Trigger. The jury returned a verdict for the estates represented by Jerald Brown, in the amount of \$50,000 for the Estate of Florence Trigger but only \$1 for the Estate of Raymond Trigger.

The two sides argued about causation and contributory negligence. What is contributory negligence? I'm glad you asked. While contributory negligence ended up not factoring into this case, it is an interesting legal theory used in Alabama and only a few other states. In contributory negligence, even if one party was primarily negligent, but the other party was determined to have contributed even one scintilla of negligence to the situation, then neither party can recover anything. The majority of the states look at comparative negligence. In that situation, as an example we will say that Deese had contributed 60% to the negligent cause of the accident and Raymond Trigger had contributed 40% of the negligence by turning across two lanes rather than taking a safer approach. In that made up example Trigger had the lesser contributing percent, his estate would have prevailed. But because he contributed 40% of the negligence then his estate would only receive the difference in what an award would normally be. In Alabama using contributory negligence, the award would have been zero. However, any other available legal theories may be available and result in an award for the Trigger estates.

Going back to the case, the jury was instructed on what negligence and wantonness are which was tied to Deese. Additionally, contributory negligence was discussed as well as the rules of the road and damages. The trial court was clear when the jury was told, "If Raymond's ... conduct was contributory neglig[en]ce, he cannot recover on his claim that ... Deese was negligent. ... If you find that both parties were guilty of simple negligence and each is a proximate contributing cause, then neither party can recover damages from the other"(SC-2023-0798, Supreme Court of AL, Special Term 2024).

Furthermore, the trial court in instructing the jury about damages, said "[T]he damages in this case are punitive and not compensatory. Punitive damages are

awarded to preserve human life, to punish the defendant, ... Deese, for his wrongful conduct, and to deter or discourage ... Deese and others from doing the same or similar wrongs in the future. The amount of damages must be directly related to ... Deese's culpability. And by that I mean how bad his wrongful conduct was. You do not consider the monetary value of Raymond's ... or Florence's life because the damages are not to compensate the estate of the Triggers or ... -- or Raymond's ... or Florence's family from a monetary standpoint because of their death. The amount you'll award is within your discretion based on the evidence and the guidelines in this instruction." The jury initially awarded Florence's estate \$50,000 and Raymond's estate \$0 but were told \$0 could not be awarded. The jury therefore awarded Raymond's estate \$1. Brown argued that the \$1 was inadequate for Raymond's estate and the \$50,000 did not punish Deese for the wrongful death, nor pay the costs of litigation or compensate for the deaths. He asked for a new trial and Deese appealed.

When the Justices of the Supreme Court considered the reasons for appeal of inconsistent awards (\$1 for Raymond and \$50,000 for Florence), equal protection under the 14th Amendment and inadequacy of the award, the Justices held that Brown had no right of appeal. On inadequacy, "Deese correctly argues on appeal that, unlike compensatory-damages awards, Alabama law does not permit the trial court to inquire into the adequacy of punitive damages in wrongful-death cases". On the 14th Amendment, Equal Protection the Court said, "Brown cited no authority to support that argument in the trial court, and he totally omits any equal-protection argument from his brief on appeal. " Finally the Court said "... the alleged inadequacy of a punitive-damages award in a wrongful-death case is not a sufficient basis upon which to grant a plaintiff's motion for a new trial." The new trial originally ordered by the trial court in Houston County being found by the Alabama Supreme Court to have no justification was reversed and remanded back to the trial court. The trial court was ordered with instructions to enter a judgment based on the verdict of the jury.

This article is informative only and not meant to be all inclusive. Additionally this article does not serve as legal advice to the reader and does not constitute an attorney-client relationship. The reader should seek counsel from their attorney should any questions exist.

"No representation is made that the quality of legal services performed is greater than the quality of legal services performed by other lawyers."

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## Where Trump Goes from Here: A Plan for Bipartisanship and Progress

The Fact is that Donald J. Trump is the President elect. He has the chance to be the first Republican President since George H. Bush to win the popular vote. He Finds himself in a critical position, a Republican majority in Congress although somewhat narrow, and a real opportunity to make meaningful changes for America. He has the opportunity to show the world what true leadership looks like. President Trump needs to go beyond the usual political games and work towards something much bigger. It's time to flip the script, collaborate across the aisle, and ignite the American engine of progress.

First, he must not bulldoze opposing views. To achieve lasting progress, President Trump must embrace a simple but revolutionary strategy: invite leaders from both sides of the aisle into the room and showcase a genuine willingness to work together. As Ronald Reagan once said, "If we love our country, we should also love our countrymen". The spirit of unity and faith in each other is what we need now more than ever. Let's be real—the mainstream media wants to see division. Instead, let's give them a narrative they can't resist: America, united in purpose.

Trump's goal should be clear to everyone create a great economy for all Americans. This means putting ideological bickering aside and focusing on what actually matters to us. This starts with economic stability, the kind that allows everyday people to thrive. The President must be open and enthusiastic about crafting smart, meaningful immigration reform. Yes, we have to build the wall to secure our borders—but let's also put forward immigration policies that make sense and reflect the values of a country built by immigrants. America needs a solution that's firm, fair, and sustainable.

Then there's energy independence. America is sitting on a gold mine—liquid gold, to be precise—and we need to drill. Not because it's convenient, but because it's necessary. Lowering gas prices isn't just about affordability; it's about security, strength, and a resilient economy. Our oil resources are an asset, and it's time we treated them as such.

But it's not just about oil. We need to release the full potential of American dynamism—our entrepreneurial spirit, our drive for innovation, and our unmatched work ethic. It's time to remove the bureaucratic shackles that hold back our inventors, builders, and dreamers. By fostering an environment that encourages growth, we can create a future where American ingenuity is unleashed, driving us toward unprecedented prosperity.

What about healthcare? Let's unleash a member of the "First Family" of democrat politics Robert Kennedy Jr.. He's not afraid to tackle the systemic inefficiencies that plague our healthcare system, and his no-nonsense, unconventional approach



**Perry O. Hooper Jr.**

Founder Let the People Speak  
Founder Patriots First  
Former Alabama State Representative  
Alabama State Republican Executive Committee



might just be the breakthrough we need. He knows that American families are being crushed by healthcare costs and bureaucracy, and he's got the guts to take on Big Pharma and the health-care-industrial complex.

And, speaking of efficiency, let's bring Elon Musk an African immigrant and holder of many liberal social views into the mix. Let's put him in charge of reforming government processes. The man who redefined space travel and electric vehicles knows a thing or two about getting things done faster, cheaper, and better. Imagine what he could do with bloated bureaucracies and legacy government inefficiencies. Government needs to move at the speed of innovation, not the speed of paperwork.

Foreign policy must also be a priority for President Trump in this new chapter. A strong America requires a strong global presence, but not at the cost of endless wars or reckless spending. Instead, Trump should focus on building strategic alliances, fostering fair trade relationships, and ensuring that America's interests are protected without compromising our values. By leading with strength and clarity, Trump can secure America's position on the world stage while maintaining peace through strength—an approach that ensures stability and promotes prosperity both at home and abroad.

The mainstream media must get on board and stop creating division. Their role should be to inform the public, not to amplify discord or manufacture controversy. If the media chooses to focus on unity and shared progress, it can help heal the divides that have weakened our country. America needs the media to be a partner in moving forward—highlighting the issues that matter, showcasing collaboration, and being part of the solution rather than fueling the problem. It's time for the media to embrace a narrative that uplifts rather than undermines our shared goals. Ultimately, this is Trump's moment to redefine his leadership. No, it's not about making everyone like him. It's about proving that even in the face of opposition, he can deliver results that matter. It's about getting this country back to work, lowering costs for families, and taking care of our people. It's time for bold decisions, cross-party collaboration, and real progress—all while remembering that the ultimate goal is a stronger, more prosperous America.

This isn't about the old rules of politics. It's about rewriting them for the benefit of the American people. Now is the time to harness the power of unity, optimism, and relentless pursuit of progress. America is at its best when we come together, break down barriers, and set our sights on a brighter future. Let's rise to the challenge, because the world is watching—and it's time to show them what true American leadership looks like.

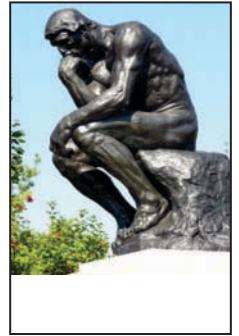
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# God Bless the USA!



John Sophocleus

# Election Anxiety: No Jesus, No Peace



THINK

God and Country. Unlikely young readers are familiar with this three word phrase, part of our lexicon some scores ago. Some oldsters will remember and understand when and why it was evoked. There was a time this phrase and Spirit was an integral part of our lives - perhaps even more embedded in those born and raised South of the Mason/Dixon Line. Most important... the order mattered. God 'trumped' all.

who still and support such flawed, un-Christ like candidates. Pastors shining light on only one of the 'errors' C.S. Lewis wrote about above are worse and most effective in accomplishing the Devil's goal. Not only remember, but rebuke [<https://www.alabamagazette.com/story/2022/05/01/opinion/remember-every-joesophant-and-magat/2349.html>] and make them work hard to regain trust to be worthy of considering their input in your life.

Can't recall a presidential election cycle where duopoly party candidates were more over degreed and under educated than 2024, wreaking with collusion and tyranny. Time for the Blue soviet party to do some serious soul searching (while the sting of defeat is still throbbing) and return to the traditional Democratic Party roots and principles of a limited federal government promoting the general welfare over specific interests to secure the blessings of liberty for ourselves and our posterity.

As the 'sugar-high' of Trump's re-installation fades, it will be time to again address the 'buyer's remorse' of those who decided to vote 'lesser of two evils' or foolishly wished they'd voted for Harris instead of anti-duopoly. Harris' projected \$3.95 trillion spending increase would be just as deleterious as Trump's \$7.75 trillion projected spending increase. Biden is certainly on track to be as bad as Trump's first four years. So as more 'promises kept' and 'tired of winning' unfolds while our hegemonic nation keeps accelerating to the edge of the cliff (indeed some care if we drive off more to the left or more to the right) please remember the folly of voting for such a highly degreed, poorly educated, failed businessman. There is no disputing Trump is an accomplished corporate welfare queen, he's not equipped to understand promoting our general welfare over specific interests.

Fixing primaries and installing candidates rejected by voters determined with taxpayer dollars [<https://www.alabamagazette.com/story/2024/09/01/opinion/rigged-elections-primary-coups-and-general-racketeering/4033.html>] is a fool's errand. Many of the 'blue-duped' will now see the 107 day dance of the 'Kamalala-Land Waltz' a failure. It does illustrate poor choreography and orchestration, unable to defeat the ramblings of an old soviet corporate welfare queen on par with the ramblings of the sitting president they kicked to the curb. One can make the case Biden would've generated a similar November 5th outcome. Some argue a better result without the primary coup and certainty of only four more years of Biden's authoritarianism over a likely eight years of Harris. The objective was not to win but to re-prime the money mill pump to extract more from the dumb masses and further enrich our political puppeteers with no souls or righteous goals. Even with inflation adjustment, the blue money dump was something to behold these past three months.

Let's address the 'big three' issues from last month's column. I will be Trump's whole tenor section singing his praises if he repairs Nixon's harm of closing the Gold Window. It would re-open at approx. \$3,000/ounce thanks to following our soviet economists' policies further enabled by Nixon and Republicans championing the removal of this monetary discipline and actually 'Whip Inflation Now' with Constitutional, stable coin based money. One of the most alarming things Comrade Trump promised on the campaign trail is to remove the few remaining threads of independence the 'Federal' Reserve still has in their power over the economy. If successful, it is easy to predict that interest rates will return to where Trump whined them down to be (dangerously close to zero) spring loading inflation during his failed (straight from the Obama/Biden playbook) Covid response. Little wonder Biden's IRA (Inflation Reduction Act) threw gasoline on that 'trumpster fire.' The irony is IRAs and most anything on the exchanges (not driven by market forces) will explode again as investors again hedge against Trump's inflation tax.

The more one observes un-Christlike behaviour in our executives, judges and representatives, any rational person expects more anxiety, despair and harm. I've grown to appreciate Apostle Paul's Scriptures on hope seemingly aimed at the Greeks. No longer hearing 'God and country; how many want to 'roll our eyes' remembering more modern phrases like, "The Man from Hope" or "Keep Hope Alive" bantered in past elections? Paul intuitively understood the Greeks' struggle with hope. That Pandora's Box thing - is it something to revile or revere? I find 'hopeful Christians' far too pessimistic... God's will is a certainty to me, not a hope. Illustrated via the acts and Victory of Jesus; still alive and shepherding those pursuing righteousness, thousands of years hence. Folks can be an impediment or a facilitator toward God's righteous ends. The choice was clear for Annas, Caiaphas, Herod, Pilate, et al and just as clear for Jerry Falwell, Billy Graham, George Wallace, Dick Nixon, et al in our time.

**Onto uniform tax structure.** Nice to hear Trump getting tariffs into the political discussion again... unfortunately, he's shown himself to be poorly educated on the tariff history of the US and surrounded himself with more soviet economist disciples on the issue. As for the federal income tax, I worked with Dick Armeo on the 'Hall/Rabushka Plan' to simplify the tax code and disempower the IRS. Doubt anyone in Trump's circle remembers this plan, much less understands it... and NO readers, don't expect the Trump team to be interested in having me or my well cited Econ journal publications on this deleterious wealth redistribution (destroying our nation) in Trump's orbit.

The two authoritarians most (who participated) cast their votes for are a shameful embarrassment. Amazing how many simply assert when one candidate makes some silly trash comment about the other, it has insulted half the nation. First, repeated insult from one with the intelligence and integrity of Biden/Harris or Trump/Vance caliber politicians indicates one trekking a righteous path. Second, minions duped by duopoly candidates are NOT halves. About 20% of eligible voters are going to blindly vote for the blue soviet and another 20% for the red soviet candidate. These two deeply flawed modern democrats (yes, I know Trump has been wearing the red jersey these past few years) don't represent the 60% who do not participate or waste much time and Spirit to determine the 'lesser of the two evils' they aid and abet.

**Finally** - a rational, Constitutional immigration policy. Much like the Reagan years, I forecast more amnesty to come. While 'Obama the deporter' was a good start, he didn't seem to have much education on this Constitutional design any more than Trump. Unless Trump is given another Title 42 type excuse from his failed initial response to Covid, immigration will remain a problem [<https://www.alabamagazette.com/story/2018/02/01/opinion/toward-a-more-rational-constitutional-immigration-policy/1275.html>] just as observed in Trump's first years in office. Our executives have shown a lack of knowing/understanding the letter and more importantly the Spirit of our Constitution to resolve this for our Republic... as oligarch babble of democracy carries the day.

The C.S. Lewis Mere Christianity [1952] quote from last month's column was soul-searching according to some reader comments:

*"I feel a strong desire to tell you - and I expect you feel a strong desire to tell me - which of these two errors is the worse. That is the devil getting at us. He always sends errors into the world in pairs - pairs of opposites. And he always encourages us to spend a lot of time thinking which is the worse. You see why, of course? He relies on your extra dislike of one error to draw you gradually into the opposite one. But do not let us be fooled. We have to keep our eyes on the goal and go straight through between both errors. We have no other concern than that with either of them."*

**In closing,** Barabbas illustrated the hypocrisy of corrupt clergy and political sycophants. Most translations do not make clear Barabbas was assassin of Romans, killing and stealing all he could from his occupiers. For Caiaphas to promote sacrificing Jesus 'to keep the peace' and then call for the release of Barabbas over Christ is among the worst recorded in the Scriptures along with Judas [John 12:6] claiming to care about the poor to cloak one's avarice. These past months I've seen far too many championing the path of Barabbas over Jesus... in a few decades the Temple was destroyed and Israel once again suffered the consequences of turning their back on God. Why would one expect any different fate? For me it is not a matter of hope for Jesus and God's discipline... it is a matter of time and certainty.

One of Luke's Scriptures recently stressed in my Bible Study class (I must confess I'm missing to pen this column) is most apropos in this time of angst

Great crowds were following him. He turned around and addressed them as follows: "Anyone who wants to be my follower must love me far more than he does his own father, mother, wife, children, brothers, or sisters—yes, more than his own life—otherwise he cannot be my disciple. And no one can be my disciple who does not carry his own cross and follow me." Luke 14:25-27 The Living Bible

*Postscript: Some presidential candidates run to receive primary matching federal funds; the two of note from the 2024 primary are Jill Stein (\$379,983) and Mike Pence (\$1,128,977) who were soundly rejected this election cycle. Of course, Pence is more notable for the Spirit (or lack thereof) highlighted in this column. If Pence as VP had stood up to Trump's failings from day one (instead of in the final days) and tried to shepherd him toward a righteous path, perhaps we would've witnessed a different result these past eight years. BTW, thanks for input on prostitutes or politutes - i.e., political prostitutes for future use. Still no consensus.*

*The views of submitted editorials may not be the express views of The Alabama Gazette.*



May we always honor how our forefathers worked to establish a Republic by the People and for the people.

\*\*\*\*\*  
"There is no limit to the amount of good you can do if you don't care who gets the credit."

Ronald Reagan

## U. S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION



## MISSION STATEMENT

Protect the American people, safeguard our borders, and enhance the nation's economic prosperity. ENDURING MISSION PRIORITIES

**Counter Terrorism** – Anticipate, detect and disrupt the threat of terrorists, their weapons and actions to protect the people and economy of the United States.

**Combat Transnational Crime** – Detect, deter and disrupt transnational organized crime that threatens U.S. national and economic security interests at and beyond the border.

**Secure the Border** – Protect the Homeland through the air, land and maritime environments against illegal entry, illicit activity or other threats to uphold national sovereignty and promote national and economic security.

**Facilitate Lawful Trade and Protect Revenue** – Enable fair, competitive and compliant trade and enforce U.S. laws to ensure safety, prosperity and economic security for the American people.

**Facilitate Lawful Travel** – Enhance, enable and transform the travel experience by anticipating, detecting and intercepting threats prior to and at ports of entry.

Support **YOUR** Local Law Enforcement

## Montgomery County Sheriff's Office

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◆ [www.montgomerysheriff.com](http://www.montgomerysheriff.com)



Chief Deputy Murphy

**The Montgomery County Sheriff's Office is continually involved in community affairs within the county. They work hard to ensure the safety and well being of OUR Montgomery County residents. Their involvement extends to youth programs, services for the elderly, teaching firearm safety to the public, and many other programs. Listed below are several programs sponsored by Sheriff Cunningham and his staff and his officers. SAY "THANKS" WHEN YOU SEE AN OFFICER.** GAZETTE



### Cadet Unit 2590 is a Law Enforcement Cadet Post sponsored by the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office.

Our objective is to provide a firsthand experience in the field of law enforcement for students who are at least 13 years of age to 18 years old. Members of Cadet Unit 2590 is a year-round post where we engage our Cadets in our events that take place at the Sheriff's Office. Cadet Unit 2590 will learn the importance of organized procedures, professionalism, community involvement, leadership, and discipline. Our Cadet Unit is a mentee/mentor type of unit where cadets will work one-on-one with our Staff to achieve the task or accomplish the task that will lead our youth into the future. These Cadets will be groomed for Sheriff's Office Cadet positions, leading them to a career path in law enforcement.



### CITIZENS ACADEMY

We would like to thank you in advance for inquiring about our Citizens Academy. It is our belief that the citizens are the most valuable assets in our community. Without your assistance, our tasks would be more difficult to complete. The Citizens Academy includes members from all communities of Montgomery County. The academy meets for six (6) consecutive weeks, but only one (1) night per week for one (1) hour. The participants of the Citizens Academy are guaranteed to have fun while learning about the duties and obligations of the Sheriff's Office. The six week program will probably be one of the most enjoyable times of your life. While our ultimate goal is to make you aware of what is going on in your community, how to report suspicious activities/crimes as well as how things are handled from a law enforcement perspective, I can assure you fun will be had by all who are in attendance. I look forward to meeting each and every one of you.



## Sheriff's Office App

If you haven't already heard, the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office has a phone app called "Montgomery County AL Sheriff" that can be accessed through your phone's app store. Once you have added this app to your phone, you can easily set your phone up to receive important push notifications. Push notifications are quick, important messages that can notify you of road closure(s), blocked road(s), anything pertinent to your travel, escapee, etc. While our app can help you with many things including checking to see if someone is in the county jail, it is most helpful to receive push notifications. After you have downloaded the app, go through the follow steps to make sure your phone is set up to receive the push notifications.

### The Business/Church Watch Program

provides the Sheriff's Office with a direct emergency contact for your business or church in case of an emergency. Once enrolled in the program, your business or church will be provided a login and a password where you will be able to update information in our database as needed. Under this program, whatever you enter into the database is confidential to your organization. The program's main purpose is to assist the businesses and churches in our community. Enrollment is free. If you need more information concerning the program, please contact our Community Relations Division at 334-832-1369

Login to Business & Church Watch



John Martin



In the Southern United States, nearly everybody is familiar with the fast-growing invasive leafy jungles that can be seen nearly everywhere. This relentless "Vine that Ate the South" can smother just about anything it encounters—from roads, abandoned fields, barns, houses, and entire forests. With the possible exception of the sea alga *Caulerpa taxifolia*, kudzu (*Pueraria montana*) is the most invasive weed on Planet Earth. So far, efforts to control this monster have been very limited and at a great cost.

For centuries, Kudzu's range remained limited to small parts of China and Japan. In 1876, it was introduced into America at the World's Fair at Philadelphia's Fairmount Park as an ornamental plant and a quick way to shade a porch.

In 1884, the Cotton Centennial Exposition in New Orleans showcased this invasive vine as a control for soil erosion. In 1902, Charles Pleas discovered that kudzu, which is a legume, was effective at rebuilding the soil, as well as a good alternative for livestock feed. He mailed seedlings to farmers for that purpose. In 1920, John Rigdon began a business of selling and shipping kudzu bales to substitute for hay. But so far, the spread of kudzu had not yet reached a problematic scale.

Then in 1935, under the supervision of our notorious and reckless President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the U. S. Department of Agriculture, with the assistance of the Civilian Conservation Corps, began HEAVILY spreading kudzu all over the South "any way they could" to prevent erosion. They didn't just target public land; they also went after private property. Our government offered farmers eight dollars per acre to plant kudzu (adjusted for inflation, about \$180 per acre in 2024). Millions of farmers accepted the bribe and infested their land with this virulent invader that can now cost billions to abate.

From the 1930's through the 1940's, government workers planted about 85 million seedlings, enough to infest an estimated three million acres—about 4680 square miles. By then, the kudzu invasion had reached pandemic proportions.

During World War II, many farmers were sent to war, leaving their fields and farms unattended. Meanwhile, the kudzu spread its leafy flood like wildfire, smothering the land in its embrace. When they returned after the war, they were faced with almost impenetrable jungles. Attempts to remove them were futile. Digging didn't work. Neither did burning. Grazing did little. The wicked vine kept coming back, again and again.

Once kudzu gets started, its primary root can grow up to 100 feet long, eight inches in diameter, weigh up to 400 pounds, and penetrate up to six feet into the ground. When the vine runs, wherever a node touches the ground, it puts down a root. These develop into additional primary roots at rates of up to a foot a day. A patch of kudzu 100 feet from a home could be all over it by the following year.

When young and tender, kudzu sprouts quickly twine loosely up small trees and climb up to their crowns. As it grows, the vines thicken, get stronger, and also SHORTEN and TIGHTEN, strangling the trees' trunks by cutting off their circulation. As it relentlessly climbs, the kudzu slowly pulls their limbs and even their crowns toward the ground, where they smother them under a shady embrace. Only the biggest trees can survive the onslaught. Kudzu vines as young as three years old are so strong, they can be tied into tight knots without breaking. Almost no other vines are that strong and flexible.

According to the U. S. Forest Service, about eight million acres of forest land are now infested with kudzu. Although we have no official statistics on other land, Wendigoo's estimates could be up to another eight million. We don't

really know. "It's estimated from the 1960's until 2020, kudzu, across all industries, has caused an estimated 1.22 TRILLION dollars in damage...."

Today, according to The Nature Conservancy, kudzu is now spreading from the South into the Northeast, the Midwest, and even all the way into Oregon.

Trees and buildings aren't kudzu's only victims. The tough vines can entangle themselves into tractors and mowers, stopping them cold, and sometimes even breaking them. Be careful when driving a car or truck across a Kudzu field. You might not make it.

Even with today's modern technology, controlling kudzu is a tough and expensive battle. Our government has outlawed two of the most effective herbicides that could control it—Tordon and 2-4-5-T, even though it didn't mind using them to devastate the forests of Vietnam and Columbia.

On level farm and range land, machinery can be used to plow up the roots. Repeated treatments of plowing, burning, grazing, and herbicide applications can eventually kill it. Forested land is more problematic, where machine use would be limited by damage to the trees' roots. Grazing is the best option here, and it must be repeated every month or so for two to four summers. Afterwards, spot re-growths can be treated as needed with herbicides, or additional grazing.

In much of the scenic Southern Appalachians—from Northern Virginia down through Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama, infestations are particularly problematic. The mountains near Knoxville, Asheville, and Nantahala Gorge seem hopelessly strangled. Machinery could literally fall off of the steep slopes. So would cattle and horses. The only option to save the trees and native plants is to hand cut the vines climbing into the trees, and then as they sprout a year later, hand spray with a potent herbicide with an army of workers—perhaps volunteers or boy scouts—and re-spraying as needed when growth re-appears for several years. Considering that many sensitive native plants live in these areas, kudzu control is essential to prevent their extinction.

Goats could be one of the best options. According to Wendigoo, 200 goats can eat an acre of kudzu in a day, but treatments must be repeated at regular intervals (perhaps two weeks to a month each) for about two years. Secure fences would be needed to contain them, lest they trespass into neighbor's gardens and other places where they could become a nuisance. Then spot treatments with herbicides could finish any re-growths. Whatever methods are used, eradication in these areas will be horribly expensive and time consuming.

Had Roosevelt's policies never taken place, the impact and damage from Kudzu would have been minimal—less than a tenth of what we have now. Of course some farmers would have tried growing it, but not on a massive scale. They would have sooner discovered that its rampant growth was a bigger liability than its assets. Their plantings would have been limited to lands where their shortcomings would have been quickly revealed, and action taken to stop its spread. And they would have never planted it along miles of roadsides and railroads, and certainly not in the mountains, where control is most problematic.

One very important action that must be taken is to make 2-4-5-T and other effective herbicides readily available to all farmers and landowners. This act alone can provide a great deal of control without expensive and often ineffective government programs.

### SOURCES

1. Wendigoo, The Vine that Ate the South - The Terror & Revival of Kudzu, YouTube, 2024.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3x9LNQGSO-k>
2. The Nature Conservancy, What is Kudzu? What problems does kudzu cause?  
<https://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/united-states/indiana/stories-in-indiana/kudzu-invasive-species/>



# Community Lifestyles

**NOTICE!**  
PLEASE GO TO OUR WEBSITE AND VIEW THIS ISSUE AND UPCOMING ISSUES ALONG WITH CURRENT NEWS!  
[www.alabamagazette.com](http://www.alabamagazette.com)

## Honoring Our Heroes



### VETERAN NEWS

#### Martha P. Simmons

The Alabama Gazette wants to honor Martha for the many years of service to our veterans. She has spent countless hours interviewing, showing special attention, writing stories of the many great Veterans in our area that has served in so many of our American conflicts and wars.



We hope all our readers and especially our veterans enjoy the Alabama Gazette!



LTC Eddie Compton



Sergeant Major J. R. Jimenez



LtCol Donald Dean Lehman



Sergeant John Robert Miller



### Town of Pike Road Veterans Appreciation Ceremony

The 13th annual Town of Pike Road Veterans Appreciation Ceremony was held November 3, 2024 at the Pike Road Veterans Memorial at Veterans Park. Pike Road Mayor Gordon Stone served as the emcee, and the event featured the Veterans Walk of Honor, the dedication of seven new commemorative bricks installed in the floor of the Veterans Memorial, patriotic music including the National Anthem and Taps by the Capitol Sounds under the direction of John Jackson, the Presentation of the Colors, and remarks by COL Derrick Iwanenko, Commandant, U.S. Air Force Officer Training School, Maxwell Air Force Base.

The veterans whose bricks were installed were: (1.) SGT. Dorothy L. Baker, (2.) TSGT James A. Mill Jr., (3.) SP4 Bruce D. Oliver, (4.) COL Chaig S. Peterson, (5.) COL James M. Robinson, (6.) (E-4) SPC Michael Rogers and (7.) MAJ Kim Whittington.

A hand-made quilt created by the members of the Pike Road Quilters was given to a veteran in attendance by the Pike Road Arts Council.

### VETERANS NOVEMBER/DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Fernandez Ponds.....	November 1st	Mary LyBrands.....	December 1st
Vernon Wallace Young.....	November 2nd	LeonArd Norman .....	December 1st
James Malcom Levy.....	November 9th	Robert C. Carr Jr. ....	December 4th
Walter E. Hines III.....	November 11th	Waldo Allison Spencer .....	December 12th
Bryan D. Strickland.....	November 12th	Rhon Vernon Carleton .....	December 13th
John A. Brantner.....	November 12th	Peggy Holley .....	December 13th
Walter Woods.....	November 13th	David Payne .....	December 14th
Shanarik D. McNeal.....	November 22nd	Robert Harper .....	December 18th
Harry Ural Jackson.....	November 22nd	John Robert Miller.....	December 18th
Donald Allen Heil.....	November 24th	Lamar Smith .....	December 19th
Milton Garnier.....	November 24th	William L. Chivalette .....	December 20th
Timothy L. Torney.....	November 26th	William Kent Davis.....	December 22nd
James R. Phillips.....	November 27th	David Gordon Stainback .....	December 26th
		Lee Aldridge .....	December 28th
		Billy Gillyard McKenzie .....	December 28th
		James L. Tatum .....	December 29th

#### WWII US Army Air Corps Gunner Charles E. Lynn



US. Army Air Corps veteran, Charles E. Lynn, passed away November 1, 2024 at the age of 99. He served with the 381st Bombardment Group as a gunner in a turret in the bottom of a B17 Flying Fortress flying 35 missions for 28

months from England over Germany without injury.

He stated, *"The Lord blessed me and took me through WWII with no injury. I served my country. I would do it again."*

His article was published in the April 2019 issue of the AL Gazette.



### Chapter 607: Vietnam Veterans of America

Chapter 607 of The Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) is located in Montgomery, AL, and it meets at the Montgomery Garage at 4035 Wallace Drive, Montgomery, AL 36116 at 1:00 on the first Monday of every month. The purpose of Chapter 607 is to ensure Vietnam Veterans are kept up to date on all the latest information necessary for their well-being including health, disability claims, recent, applicable legislation. It gives Vietnam Veterans a place to meet in fellowship with others of like minds. Not only do its members have the privilege of assisting veterans during their lives, but also Chapter 607 has the privilege of honoring veterans and their families at the time of the veterans' deaths. Chapter 607 has three teams, the Honor Guard, the Presentation Team and the Color Guard. When requested, these three teams, go to funerals, memorials, dedications, etc. and present full military honors for the fallen veterans. Although Chapter 607 honors its brothers from the Vietnam War first, it will honor any veteran whose family requests its services at no cost to the family. There are some limitations as to time and distance so please contact Chapter 607 for more information. Chapter 607 welcomes all Vietnam Veterans who served between November 1, 1965, and May 7, 1975 or in any duty location between August 5, 1964, and May 7, 1975. Please contact VVA Chapter 607, PO Box 231657, Montgomery, AL 36123 with any questions or call 334-328-0468, or, 334-324-6562. Members of Chapter 607 are looking forward to seeing you! Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans!





## Captain Jack Hawkins Jr.: Age 79



Captain Jack Hawkins, Jr. served six years in the United States Marine Corps which included combat duty in the Vietnam War. In addition, he served five years in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve. For his military service he received the following medals, awards, decorations and badges: the Bronze Star Medal "V", Purple

Heart with one star, Combat Action Ribbon, Meritorious Unit Commendation, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal with device, Citation from Republic of Korea Marine Corps, .45 Pistol Expert Badge and M-14 Marksmanship Badge. His Military Occupational Specialty Code (MOS) was Combat Engineer Officer. His life as a Marine and as a civilian personifies unfaltering leadership and service to others.

Captain Hawkins was born March 30, 1945, in Mobile, AL, to his parents, Jack and Phoebe Hawkins, and he was reared there graduating from Murphy High School in 1963. He volunteered and enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in January 1964 in Birmingham, AL. He came from a Marine Corps family. His brother, Tom, and brothers-in-law, Winston Mosley and Charles McLeod, served in the USMC. Tom and Charles also fought in the Vietnam War.

Captain Hawkins completed the Platoon Leaders Class Program and was commissioned a second lieutenant in 1967. He trained at Marine Corps Base, Quantico, Virginia, and received additional training at Camp LeJeune, N.C. Following his service in Vietnam, he served at the U.S. Naval Base in Coronado, CA, the home of NAVY SEAL Training.

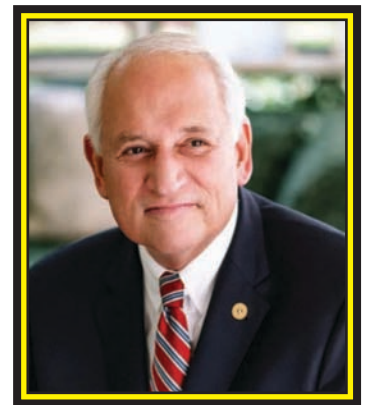
This brave, heroic Marine was a platoon leader and participated in operations against the North Vietnamese Army and Viet Cong Forces in the Democratic People's Republic of Vietnam (RVN), in Operation Wheeler-Wallowa and in Quang Nam Province, RVN. While leading his platoon, he was wounded. Captain Hawkins was discharged from active military service in 1970, and then he served in the USMCR until 1975.

Dr. Hawkins earned three degrees: a Bachelor of Arts with a double major in Political Science and History in 1967 from Alabama College (now the University of Montevallo), and he used the GI Bill to earn a Master of Education

Degree from the University of Montevallo in 1971 and a Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration from the University of Alabama in 1976.

Dr. Hawkins' professional career included service as the Assistant Dean of the School of Community and Allied Health at the University of Alabama at Birmingham from 1971-1979, and from 1979-1989, he served as President of the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind. In 1989, Dr. Hawkins was appointed Chancellor of Troy University. Today he is the longest-serving CEO of a public university in the United States.

Dr. Hawkins and his wife, Janice Grindley Hawkins, have been married since 1977, and they have two daughters and four grandchildren. He continues his service to others through membership on the Board of Trustees of the Daniel Foundation of Alabama, the Board of Managers of the College Football Playoff, the Board of Trustees for Troy Bank and Trust and the Board of Trustees for American Village where he served as Chairman. He has also served as a member of the Board of Visitors for the Marine Corps University in Quantico, VA, and as Chairman of the Board of Visitors for Air University for which he received the Distinguished Service Medal from the Secretary of the Air Force. He has been a member of Rotary International since 1989 and is a member of the Church of the Highlands.



Dr. Hawkins' conclusions about what his military and civilian life mean are: "Freedom is not free. The precious nature of a democracy requires sacrifices. It was an honor to serve our great nation. At Troy University, it has been a remarkable experience helping to create a focus on leadership and international education. In particular, our university's service to the United States military has been and continues to be rewarding. We are focused on training the next generation of leaders in the military and civilian communities."

Dr. Hawkins would like people to remember him by his own words, "The essence of leadership is service. You can't lead if you can't serve." He has made a difference in the lives of those he has served.



## Captain Joan E. Ford: Age 91



Captain Joan E. Ford served eight years on active duty in the U.S. Air Force Reserve. Her Air Force Specialty (AFSC) was Nurse serving as a Nurse General, Nurse Psychiatric and Charge Nurse. She received the following medals, awards, decorations and ribbons: Air Force Longevity Service Award, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award and Air Force Good Conduct Ribbon.



Captain Ford was born August 9, 1933 at Washington, D.C. to her parents, William A. King and Elizabeth C. Arch. She was reared there and graduated from Dunbar High School in 1951. She completed nurse's training at Harlem Hospital in New York City September 14, 1954. Harlem Hospital offered a training program for nurses through the Harlem Hospital School of Nursing which primarily focused on providing a diploma-level nursing education particularly for African-American women. She was licensed as an RN in New York and in California in 1959. She worked as a Civilian Expert, as a staff nurse at Children's Hospital in Washington, D.C. during November 1954 through January 1955, as a staff nurse at Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington D.C. during January through April 1955, as a psychiatric nurse at a Veterans Administration Hospital during April 1955 through December 1957 and as a private duty nurse in Los Angeles, CA, during April 1958 through December 1959.

Captain Ford entered military service in the Air Force Reserve January 1, 1955 serving until February 5, 1959. She was then commissioned February 6, 1959 at Travis Air Force Base, CA, entering active duty as a 1st Lt. She completed Officer Training School (OTS) at Gunter Air Force Base at Montgomery, AL. She served as a flight nurse escorting wounded military personnel from Vietnam to military hospitals in Guam and Okinawa. A picture of her in this duty was featured on the cover of Parade Magazine. She served TDY at Gunter AFB, AL, beginning February 6, 1959 until service in general nursing services at Travis AFB, CA, at the USAF Base Hospital beginning March 11, 1959. Remaining at Travis AFB, she then served until July 15, 1959 as a nurse in psychiatrics there. Next, beginning October 27, 1959, she deployed to serve as the nurse in general medicine in the Dependent Ward at the USAF Hospital at Chateauroux Air Station, France. Remaining there, she served as a nurse in general medicine in the medical and surgical ward from August 1, 1961 until May 26, 1963. Then she served as a nurse in general medicine at Plattsburg AFB, NY, from May 26, 1963 until March 2, 1964. Her last assignment was as the charge nurse at Medical Support at Plattsburg AFB, NY until March 2, 1964.

Captain Ford was discharged from military service May 31, 1967 while she was stationed in Japan.

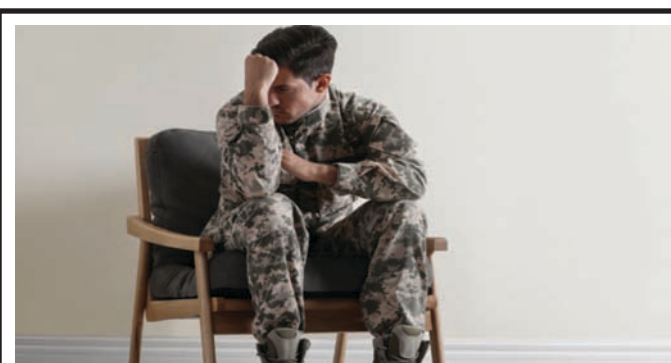
After her military retirement, Captain Ford continued her nurse's education

and training. She participated in the University of AL Birmingham School of Nursing's Continuous Education Service's program in Pediatric nurse Practitioner Program completing August 4, 1975 and completed the National Board of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners and Associates' requirements for competency to practice as a pediatric nurse practitioner/associate and was certified June 16, 1978. She worked as pediatric nurse at Lowndes County AL Health Department for 11 years. She then owned and worked as a nurse at Wee Tots Nursery for 20 years and at Adolescent and Pediatric Associates for 15 years in Montgomery, AL. She retired from all employment in 2013.



Captain Ford and her husband, James L. Ford, Ret. CMSGT, were married 52 years before he passed away, and they had two children and two grandchildren. She is a member of the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepard in Montgomery, AL.

Captain Ford's conclusions about her military service are: "I loved traveling and meeting people." She would like people to remember that she was kind and tried to help people."



**YOU ARE EVER ALONE...**

*Always Remember the Men and Women who have served our great nation and the sacrifices they made.*

**Veterans Crisis Line**

**DIAL 988 then PRESS 1**

**www.veteranscrisisline.net**

**IT IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT THAT YOU REMEMBER OUR VETERANS DURING THE UPCOMING HOLIDAY SEASON. MAKE A POINT TO SAY "THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE" WHEN YOU SEE A VETERAN WEARING HIS SERVICE CAP. HE IS WEARING HIS CAP BECAUSE IS PROUD OF THE OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE HIS COUNTRY. GOD BLESS AMERICA!**



## Lt Col Charles Bradford Stults: Age 80



Lt Col Charles B. Stults served in the U.S. Military for 26 years including four years and 10 months on active duty in the U.S. Army and 21 years in the AL Army National Guard. His active duty Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) was Infantry (11B).



He received the following medals, awards and decorations: Legion of Merit, Purple Heart, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Award (two), National Guard Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Humanitarian Service Award, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Combat Infantryman Badge, Parachutist Badge, Alabama Commendation Medal and Alabama Distinguished Service Medal. He completed education at the following Service Schools: Associates Logistics Executive Development Course, Command and General Staff Course, Armor Officer Advanced School, Special Forces Officer Course, Airbourne School, Infantry Officer Basic Course, Warrant Officer Advanced Course, Quality Guard Senior Advisors Course and M1/M1A1 Tank Commanders Course.

Lt Col Stults was born April 23, 1944 in Montgomery, AL, to his parents, Luther Bradford and Ann Mitchell Stults, and he was reared in Montgomery. He graduated from Lanier High School in 1962, attended Clemson University for one year and then graduated from Huntingdon College with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Accounting in 1967.

Lt Col Stults entered active military service in the U.S. Army in Montgomery, AL, April 1968 and completed Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training at Ft. Dix, N.J. He then attended Officer Candidate School (OCS) Infantry at Ft Benning, GA., completing training after six months. After graduation, he completed three weeks of training at Parachutist (Jump) School before being assigned to serve with the 3rd Special Forces Group at Ft. Bragg, N.C., for nine months. He served as Assistant Detachment Commander, and after completion of the Special Forces Officer Course, he served as Detachment Commander. He was then deployed to the Republic of Vietnam and assigned to the 4th Infantry Division as a Mechanized Infantry Platoon leader from November 1969 until February 1970 when his Armored Personnel Carrier (APC) hit an IED (Improvised Explosive Device) where he was seriously wounded and then hospitalized in the 71st Medivac Hospital at Pleiku, Vietnam. He remained there for three weeks and then transferred to Japan for additional treatment and recovery. After six weeks of hospitalization in Japan, he was transferred to Ft. Gordon, GA, for additional recovery before being assigned to Ft. McLellan, AL, on May 1, 1970.

His initial duties at Ft. McClellan were Post Billeting Officer and Supplemental Closed Mess Officer. After one year, he then was assigned to the 111 Military Police Company as Executive Officer, and after promotion to Captain, he assumed command. After commanding the 111th Military Police Company for one year, he was assigned to the Criminal Investigation Division (CID)

where he served his last six months on active duty and was discharged in December 1972.

Lt. Col Stults served in the Individual Ready Reserve for 13 years, and then he served in the AL Army National Guard from January 1985 until April 2004. While in the AL Army National Guard, he served with the 1-152 Armor Battalion in Gadsden, AL, as Personnel Officer, Headquarters Company Commander, Tank Company Commander and as Battalion Operations Officer for two years after promotion to Major. During this time period, he completed the Armor Officer Advanced Course in Active Duty Status. He then transferred to Troop Command in Montgomery, AL, where he served for five years as an Operations Officer in charge of Collective Training and Protocol Liaison Officer. After promotion to Lt Col, he commanded the Alabama Selective Service System, State Military Department. In order to continue in service in the AL Army National Guard and to the nation, he reverted to the rank of Warrant Officer and was assigned to Internal Review, State Military Department where he remained until retiring in April 2004. While assigned to the Internal Review, he completed the Warrant Officer Advanced Course, and he was promoted to Chief Warrant Officer.

After leaving active duty in 1972, he worked in the civilian sector for five years before using the G.I. Bill to receive a Masters of Business Administration Degree from Auburn University at Montgomery in 1979.

Lt. Col Stults was employed with the state of AL for 34 years with the AL Public Service Commission for 13 years, as Director of Energy the last three years and the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board for 21 years retiring from all employment in March 2014.

Lt Col Stults and his wife, Judy, have been married 30 years, and they have two children and two grandchildren. He is an active member of numerous veterans' service organizations in the Montgomery, AL, area including Chapter 607 Vietnam Veterans of America, the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Smith-Wynn Post 96 of which he is Quartermaster, Disabled American Veterans, Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) and Military Order of the Purple Heart of which he is the Commander.



Lt Col Stults' conclusions about what serving in the U.S. Military has meant to him are: "The military gave me a purpose in service to my country which a lot of people today do not have. The military made me aware of what my country represents and where we stand in relation to other countries. I have seen what other people have done, and it made me proud to serve." He would like to be remembered as a person who served his country and was dedicated to serving those less fortunate especially assisting veterans who have served after him that need a hand to get a start in life and above all, a chance to get it right.

## Birmingham's National Veterans Day event is the oldest and largest Veterans Day celebration in the country.

Birmingham became the pioneer of the national holiday when World War II veteran and Birmingham resident Raymond Weeks had an idea to expand Armistice Day to celebrate all veterans. In 1947 he led a delegation to Washington, D.C., to urge then-Army Chief of Staff General Eisenhower to create a national holiday that honored all veterans. In 1954, Pres. Eisenhower signed legislation establishing November 11 as Veterans Day. President Ronald W. Reagan (R) honored Weeks as the driving force for the national holiday with the Presidential Citizenship Medal in 1982 at the White House.

Brandon Moseley



Veterans are entitled to a patriotic ceremony at their funerals. Raymond Keel will provide this service for free!

Call him at 334-233-8736

or visit:

<https://www.buglesacrossamerica.org>



## How To Get Tickets For The Inauguration



While many people are struggling to keep their heads up at work today after staying up late in the evening watching the election returns, due to the demand for tickets, it is not too early to start looking into requesting tickets to attend the second inauguration of Donald J. Trump as the 47th President of The United States. The swearing-in ceremony will take place on Monday, January 20th, 2025 on the West Front of the United States Capitol in Washington, D.C.

at twelve PM Eastern time. The swearing-in ceremony on January 20th, 2025, will mark the 60th presidential inauguration in the history of the USA.

Since George Washington was sworn in as President in 1789, every President of The United States has delivered an inaugural address ranging from 8,445 words to a mere 135 words. And the swearing in ceremony on January 20th, 2024, will likely feature Donald J. Trump delivering his second inaugural address, as well.

There is also a Presidential Inaugural Parade on the day of the Presidential Inauguration. And there are no tickets required to view the parade since the parade route goes through areas in D.C. that are accessible to the public. But, to get a good viewing spot of the parade it is recommended to reach a desirable location with a good view, early.

If any groups wish to participate in the 60th Presidential Inaugural Parade,

the Joint Task Force-National Capital Region 60th Presidential Inaugural Parade is accepting applications from groups interested in marching in the parade through December 04th, 2024. Those applications can be filled out on their website at 2025 Presidential Inaugural Parade.

The day of the Presidential Inauguration concludes with the Presidential Inaugural Ball. Typically, the President only appears for the sanctioned balls and the tickets for the sanctioned balls tend to be rather pricey. With some tickets for the sanctioned balls being listed today in the amount of \$7,500.00USD each. However, several groups also hold their own balls for the Presidential Inauguration and the attire for the Presidential Inaugural Balls is formal.

A pre-inaugural Presidential concert is held the day prior to the Presidential Inauguration that the public is invited to attend with tickets from their respective elected officials. And while the line up for the concert hasn't been announced, as of yet. Popular music stars like Lee Greenwood have participated in it in the past.

Typically, one has to pick up their ticket for the Presidential Inauguration from their respective congressman's office or senator's office in-person in Washington D.C. a day or two before the inauguration. The lines for those tickets, even though they are already reserved, tend to be long. And while people dress in professional attire to pick up their tickets, comfortable shoes are recommended for people to wear when going to pick up their inauguration tickets. As there will be a lot of walking and standing involved in the process of picking them up.

**For Alabamians wishing to attend the Presidential Inauguration, they can contact their local U.S. Congressman's office and request tickets. Additionally, Coach Tommy Tuberville's Senate office is graciously offering a swearing-in ceremony interest form under the "Services" section of his senate website wherein people can submit their inauguration ticket requests online. The direct link to the inauguration ticket request form from Coach Tommy Tuberville's office can be found here: Welcome to TourTrackr.**



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Cell: (334) 479-1242

Fax: (334) 272-7630

**SOCIAL SECURITY CARDS  
ARE SAFER AT HOME**

## VETERANS AND ACTIVE-DUTY MILITARY MEMBERS: SOCIAL SECURITY HAS YOUR BACK!

**Veterans Day is on Monday, November 11, 2024.**

We honor all veterans who served our country and risked their lives to protect us.

If you know a veteran, please let them know about our Military and Veterans webpage at [www.ssa.gov/people/veterans](http://www.ssa.gov/people/veterans).

On that page, we have information about Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits for veterans, including:

- How SSDI benefits are different from benefits available through the Department of Veterans Affairs and require a separate application.
- How we expedite the processing of Social Security disability claims for service members.
- Answers to questions asked about Social Security.

Some active-duty military service members are unable to work due to a disabling condition but continue to receive pay while in a hospital or on medical leave. They should consider applying for SSDI. Active-duty status and receipt of military pay doesn't necessarily prevent payment of SSDI benefits.

Our Military and Veterans webpage is easy to share on social media and with your friends and family. Please consider passing this information along to someone who may need it.

### Social Security Administration Digitizes or Removes Signature Requirements for Many Forms

The Social Security Administration (SSA) announced progress this year to reduce customer burden by transitioning wet (physical) signature requirements to digital signatures for over 30 forms as well as removing the signature requirements altogether for 13 forms. These actions simplify application processes for people, including removing a potential reason for claims to be sent back or denied.

"Across forms that Americans use most often, we're eliminating as many pain points as possible, from helping people sign at the click of a button to reducing the need to drive or mail something in whenever possible," said Martin O'Malley, Commissioner of Social Security. "This means faster and more error-free processing and better service for our customers, who deserve a government that meets their needs efficiently and effectively."

As a result of this work, SSA will now allow an electronic signature rather than a wet signature for more than 30 forms, which make up 90% of the most commonly used forms by SSA customers in local field offices. Collectively, these forms represent about 14 million signed forms submitted annually.

Furthermore, also this year, SSA has removed the signature requirement entirely for 13 of its most commonly used forms totaling about 1 million submissions in volume annually. This includes removing the signature requirement for the Medical Source Opinion of Patient's Capability to Manage Benefits (**Form SSA-787**, which has a total annual volume of 768,000), the Letter to Employer Requesting Wage Information (**Form SSA-L4201**, which has an annual volume of 133,000), and Request for Reconsideration/Disability Cessation Right to Appear (**Form SSA-789**, which has an annual volume of 49,000). Customers may also upload many of the 13 forms online, further reducing the burden felt by customers.

To build on this progress, SSA is considering removal of signature requirements on other forms that would ease requirements on about 1 million additional transactions.

Social Security works to pay the right people at the right time in the correct amount. These efforts ensure we maintain strong anti-fraud protections while removing onerous requirements that are not serving their intended purposes.

These efforts also complement other initiatives to modernize and streamline operations. The agency is expanding paperless communication options for the millions of my Social Security users so they can see their online Social Security Statement, track the status of their claims, and calculate potential retirement benefits. Notices from across 60 categories are now provided through **my Social Security** for easy online access by customers, including the Cost-of-Living Adjustment, their SSA-1099, Benefit Rate Increases, Appointment Confirmations, and more.

New **my Social Security** account holders can choose online-only communications with one click, and others are encouraged to transition for an enhanced experience. Social Security is undertaking this work in alignment with the Executive Order on Transforming Federal Customer Experience and Service Delivery to Rebuild Trust in Government (**E.O. 14058**), the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) guidance Delivering a Digital-First Public Experience (M-23-22), and OMB guidance Improving Access to Public Benefits Programs Through the Paperwork Reduction Act (**M-22-10**).

To hear directly from Commissioner O'Malley and learn more about the efforts to remove wet signature requirements, visit the agency's YouTube page.

For more information on online services visit [Online Services | SSA](http://www.ssa.gov/myaccount). To create a **my Social Security** account, please visit [www.ssa.gov/myaccount](http://www.ssa.gov/myaccount).

### Social Security Administration Announces New Efforts to Simplify SSI Applications

The Social Security Administration announced a large step in a multi-year effort to simplify processes for people who are applying for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) by starting to offer an online, streamlined application for some applicants starting in December. SSI provides monthly payments to people with disabilities and older adults who have little or no income and resources.

The initial step - known as iClaim expansion - aims to establish a fully online, simplified iClaim application that leverages user-tested, plain-language questions, prepopulated answers where possible, seamless step-by-step transitions, and more. The online application aims to reduce the time spent applying as well as the processing time for initial claim decisions.

"Over the past year, we have asked many applicants and advocates - as well as our workforce - how we could make the SSI application process easier and simpler. Now, we are taking an important first step to do just that," said Martin O'Malley, Commissioner of Social Security. "People in our communities who need this crucial safety net deserve the dignity of an application process that is less burdensome and more accessible than what we now have, and we're committed to achieving that vision over the next few years."

The rollout of the iClaim expansion will generally be available to first-time applicants between 18 and almost 65 who never married and are concurrently applying for Social Security benefits and SSI. A goal of the second phase - currently targeted for late 2025 - is to expand this to all applicants.

The Federal Register Notice that supports this effort was published today and reflects changes based on what Social Security previously received. To read it, please visit [Federal Register: Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Request](https://www.federalregister.gov/agencies/social-security-administration/proposed-requests).

Subsequent SSI simplification steps will incorporate lessons learned from the iClaim expansion into in-person, phone, mobile, and paper-based processes for SSI applications. As part of that, the agency plans to develop a separate simplified child SSI application.

All of these efforts will support and streamline the way Social Security's staff technicians and applicants work together, providing an applicant journey that reflects continuous feedback from the agency's Customer Experience team, particularly from underserved communities.

## HAPPY THANKSGIVING FROM SOCIAL SECURITY

Thanksgiving is a time to reflect on our blessings and to share memories with our loved ones. During this holiday season and throughout life's journey, we are here to help provide you and your family with services, benefits, and information about our programs.

Social Security is more than just a retirement program. We provide services that assist many families across this country. We are there for joyous moments like the birth of your child and issuing their first Social Security card. We are there during times of hardship and tragedy to provide disability and survivor benefits. And we're there to help you celebrate your retirement, too.

We're here to serve you online, by phone, and in person at a local Social Security office. You can learn more about our many services at [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov).

Please share this information with those who need it. **Happy Thanksgiving!**

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**Why We Really Need Christmas This Year!**

Let's face it! After this election there is a lot of tension, division and mistrust in our culture, in our communities and in our country right now.

On the political front, we are so divided! More divided than I have ever witnessed in my lifetime. We negatively label each other as Democrats, Republicans, Socialists or Libertarians. We are stereotyped as liberals or conservatives or moderates. It seems we have a hard time having civil conversations about things that matter deeply to us. This isn't just happening in Washington DC. It's happening right here at home with our own friends, co-workers, fellow church members and within our families too. The whole country seems fractioned about a great many things not to mention our current political state of affairs as well as the future direction of our great nation.

On social media, we are quick to post our views and formulate our opinions based on the very limited information we may have on any given subject. We like or dislike, we friend and unfriend, we tweet or post. We spend on average two hours and 24 minutes per day on social media. Some of it is great for staying in touch with our "friends", but I wonder how much of it is all about sharing with the world our political viewpoints, how "great" our life is or comparing ourselves with others and how "blessed" they are.

The world has two major military conflicts happening in Europe and the Middle East. In many US cities and communities, gun violence and criminal activity is a daily concern. We talk about the different sides of town and socioeconomic and racial division. Young girls are being kidnapped and sold into sexual slavery right here in our own state. Atlanta International Airport is one of the biggest hubs (#2 in the world) for sex trafficking. Did you know that I-20 is considered a sex trafficking super highway running right through our state?

Even in my own Methodist world in recent months and years, we have been in the midst of a culture war over biblical world views, the authority of scripture, interpretations of the Bible, the definition of marriage and issues of human sexuality. Please pray for those of us in the Global Methodist Church as we launch and establish this new movement of Methodism and set a bright new course for the future!

Yes, with the troubled state of the world, our unsettled country after the election and the political divisions that still remain, we really need Christmas this year more than ever! My Pastor friend, Shane Bishop, wrote a blog a while back that sparked my interest as he was voicing the

frustrations of many of us and the need for Christmas. He writes:  
 "I am so ready for the holidays this year... I am especially excited about Christmas. I need Christmas this year. Peace on earth. Goodwill to Men. Christmas Eve services. Angels. Shepherds. Mary. Joseph. Baby Jesus. Hark the Herald! Joy to the World! That kind of stuff. That is exactly what I need.

As we enter the "most wonderful time of the year" don't forget to say a prayer for healing and peace...and for God to raise up healers and peace-makers. And don't be so glued to this earth that you neglect to look up. Look up and see the Christmas star blazing in the night sky and angels announcing to our troubled world that Christ is born...born in you and in me!

Peace dear friends and don't give in to hopelessness, fear and despair. God has this. God has you. You are of value, you matter and you are loved. And most of all, remember that there is hope in Christ. Always has been. Always will be. Hope is the one thing Christmas refuses to allow us to forget...."

**Yes! I really need Christmas this year! How about you? So, what are we going to do about it?**

Here are some ideas:

1. Take time to enjoy and appreciate your family gatherings.
2. Take advantage of all the Christmas services, events, plays, parties and concerts.
3. Avail ourselves of the Christmas Eve services, the manger scenes, the children's Christmas programs, the Christmas lights and the great Christmas season music.
4. Read the Christmas stories in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke.

**We really need Christmas this year!  
 In fact, the whole world really needs Christmas this year!  
 I know I do. I suspect you do too.**

**Merry Christmas!**



*Read the Christmas story.  
 Learn how God loved us  
 so much, he sent his only son  
 to save all mankind.*

*Luke 2: 1-7  
 John 3:16*



*Luke 2: 11  
 For unto you is born this day,  
 in the City of David,  
 a Saviour, which is  
 Christ the Lord.*

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<http://www.thewomenofhope.org/>  
 WOMEN OF HOPE is a non-profit Foundation for Breast Cancer Support and is classified by the U. S. Department of the Treasury as a 501 (c)(3) organization under the code of the Internal Revenue Service.

# Home Town Community News

## Happy Birthday!



### November

- 1 Barbie O'Neal
- 2 Bill Grubbs  
Mary Ellis Killough (16th)  
Mike Lane
- 3 Jack Hornady (96th)  
Foy Tatum (70th)
- 4 Patrick Sikes (14th)
- 5 Mike Davis  
Bill Gaston
- 6 Bella Boyd  
Laura Burt  
Scarlett Jones (7th)  
Teresa SeEVERS Johnson
- 7 Debbie Green
- 8 Trey Mainor  
Klem Paulk, Jr. (84th)
- 9 Carl McDevitt  
John Porterfield  
Patrice Wasden
- 10 Myra Mills  
Manly Swearingen  
Frances Smith
- 11 Amanda Anderson
- 12 Warren Miller  
Tom Vocino  
LeeAnn Williams (44th)
- 13 Sarah Bone  
Jenelle Jones (80th)
- 14 Shawn Adams  
Walker Meadows
- 14 Xan Morrow  
Spears Rhodes
- 15 Larry Browder  
Mary Elizabeth Dean  
Debbie Johnson  
Heather Killough
- 16 Thomas Joseph Boyd
- 18 Billy Jack Beck  
Joyce McGinty
- 19 Laird Bone
- 20 Sharon Harper  
Rich Takacs
- 22 Amy Grubbs  
Locke White
- 24 Debbie Whitehouse
- 27 Annabelle O'Neal (14th)  
Jessika Wallace
- 28 Andy Strange
- 29 Weston Browder
- 30 Brittany Abott  
Kaitlin Castleberry  
Drew Meadows (15th)  
Jackie Moseley  
Boyd Partridge

### December

- 2 Rev. Mike Northcutt  
Skeeter Rhodes
- 3 Jimmy Perdue  
Cam Stanton
- 4 Gail Cotney
- 5 Linda Beaty
- 7 Tobias Grant  
Wayne Henry Morris IV  
Belle Samson
- 8 Alice Mobley  
Meredith Sellars
- 9 Jack Whisonant
- 10 Jane Burgis
- 12 Mollie Higgins  
Wanda Beasley
- 13 Landon Meadows
- 14 Fred Crowe
- 17 Betty Armistead  
Travers Grant  
Dorothy Kiser  
Deborah Kirk
- 18 Robert Harper
- 19 Virginia Braswell
- Ruth Cordle  
Brad Echols  
Maggie Mills  
Susan Yost
- 20 Don Meadows
- 22 Austin Champion  
Dennis Woodall
- 23 Kodee Harrison  
Carla Johnson
- 24 Joyce Turnipseed
- 25 **JESUS CHRIST**
- 25 Arnie Burgis
- 27 Sandy Brown  
Marlin Ingram  
Austin Yost
- 28 Andy Meadows
- 29 Mary Pat Sikes
- 30 Tiffany Hammock  
Scott Takacs  
Sarah Watkins
- 31 Bethany Black Neubauer  
Tex Woodall

### November Anniversaries

- 5 Brad & Julie Echols
- 7 Brian & Jennifer Rushing (15th)
- 9 Don & Tanya Cooley  
James "Hotshot" & Joyce McGinty
- 10 Tanner & Shannon Grant  
Manly & Kris Swearingen
- 12 Todd & Sandy Rogers (21st)
- 15 Foy and Rhonda Tatum
- 14 Jim & Frances Ard
- 16 Stephen & Joyce Turnipseed
- 17 Chip & Tricia Norris
- 18 Burks & Charlotte Crane (29th)
- 21 Doug & Cindy Young
- 24 Gary & Debbie Partridge
- 27 Mike & Wanda Horsley
- 28 Andre & Beverly Stephens

**Belated  
HAPPY 50th ANNIVERSARY**  
DAVID AND BETTY MADDOX  
OCTOBER 4, 2024

### December Anniversaries

- Dec. 4 John & Robin Agnoli  
Rich & Jacque Takacs
- Dec. 7 Del & Prasertsi Atkinson
- Dec. 8 Buddy & Rhonda Black  
Bradley & Liz Braswell
- Dec. 9 Danny & Kristie Richardson
- Dec. 12 Tommy and Melissa Fike  
Tom & Caroline Vocino
- Dec. 13 Dan & Yvonne Mielke
- Dec. 14 Ronnie & Michelle Blount
- Dec. 16 Branon & Haley King
- Dec. 17 Dane & Leah Floyd
- Dec. 19 Dustin & Sarah Kate Moore
- Dec. 20 Wayne & Sarah Watkins
- Dec. 29 Rev. Gary & Jerrie Burton
- Dec. 30 George & Jeannie Handey

### Alabama Gazette's Sympathy to the families of...

- Temple, Kevin Andrew (39).....Oct. 3, 2024
- Beavers, Angela Sue Binkley (60) .....Oct. 4, 2024
- Chesnutt, Sarah Hines (94).....Oct. 4, 2024
- Crowe, Robert "Bob" Joseph (81) .....Oct. 13, 2024
- Braswell, Jane Spear (84) .....Oct. 17, 2024
- Walker, Sharon "Sherri" Claire Marsh (64).....Oct. 17, 2024
- Cates, Sharon Brady (75) .....Oct. 20, 2024
- Sansom, William "Billy Joe" (77) .....Oct. 20, 2024
- Ashcraft, Mahlon "Mick" Joseph (88) .....Oct. 21, 2024
- Anderson, Vivian "Gail" (70) .....Oct. 26, 2024
- Fuller, James Willoughby (94) .....Oct. 26, 2024
- Russell, Amanda "Mandy" Jo Godfrey (75) .....Oct. 26, 2024
- Watson II, Clyde James "Jim" (74) .....Oct. 27, 2024
- Bennett, Shelby "Jean" (82) .....Oct. 28, 2024
- Phillips, Drucilla "Drucie" Patton Calhoun (74)..... Oct. 30, 2024
- Weber, Dennis James (73) .....Nov. 1, 2024
- Wood, Cynthia Carroll (70) ..... Nov. 4, 2024

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Patricia Boyd Killough

Have a Blessed Holiday Season!



**Surprise Spook-tacular Happy 50th Birthday**  
\*\*\*\*\*  
**Stephanie Killough Selvage**

Friends and family gathered for a surprise birthday party on October 26th for Stephanie. Decorations and food were a combination of fall, pumpkins, spiders, spider webs, balloons. As evening fell on the "open air barn" in the country at Ada, music and food was enjoyed by all.



Amy Moon, Stephanie, and Terry Boyd enjoyed sharing their October 27th Birthdays.

### Today's Woman Trisston's Tidbits:

By: Trisston Wright Burrows

Ms. Wheelchair America/Alabama 2005

[site.trisstonwrightburrows.com](http://site.trisstonwrightburrows.com)

### "Don't Get Stuck"

One of the most forgotten sins of the Bible is looking back on your past. Did you know that it is actually a sin? Jesus says that He doesn't want you looking back anymore.

He tells us the story of Lot, his wife, and two daughter. God was about to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah and God sent two angels of the Lord to rescue them. God only gave them one instruction. Don't look back. That was the only instruction.

The life as they knew it was burning down. The Bible says that they came out but Lot's wife looked back. And because she looked back she turned into a pillar of salt, she was calcified and got stuck in a place that she was only supposed to be passing through.

Genesis 19:26: *"But Lot's wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt"*

She didn't realize that God had a hope and a future for her. God had a plan for her. God had a purpose for her. God had provisioned for her. But it was all in the future. She wanted what she was leaving more than what God had for her. She was so attached. If only she would have known that God had more for her.

My friend, we could do that...especially if we've had a broken past. Sometimes the dysfunction of our past is more comforting than the unknown freedom of the future. I want to encourage you today. Keep moving forward. Keep advancing. Know that God has a hope and a future for you!

### Happy Thanksgiving & Many Blessings



### "God is Near"

For those of you feeling lonely on this Christmas, I want to remind you that God left his heavenly dwelling to live a rejected life. And the Bible says that He sympathizes with our weaknesses, and He knows what it's like to not have people around him. When Jesus was on the cross, everyone left. He was fully alone. He was despising the shame on his shoulders...and that shame was your shame and that was mine.

So if you feel shame or a heaviness about this past year, this Christmas, I want you to let it off your shoulders. You don't have to carry it because He already carried it.

If you're nervous about this next year financially, I want you to know that we serve a God who was born into poverty. He was born into a manger. He lived a life where he didn't have two cents to rub together.

If you feel like you don't have a hope and a future this year, I want you to know that God ultimately received His glory when He endured the suffering that was on the cross. He does His best work in the wilderness with you as well.

Jeremiah 29:11 ~ *"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope."*

My friend, you got a lot of hope to be had this Christmas. I know this might be a tough season for you, but I just want you to run to your Father today because He knows everything you're going through and He wants to be with you in it. Always remember, I love you and more importantly, God loves you.

### Merry Christmas & Many Blessings for 2025 !





**Judge Peggy Givhan**

*November is one month that has 2 national holidays, Veteran's Day on the 14th and Thanksgiving on the 28th, plus this year our national election for President. The United States proudly gives tribute to the men and women in uniform who help keep our country free and to those who served in years past. So proudly display the American flag. Thanksgiving will also be a wonderful time for family, food and football. Rivalries run deep between Alabama and Auburn football families, so let the best man win. And if your team loses, there is always next year.*

These are some of the garden jobs we need to attend to in November:

1. **Plant any trees and shrubs** in November and next month for the purpose of giving them their best chance of thriving. The temperatures are cooler and we get plenty of rain.
2. **Plant and fertilize** fall to winter blooming flowers, such as pansies and dianthus.
3. **If you have bought tulips**, place them in the crisper of the refrigerator for about 8 weeks or longer before planting.
4. **Sow poppy seeds**, zinnia seeds, cleome seeds and other spring blooming flowers. Pull back leaves or mulch, scratch the surface with a rake, and sow.
5. **Cut back perennials** to within 4 inches of the

## SOUTHERN GARDENING

### Potpourri - November



bed, and mulch if you desire.

6. **Divide perennials** this month including ginger lilies.
7. **Prune rose bushes.**
8. **Mulch heavily** around begonias, plumbago, and other cold tolerant plants or bring them in to protect them from subfreezing temperatures.

**PLANT OF THE MONTH:**  
PAPER BUSH (*edgeworthia chrysantha*)



I spotted this magnificent shrub in my sister's yard in Athens, Ga. just last week. It was filled with weeping clusters of light yellow buds against the darkest of green elongated leaves. It can reach heights of 4-6 feet, is deciduous and blooms from February to April. This Paper Bush has the most fragrant light yellow cluster flowers and blooms after the leaves have fallen from February to May. It prefers full sun or partial shade, and thrives in zones 7-9. I was so impressed with this shrub that I ordered one, but fairly expensive, \$35.00 for a gallon pot. Maintenance is minimal, just prune in late spring or winter. After it becomes established, Paper Bush is drought tolerant.

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**Gary Miller**

gary@outdoortruths.org



First light has always been my favorite time of day. It's at that time my expectation is at its highest. Whether I'm fishing, hunting or just out, I love the possibilities and excitement the breaking day brings. It seems all game is more active during this period. Every cast is made with great expectations. Every corner of the woods is looked at with great expectations. The skies are filled with great expectations. It's a feeling only you and I know. I wonder sometimes if that's not what draws us back to the water or the woods.

It seems much of our daily lives are filled with less than great expectations. Instead, they are filled with expectations of the normal or average type. We expect to go to work, put in a long day, get off, come home, and do it all again the next day. And we usually get what we expect. But when we are in the woods or on the

water our mind begins to think outside the normal possibilities. I never go into a hunt with great expectations to shoot a spike. Nor do I rush to get to the lake so I can land that 12-inch largemouth. No, my mind soars beyond the average and beyond the normal to the possibilities of what may lie just beyond the corner or just under the surface. And it's that dream that makes the experience so exciting. Some people say, "Get real." I prefer to let my mind take me to the "what ifs."

God has put within each one of us the capacity to dream. Those dreams are our motivation. They are our great expectations. They get us up early and keep us out late. When put into action they are our contribution to the world. If you think about it, dreams have always taken us where we had never been and allowed us to do things we thought we would never do. If you have a dream, it's a gift from God given to you, to be used for Him. To not follow that dream would be not only a shame but a sin. As you look to the days ahead, rekindle the dream you have let simmer. It might take you and others places we have never been.

*Gary Miller has written Outdoor Truths articles for 21 years. He has also written five books which include compilations of his articles and a father/son devotional. He also speaks at wild-game dinners and men's events for churches and associations. gary@outdoortruths.org*

The Alabama Gazette celebrated its 25th Anniversary in October!  
We hope we have published a "VOICE REASON" for us all to "THINK" FOR OURSELVES!

**25 YEAR ALABAMA GAZETTE ADVERTISER**

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Have a Blessed Thanksgiving!

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## HISTORY BITS AND PIECES

### THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY



**Justice Will Sellers**

barely made the grades to graduate from seminary, but Popieluszko was a man of the people, and he spoke to them in unadorned, persuasive sermons, chiseling a significant crack in Poland's socialist foundation.

Within five years, the Polish People's Republic would be discarded and the Republic of Poland restored; one of the key events leading to this change of government was the funeral of Father Popieluszko.

The Polish Politburo saw the threat posed by Father Popieluszko as evidence by their frequent arrest, detention and interrogation of him. Until his murder, his house would be ransacked, his car sabotaged, and he was constantly harassed. The security services thought this slight vicar would get the message. They wrongly assumed, if intimidated enough, he would cease to preach and support his congregants who were starved physically and spiritually.

For all the interrogations, death threats, and brutality, he never relented. It wasn't that his messages were overtly anti-government intending to incite a riot. Rather, he spoke plainly, and with the power of his simplicity, he wove Biblical stories and admonitions to indirectly, but by obscured analogy, attack communism in general and the oppressive Polish government in particular.

Forty years ago, the politics of Poland pitted the people against Soviet puppets. What started in a shipyard in Gdansk over increased food prices became a nationwide strike focused on the plight of workers in Poland. Exposing the dangerous working conditions of Polish laborers and their meagre salaries gave lie to the peace, prosperity and stability in a workers' paradise.

These strikes would begat other strikes until Poland's government was forced out of office and martial law was declared. All of this was a public relations nightmare for the Soviet Union, which in 1984 was experiencing its own tribulations and did not welcome the distractions of a satellite wobbling out of orbit. The one-two punch of Ronald Reagan and Pope John Paul II spreading messages of hope and freedom on Radio Free Europe was simply too much for the regime. While the people might not have control over their circumstances, their minds were engaged and inspired by Father Popieluszko.

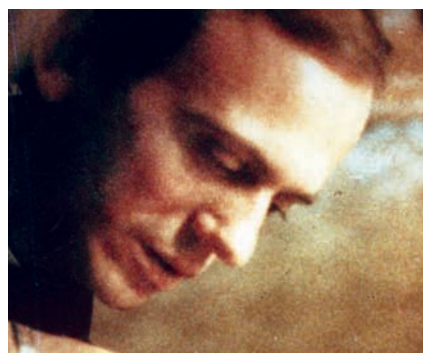
The more he preached, the larger his followings, and the need for the totalitarians to silence his voice increased. Within the socialist republic, the choice was easy — arrest him on trumped up charges and put him in prison after a "fair" trial — but the regime's henchmen overplayed their hand. They placed weapons and explosives in his car and home, but the magnitude, not to mention the provenance of the weaponry, was beyond anything a priest could obtain. Once the Vatican and others weighed in, he was released.

Rather than deter Father Jerzy, this only emboldened him. If it had not been clear before, it was obvious that he was a mere priest taking on all the machinery of the Polish communists. Undeterred, he continued, and his sermons would be recorded, surreptitiously dropped off at the American Consulate, and replayed on

## A Funeral to End a Regime

For a communist country, it was strange to have an unsanctioned gathering of a million people, but 40 years ago in Poland, the funeral of a simple parish priest brought the nation to a halt to pay their last respects.

Father Jerzy Popieluszko was not known as a great scholar or a powerful intellectual. In fact, he barely made the grades to graduate from seminary, but Popieluszko was a man of the people, and he spoke to them in unadorned, persuasive sermons, chiseling a significant crack in Poland's socialist foundation.



**Father Jerzy Popieluszko**

Radio Free Europe. Instead of silencing him, the government had inadvertently provided him a megaphone.

This called for more urgent measures. Perhaps the security forces had learned from watching the Godfather because first they tried tampering with his car to precipitate a fatal accident. When this did not work, they performed the ultimate actions of a thug: kidnap, torture, murder, and hide the body.

Their plan worked well for two weeks, but the weights tied to the body failed to keep him submerged, and when his body floated to the top of the water, the brutality of the Polish People's Republic was exposed. Father Popieluszko would be the last of nine priests murdered by the communists.

No one accepted the attempt at plausible deniability. Everyone knew that nothing happened in Poland by private initiative, much less chance. Even when three security force members were placed on trial, it was clear they were acting on orders from above. Once convicted, they were confined in a jail of sorts but would later be released. Everyone knew the government was responsible, but questions remained about the chain of command.

The funeral was a huge event. Even the official estimate had to concede that more than 250,000 mourners attended, and unofficial estimates placed the crowd at four times that number. To make sure the funeral did not become a riot, security forces were everywhere, but rather than act belligerently to the antagonizing officers, the mourners chanted versions of "We Forgive You." This expression of passive resistance stunned the government which so wanted a pretext to justify brutal crowd control, but Father Popieluszko's message won out.

Even in death he had again defied the government.

For the next several years as conditions worsened in Poland and throughout the Soviet Union, various popular uprisings and strikes would challenge the authority of the government. As the tension within each uprising required the government's acquiescence on several issues, the communist regime collapsed in Poland and elsewhere. Through the lens of the life of Jerzy Popieluszko, the economic, moral and political bankruptcy of communism was exposed for the world to see.

In one of Father Popieluszko's last sermons he said, "Violence is not victorious, though it may triumph for a while. We must unite in reconciliation in the spirit of love, but also in the spirit of justice. Love is greater than justice and at the same time finds reassurance in justice."

Sometimes the words of a simple priest are more powerful than all the might and concentrated force of a socialist regime. No wonder millions of people continue to visit his grave in Warsaw each year.

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*The views of submitted editorials may not be the express views of The Alabama Gazette.*



## The Apotheosis of Abraham Lincoln

*"Abraham Lincoln...has almost disappeared from human knowledge. I hear of him, I read of him in eulogies and biographies, but I fail to recognize the man I knew in life."*

Union General Donn Piatt

You have to give credit to those who fought to prevent Southern Independence. Post-war, they seized the narrative, stated they were going to "reeducate" Southerners and created a "Righteous Cause Myth" that is still believed by many. Even into the mid-1900s, Southerners fought back as best they could but the "reeducation agenda" has been deeply entrenched.

Frenchman Alexis de Tocqueville understood the formation of the federal republic of these United States:

*"The Union was formed by the voluntary agreement of the states; and these, in uniting together, have not forfeited their nationality, nor have they been reduced to the condition of one and the same people. If one of the states chose to withdraw its name from the contract, it would be difficult to disprove its rights to do so, and the Federal government would have no means of maintaining its claims directly, either by force or by right."* How many modern Americans are aware of this basic fact? How many talk about our "democracy" and our "nation"? Both words are conspicuously absent from the founding documents.

Many in both North and South understood the situation relative to the "political football" of the day — slavery. Massachusetts Abolitionist Lysander Spooner stated: *"The pretense that the 'abolition of slavery' was either a motive or justification for the war is a fraud of the same character with that of 'maintaining the national honor.' ...And why did these men abolish slavery? Not from any love of liberty...but only 'as a war measure,' and because they wanted his assistance, and that of his friends, in carrying on the war they had undertaken for maintaining and intensifying that political, commercial, and industrial slavery, to which they have subjected the great body of the people, both black and white."*

Multiple pleas from all sides were made to compromise and avoid war—Lincoln ignored those pleas. After authorizing the invasion of sovereign States, Lincoln and his minions trashed the constitution as they suspended habeas corpus, had over 30,000 Northerners arrested for their opposition to his war, shut down and/or censored hundreds of Northern newspapers, arrested and banished Ohioan Clement Vallandigham for exercising his First Amendment Rights, blockaded ports Lincoln insisted were still part of the U.S., violated international law by stopping the British Mail Ship Trent and arresting John Slidell and James Mason, unconstitutionally created a State (West Virginia) from another State (Virginia), invaded Maryland and arrested almost 100 politicians and newspaper editors to stop a possible vote on secession, slaughtered the Plains Indians in the West to accommodate railroad interests, etc. As noted by M.E. Bradford, *"Thousands of Northern boys lost their lives in order that the Republican Party might experience rejuvenation, to serve its partisan goals. And those were 'party supremacy within a Northern dominated Union.'"*

Even in the South, students have been required to study the Gettysburg Address and treat it as though it has historical validity. H.L. Mencken noted the fallacy of the address' claim that Union soldiers died for self-determination: *"It is difficult to imagine anything more untrue. The Union soldiers in that battle actually fought against self-determination; it was the Confederates who fought for the right of their people to govern themselves. What was the practical effect of the battle of Gettysburg? What else than the destruction of the old sovereignty of the States, i.e., of the people of the States? The Confederates went into battle free; they came out with their freedom subject to the supervision and veto of the rest of the country..."*

The so-called "second founding" born out of Lincoln's forced union feeds into the distortion of American history. Understanding the fact that the country was created as a federal republic composed of "free, sovereign, and independent States," contributors to the Abbeville Institute, along with many traditional conservatives, constitutionalists, and libertarians have consistently criticized the routinely promoted "proposition nation myth."

After the Southern States were denied their independence, "deification" immediately ensued. Abraham Lincoln was elevated as the martyr to represent this new founding with its massive centralization of power, so desired by the Radical Republicans. Lincoln's bodyguard Ward Hill Lamon observed: *"The ceremony of Mr. Lincoln's apotheosis was planned and executed by men who were unfriendly to him while he lived. The deification took place with showy magnificence; men who had exhausted the resources of their skill and ingenuity in venomous detractions of the living Lincoln were the first, after his death, to undertake the task of guarding his memory, not as a human being, but as a god."* Has any plan in history been more effective?

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**John Taylor**

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