

THE GAZETTE IS "THE VOICE OF REASON"!

AMERICA -AT-A -CROSSROADS! EXPLOSIVE NEWS EVERYDAY!

By Brandon Moseley, Gazette Special Reporter

The 2024 election pits two very different candidates.
Very different American values!

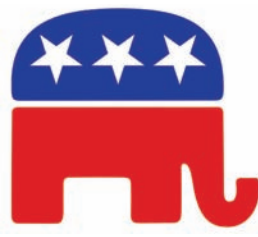
LEFT ISSUES:



Harris and the Democrats

- Support a national law codifying that women have a right to an abortion.
- Favor continuing U.S. military support for Ukraine to force Russia to cede all territory it currently occupies there including Crimea.
- Supports an aggressive approach to reducing America's carbon dioxide emission; including future limits on the vehicles, appliances, locomotives, and power sources Americans can purchase.
- Supports banning semi-automatic rifles and shotguns.
- Embraces LGBTQ+ rights: including allowing transwomen to compete against biological women in athletics as well as guaranteed access to women's restrooms and locker rooms.
- Believes in federal control and regulation of every creek, stream, drainage ditch, and farm pond under their rewritten version of the "water of the U.S." rule.
- Would place more limits on oil and gas exploration. Favors large offshore wind farms. Opposes a pipeline from Canada and the sale of liquified natural gas to our allies.a
- Supports immigration reforms that would include a pathway for citizenship for the estimated twenty million undocumented migrants presently in the U.S. Would make it easier for more immigrants to come to the U.S.
- Supports a limited interpretation of religious liberties to "freedom to worship." Would require medical practitioners to perform dubious medical procedures like sex changes, sterilizations, euthanasia, and abortion.
- Views sex change procedures as "gender affirming care" and would ban states from enforcing state laws preventing doctors from sexually transitioning minor children.

RIGHT ISSUES:



Trump and the Republicans

- Support allowing states to make their own policies on abortions, including leaving in place the abortion ban in the Alabama Constitution.
- Favor negotiating a peace deal between Russia and Ukraine, that presumably would include allowing Russia to retain some portions of the territory it occupies in Ukraine, including the Crimea.
- Supports an all of the above energy policy that includes: solar, wind, natural gas, coal, and oil.
- AABelieves that Americans have a Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms that would preclude passing any sort of assault weapons ban.
- Believes that actual biological women should be protected from men – even men who identify as women. Will not allow men in women's restrooms, locker rooms, or competing in women's sports – even if they claim they are a transwoman.
- Believe that the "waters of the U.S." rule applies only to navigable bodies of water. Would leave drainage regulation to the states and local governments.
- Favors more drilling for oil and gas including in the Gulf of Mexico and the Arctic Wilderness, as well as a pipeline from Canada and the selling of liquified natural gas to our international trade partners – particularly Europe.
- Supports a border wall, deporting criminal illegal aliens, more restrictions on immigration.
- Favors broad interpretation of religious liberties to include freedom to live one's faith – including the rights of medical practitioners to opt out of dubious medical procedures like sex changes, sterilizations, euthanasia, and abortion.
- Views sex change procedures as elective surgeries. Opposes taxpayer funding for the controversial procedures. Would allow states to ban doctors from sexually transitioning minor children.

PARIS 2024 OLYMPICS



2024 Olympic Opening Ceremony Celebrates Decadence Offending Many Christians

Dr. Lester Spencer- - Soul Searching page 10

Why was this scene that seem to depict the Last Supper of Christ being acted out by drag queens allowed in the opening ceremony of the 2024 Olympics? Or, as some claim, it was merely a depiction of some Ancient Greek celebration of hedonism? Either way, it was offensive to many people around the world which is why the Olympic Committee has now issued an apology as many sponsors have pulled their support.

This article by Dr David F. Watson explains more about what may be happening here and helps many of us who are Christ

followers to put this into perspective as we seek to share our faith in a lost and dark world. Dr. Watson is the Academic Dean and Vice President for Academic Affairs at United Theological Seminary. He teaches New Testament Greek along with many other courses in church renewal and the Bible. He is certainly very well educated about Greek history and adds tremendous insight into the deeper issues at hand regarding what we witnessed at the Olympic opening ceremonies.

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 defense, promote 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.

Bryan Jewelry
 1778 E. Main Street
 Prattville, AL 36067
 (334) 365-6552
 M-F: 9-5 Sat: 9-5 Sunday: Closed
 God Bless America



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/>

Donald J. Trump Probably Will Be The 47th President of the United States

July 24, 2024:

I was watching the Trump rally on television the late Saturday afternoon of July 13, and saw the horrific assassination attempt on President Donald Trump. I followed the aftermath and discussions for the next 48 hours and knew that I was watching the revelation of history. The scenes of the horrific incident will be seen for years in historic documents and films. The reaction by President Trump, rising above the Secret Service detail and heroically pumping his fist into the air shouting to the immense throng of worshippers, "Fight! Fight! Fight!" will be seen millions of times between now and November 5.

The mere fact that Trump had the strength and presence of mind to get up and react was amazing after being hit by a bullet and tackled by five Secret Service agents. He actually wanted to continue his speech to the tremendous Pennsylvania audience. He revealed a resilience that I do not believe even his most ardent followers thought he had. That picture of him with blood on his face, defiantly pumping his fist, and saying, "Fight!", will be an indelible iconic image forever in the annals of presidential politics.

The Secret Service did a good job of getting to Trump and covering the President. However, the Secret Service and its director became villainized by the inexplicable inability to secure the rally surroundings from a person carrying a rifle onto the top of a building with a clear view less than 150 yards from where the President was delivering his address.

The most remarkable unfolding of the event was the fact that if President Trump had not turned his head to the right at that exact moment, the bullet would have hit him right in the head and killed him rather than simply grazing his ear. That was without question, divine intervention.

It was obvious when Trump appeared at the GOP Convention on Monday night, a mere 51 hours after almost being murdered, he had a quiet, calm redemptive composure. He had the same mellow demeanor as he gave his acceptance speech

on Thursday night. He looks and sounds presidential. He realizes that God spared his life. A mere millimeter difference in the bullet's trajectory, caused by the exact timing of his turning his head, saved his life. The former and probably next President had a Damascus Road experience.

The entire country, including Republicans, Independents, and even Democrats, have seen the cognitive decline of current President Joe Biden over the last three years. It has accelerated over the last three months, and it will not improve. Even the most ardent Democratic politicians and pundits have overtly acknowledged that he cannot lead the country for four more months, much less four more years.

Lights are out on the reelection of Joe Biden. His reluctance to leave the race revealed that a small insular group of close advisors, including his wife Jill, were keeping him isolated because they liked running the White House and remaining in the limelight.

There is complete discord and disarray within the Democrat Party. Democrat leaders in the Senate and House have been urging Biden's handlers to allow him to step aside as their presidential candidate. Their fear was that Biden's name atop the ticket would not only assure the loss of the White House but would cause the Democrats to lose the House of Representatives and U.S. Senate.

Biden's recent departure from the race allowed the Democrats to field who they believe to be a viable presidential candidate in Vice President Kamala Harris.

However, regardless of whoever is selected to be the Democrat nominee, the assassination attempt on the life of President Trump and his iconic fist pump has galvanized the Republican Party base and probably made Donald J. Trump the 47th President of the United States.

See you next week. Read online in the Alabama Gazette.

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



Robservations...

By: Rob Tate

AN EXISTENTIAL THREAT

So, here we are. I am writing this one week after the Trump assassination attempt. Like many of us, I am troubled. Not so much that an idiot kid would try to do something like this but rather the

mess the Secret Service (SS) made out of the entire situation. In no way am I going to condemn the entire organization or the men and women doing an incredibly difficult job. But, and there is always a but, none of us can ignore the glaring mistakes that were made. Along those lines, I have never been a conspiracy type theorist, but when you look at the sheer number of "known" mistakes that were made by one of the premier law enforcement agencies in the country, you have no choice but to start asking questions.

There are a couple of websites and YouTube videos that outline just some of the known mistakes that were made. I like to ask the following question. "If President Biden was deliberately trying to destroy this country, what would he be doing differently?" So, I would like to have someone ask the director of the SS, "If you were deliberately trying to mess up President Trump's security detail, what would you have done differently?" Yes, the director, Kimberly Cheatle, as Ricky Recardo would say, "Had some splainin' to do." But while people are rightfully jumping on her throat for what happened, let's not forget that as the Director of the SS, she answers directly to the Secretary of Homeland Security. Yes, exactly; Alejandro Mayorkas. The same guy who has failed miserably at his job and has been instrumental for fomenting the chaos that continues to reign at our southern border. Thus far from his office, crickets chirping.

I will be honest with you. I do not know what to think. I served 25 years in our military and love this country. I have seen military operations go smoothly and some turn into disasters. And you know what, in my experiences, it has NEVER been the fault of the men and women with boots on the ground but rather gross failures in leadership. Management always knowing what is best and implementing plans while the operators are forced to choke down the poop sandwich handed them. Once the shots were fired at Trump, the team on the ground responded in a flash. The uncomfortable reality, however, is that it never should have gotten to that point. Never. "Lucy, you got some splainin' to do." All of us are awaiting a cogent answer from the SS although it is likely we will never get one. Too much butt kissing and butt covering going on. But we will see.

What is interesting is what so many people on television have said about the assassination attempt. One low brow commentator stated that it was staged. Staged? Really? I tell you what. If you took the best sniper in the world, put him 135 yards away and told him to just wing someone's ear as they happened to turn their head to the right, who would take that challenge? Not me! Some termed the now famous bloody Trump photos as a "photo-op." Actually, when congressmen and women knelt while wearing the Ghana kente scarves back in June of 2020, that is what one would call a shameless and self-serving photo-op. Some commentators and news organizations refused to initially call it an assassination attempt and one person equated the shooting to Biden's recent bout with COVID.

But a lot of this points directly to the political atmosphere in this country. After President Biden's disastrous debate performance, the heat has only ratcheted up. I find it funny how the left is so eager to call Donald Trump and



existential threat to democracy and if elected, he will destroy our country. I guess they forgot he was President for four years already and none of their threats bore any fruit. Look, I am in no way a "forever Trumper." But I am definitely a "forever, no way in hell Biden/ Harris supporter."

As far as an existential threat to democracy is concerned, let's look at our Democrat brothers and sister. Nothing cries democracy like willfully allowing up to 12 million illegals into our country and then fighting to allow them to vote in our elections. Nothing cries democracy like doing nothing about illegals robbing, beating, killing, and raping American citizens. Nothing cries democracy like the President allowing an enemy aircraft (spy balloon) to transit the entire length of the United States for a week, collecting sensitive information from many of our military bases, and not shooting it down until after it had completed its mission. Nothing cries democracy like not holding people like Mayorkas and Cheatle accountable for their glaring failures. What about a Secretary of Defense who went AWOL for two weeks? Nothing cries democracy like keeping Congressman Bob Menendez in office despite his growing list of "crimes." Nothing cries democracy like the continued ability of our elected leaders to get rich on insider trading. Nothing cries democracy like finding cocaine in the White House and being told nobody has any idea where it came from. If there is indeed an existential threat, it has already been firmly engrafted into the higher levels of our government. The list goes on. Likewise, the threats of China, Russia, North Korean, Israel/ Hamas, and Iran are real and have all been made more tenuous by this administration.

If one is looking for a classic example of an existential threat, look no farther than the SS equity director, Loucious Hires. He said that "when every Secret Service agent makes DEI a 'mission imperative,' the agency will have achieved our ultimate goal." So, DEI is the ultimate goal of the SS? What about saving the life of those you are paid to protect? How about that? The fact that someone would consider DEI as any kind of "ultimate goal" for an organization like the SS is a shame and an operational and existential threat. I am not saying DEI is not important but I am saying put it where it belongs and do not elevate it to a status it is not worthy to possess.

Following the debate, it became clear to everyone that Biden was clearly not in the game. The Democrats could no longer lie and hide the truth. But you know what? For those of us with eyes, it had been clear for years. In my February 2021 Robservation, I wrote, "My prediction, however, still stands. By Christmas next year, Harris will be in the top seat and Biden will be put out to pasture. He cannot make another four years as POTUS." I was not wrong in my prediction, and fully correct in my observations of Biden. It was clear to all who wanted to see, and now after covering for him for 4 years and lying every day to the American people, the Democrats have removed him from their ballot. They propped up a tired and sick old man and now that they have little to no use for him. He was made to drop out.

Remember, these are the same guys who cry that Trump is an existential threat to democracy while trying to stage a bloodless coup and disenfranchising every Democrat voter in the country. (After Biden's dropout, this is exactly what they have done). They covered for him, but now after the proverbial cat was out of the bag, they got rid of him. The acerbic language from the left is intensifying. After Biden's dropout, it will only increase. *The next two months will certainly be "sporty." Maybe even desperate.*

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



Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.

Psalm: 119:105

God Bless the USA Holy Bible

Authorized King
James Version

Old and New
Testaments

I want to thank Perry Hooper, Jr. for the presentation of copies of the *God Bless the USA Bible* to me and Brandon Moseley, Gazette reporter. It was signed by Lee Greenwood with the words to his famous song, "*God Bless the USA*".

In the back of the Bible are printed the Declaration of Independence, The Constitution, and The Pledge of Allegiance. The Republic of America was founded on these documents and principles. What an honor to receive this special edition of God's Word.

Thank you.

Loretta Grant, Co-Owner, Editor



Ronald A. Holtsford

What is the historical meaning of the First Amendment regarding religion?

There are two schools of thought on the Constitution; either those that are strict Constitutionalists or those that believe it is a living, breathing document that changes with the times. Certainly there were assumptions at the time the Constitution was written when most of those in government were protestant. Though not in any judicial position, I tend to argue a strict Constitutional view. It's the same with the Bible, the Bible is either the infallible, inspired, Word of God or is subject to change such as the view of liberals and progressives relative to the culture. I account for the change in times but like the Bible I try to seek it's original meaning.

Prior to the Constitution, the several states had their own laws. Religion was important and most addressed it in new state constitutions. Some that settled the various states were those that had escaped religious persecution. Even among the various Christian denominations the theology differed. No denomination wanted a state sponsored or from a historical perspective, "established" religion that might force change on their beliefs and no denomination wanted to be mixed with politics. I know as a PCA Presbyterian, I do not want to be forced to follow a more liberal denomination or even one that differs in theology. I'm sure in the same sense no individual from another denomination wants to be told by government to only follow what PCA Presbyterians believe in.

The mantra of most Americans is a separation of church and state. Various denominations and religions as well as those that have no religion do not want their theological belief system (or unbelief) changed or another forced on them. The phrase, "Wall or hedge of separation", was first used by the founder of Rhode Island, Roger Williams. Williams also founded the first (not First) Baptist church in America. Later, Thomas Jefferson wrote a letter to the Danbury Baptist Association using the phrase, "a wall of separation between church and state", when referring to their fears in that both the establishment verbiage and free exercise language together supported their freedom to worship without persecution.

The First Amendment says, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof;". No where in the Constitution does the phrase exist regarding "separation of church and state". There are multiple appellate cases, even more notable from the United States Supreme Court that address those areas where religion and any level of American government overlap. In the 1947, US Supreme Court case of *Everson v Board of Education*, the Township of Ewing, NJ under New Jersey law allowed the free public transportation of not only public school children but also the "not for profit" private schools which were mostly parochial, Catholic schools. *Everson* had argued against taxpayer funding of bus transportation of parochial students. The Supreme Court said that the public transportation was for the public benefit and

outweighed the potential entanglement. Furthermore, that due process of the Fourteenth Amendment was not violated.

In 1971, the United States Supreme Court decided the case of *Lemon v Kurtzman*. It was from that case that the "Lemon Test" was created for subsequent cases. The Lemon test hinged on the following; government action (1) must have a primary secular purpose, (2) may not have the principal effect of advancing or inhibiting religion, and (3) may not foster excessive entanglement with religion. For four decades that test was used without consistency and began to face criticism. In the 2022, *Kennedy v Bremerton* case involving a coach's postgame prayers, Justice Neil Gorsuch said that the (Lemon) test, "must be interpreted by 'reference to historical practices and understandings.'" He felt that the Lemon test had caused a "vice between the Establishment Clause on one side and the Free Speech and Free Exercise Clauses on the other." This seems to provide a more thoughtful shift relative to future First Amendment cases.

An example of government "entanglement" with religion has been presented in the Winter holiday displays where legal action has been brought against municipal displays of manger scenes on public property. Municipal governments have found through legal advice and Court rulings that displays that meet certain historical display criteria involving both secular and religious symbols have been successful. Such displays may include displays of a manger scene, a menorah as well as a Christmas tree and Santa Clause.

The First Amendment relative to religion has (1) wrongly been described as primarily a function of forming a hedge between church and state, (2) the free exercise clause has received less attention especially as time marches on when religious diversity and culture has overwhelmed a time in this nation when it was mostly Protestant with minority Catholic and Jewish faiths, and (3) the historical meaning of establishment was not to found but rather understood more as a predominant existing institution. The founders did not want a Church of England type institution in this new nation with a restricted ability to worship from different theological views and they also wanted to protect religion from a government imposing its own views into theology or the views of a single theological institution.

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."

Ronald A. Holtsford, Esq.
Ronald A. Holtsford, LLC
7956 Vaughn Road, Box #124
Montgomery, AL 36116
(334) 220-3700 - raholtsford@aol.com

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



John Martin

Better Highways at Lower Cost

This past May, June, and July, 2024, along Highway 231 in Wetumpka, our "illustrious" Alabama Highway Department has been hard at work from the Wal-Mart north to the old Montgomery Highway with construction cones all over the place. Somehow, the department had decided that dozens of raised "islands" in the highway's center would help make traffic safer and more expedient.

Do these contraptions really have any value? Do they enhance safety? Do they help the traffic flow? And how much extra taxes do they cost the people?

I have driven down this highway regularly for many years in its "unimproved" state—already a four lane divided highway with a marked paved median to allow for left turns wherever and whenever they are needed. It has been perfectly satisfactory for many years.

Once the "islands" are completed, left turns will be blocked in many places. Motorists will be forced to slow down to a crawl to make "U" turns around them and then backtrack to reach many business establishments, clogging traffic. When it gets heavy, nightmarish jams will likely be frequent. Also, fewer safe places will be available to pull over in case of an accident.

AND to top it off, MORE ACCIDENTS will certainly occur whenever a car or truck hits one of these monstrosities at a greater than walking speed. Many will be multi-car accidents. An 80,000 pound semi could jackknife and end up killing people and blocking the entire highway for hours.

Like all asphalt highways, 231 must undergo resurfacing about every eight to ten years. While it is straight, flat, and unobstructed, this maintenance is a simple task with minimal delays and at a nominal cost. Through traffic can easily shift from lane to lane as the paving progresses. But once the "islands" are in place, the traffic must detour around them, and the pavers must consume considerable extra time and space, blocking traffic to negotiate and pave the spaces between them. This adds to the time and expense to perform the job and also adds to lane closure times by reducing the number of usable lanes.

PLEASE, Mr. Highway Director, tell us HOW you are making our highways safer with these abominations. Once these obstructions are completed, and the self-evident dire consequences begin to slap us in our faces, more of our highway funds must later be consumed to undo this death trap. Sometimes, as in this case, the best improvement is to just leave things alone.

Of course we do need to maintain our roads and bridges and keep them in good repair, but we need to focus on useful improvements, not traffic impediments.

How could we improve this highway to a top standard? To be honest, at the beginning, it didn't need much work. Just keep the original lanes as they are, resurface the pavement whenever needed, and then apply the ONE improvement we do need on most of our highways—REFLECTIVE PAINT onto the lane lines. That's it.

THAT is the BEST solution to make ALL of our roadways safer—MUCH SAFER?

And it will cost MUCH LESS than the stupid barricades.

Just apply the reflective paint onto all of our highways—the kind we sometimes see on better roads elsewhere. Neighboring Georgia is already pulling well ahead of us with this life-saving technology. Driving down many Georgia highways at night is a real pleasure with lane lines clearly visible hundreds of feet ahead, with no accidentally ending up in the wrong lane or a truck cutting you off because the lane lines have faded to almost nothing, like we see in much of Alabama.

Right now, many of our roads are less than adequately painted, even with ordinary paint. Some lines are badly faded—almost invisible at night. Imagine driving with no headlights, unable to see what lane you are in. Drop the useless projects and paint our roads to adequate standards.

Good reflective paint can light up highways like Christmelyas trees and enhance safety tremendously. In critical places, reflectors can also be added. There is no question that it prevents multitudes of accidents. WHY isn't Alabama making reflective paint a TOP PRIORITY? Why does our highway department keep whining about safety, concocting largely useless actions (like the no-brainer I described above), and ignoring the ONE most logical solution that can provide maximum safety at a minimal cost. Reflective paint is the obvious remedy far ahead of all others to provide that safety. It provides more "bang" for our



highway bucks than any other maintenance procedure. There is no excuse not to apply it onto EVERY ONE of our roadways.

Another needed highway improvement is adequate signage. Some of our roads, especially rural roads, go many miles without any useful clues to their names, numbers, or locations. Some even lack adequate signs at intersections. Signs should include both numbers and names, and they should be everywhere.

In some places, improperly timed traffic signals can be a serious nuisance. The most frequent problem is inadequate green time on the primary highways, backing up traffic to give green lights and usually unnecessary protected left turns on minor roads with almost no traffic—often changing to red and blocking the highway when there is no traffic at all on them. Lights on highways should remain green unless cross traffic is actually detected.

Another solution is to program signals to go on flash during off-peak traffic hours. This is already done in a few places, but it needs to be done a great deal more.

And NEVER install a signal that can turn red on a highway at the bottom of a long, steep hill. That can be deadly.

There are some signals that should just be scrapped. One particularly obnoxious one in Wetumpka is at the intersection of South Main Street and River Oaks Drive. That light will turn red when there is NO traffic on River Oaks Drive, and it will STAY red on Main Street for minutes and minutes, piling up traffic. It is utterly unjustified and a public nuisance.

Another huge improvement that would cost almost nothing would be to allow parking along the sides of the interstate highway ramps. Many of these ramps are of ample width to safely provide space for up to three big trucks. They would be a great emergency asset for our truckers when they need to rest after long drives and all of the rest areas and truck stops are filled up to or even beyond their capacities.

A couple of improvements for Montgomery would include:

1. Remove the road block on Dalraida Road and connect it to Highway 231. This would provide a much needed direct corridor from 231 to the southern end of Perry Hill Road.

2. We have a chronic shortage of PUBLIC parking close to the state house. Yes, there is a huge parking lot already next to it—about 100 spaces—maybe more. BUT they are all reserved. They are empty nearly all of the time. We common people cannot use them. I twice had to push an elderly handicapped friend in a wheelchair a half mile down Mt Meigs Road and on to the state house and back again for important meetings for the lack of a parking space.

Go easy on traffic stops. Too much "enforcement" can obstruct traffic, distract people, and be more dangerous than too little, or even none at all. Traffic laws are essentially self-enforcing. For their own protection, people naturally strive to avoid recklessness and avoid accidents on their own—without "Big Brother" sticking his nose into their business.

Now let's look a few years into the future. How well is Highway 231 in Wetumpka getting along? How well is the traffic moving? How many more accidents, injuries and deaths have taken place since 2024? Who is going to be held responsible?

Finally, the time will arrive to back up and punt. Remove the death traps and restore the highway to its earlier, safer condition?

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



Col. John Eidsmoe

TRUMP: A THREAT TO "DEMOCRACY"?

Desperate people will say anything. And the Radical Left is getting desperate as they look to the November election.

They can't run on the economy. The voters know that inflation has wiped out any financial gains, and they have less buying power than they had four years ago.

They can't hide behind the COVID pandemic as they did in 2020. Increasingly, Americans are realizing that the lockdowns and compulsory vaccinations probably did more harm than good.

They can't run on foreign policy – not after the Afghanistan debacle, which in turn encouraged Russia to invade Ukraine, Hamas and Hezbollah to attack Israel, and bolder moves by China and North Korea.

They certainly can't run on the border, which has become a non-border, letting in terrorists and criminals as well as people who will take jobs from American blacks and Hispanics.

And their principal candidate, President Biden, is becoming a liability, and Vice-President Harris even more so.

So in desperation, they have developed a new campaign theme: This is a campaign to "Save Our Democracy." You see, they say, "Donald Trump hates democracy, and if he is elected, he will destroy our democracy and establish a dictatorship."

Never mind that the Framers did not establish a pure democracy with unfettered majority rule; they established a constitutional republic with limits on government power and protection for minority rights. But we also recognize that people loosely use the term "democracy" today to refer to representative government in general.

And never mind that in his first term of office, President Trump did not establish a dictatorship. Rather, through numerous executive orders he abolished regulations promulgated by administrative agencies of the executive branch, thereby divesting himself of power. Just repeat the mantra: "Trump hates democracy, and if elected he will establish a totalitarian dictatorship."

Let me suggest that, **if there is a threat to "democracy," that threat comes from Biden/Harris and the Radical Left.**

Has the Biden/Harris Administration – and I use the term Biden/Harris because the Vice-President will have to stand on the Biden record -- really become a threat to democracy? As Jefferson said in the Declaration of Independence before enumerating the grievances against George III, "To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world."

+ Biden/Harris and their Radical Left allies have, as of July 2, 2024, signed 139 executive orders, 190 presidential memoranda, 629 proclamations, and 129 notices. While the number of executive orders is fewer than those signed by President Trump, many of Biden's orders expand federal power while Trump's orders deregulated the economy and limited federal power. Furthermore, many of his presidential memoranda are really executive orders under the guise of memoranda, issued as memoranda so the Administration does not have to meet the legal requirements for adoption of an executive order, such as pre-publication and public comment. On four occasions the U.S. Supreme Court has struck down the Biden Administration's regulations as usurping the authority of Congress: *National Federation of Independent Business v. OSHA* (2022) (OSHA vaccine requirements exceeded authority granted to OSHA by Congress), *West Virginia v. Environmental Protection Agency* (2022) (EPA carbon emissions regulations exceeded authority granted to EPA by Congress), *Biden v. Nebraska* (2023) (Biden's student loan forgiveness plan exceeded authority delegated to him by Congress – but Biden defied the Supreme Court with a slightly modified plan that will cost the taxpayers at least \$870 billion. That plan, too, has recently been struck down by the Eighth Circuit, but the same day the Circuit made its decision, Biden/Harris announced another loan forgiveness program), *Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo* (2024) (holding that courts rather than administrative agencies must interpret federal laws).

+ Biden/Harris and their allies have usurped the powers of states and local school boards, ordering LGBTQ policies that states, school boards, and parents do not want, and requiring teachers and students to use "personal pronouns" that violate their free speech rights and, in some cases, their religious convictions.



Foundation for Moral Law

One Dexter Avenue, Montgomery, AL 36104.
(334) 262-1245.

+ Biden/Harris and their allies have ruined women's athletics by forcing them to compete against supposedly transgendered men.

+ Biden and his allies have weaponized the FBI and the Department of Justice, ordering them to treat parents as terrorists for objecting to Leftist school board policies, prosecuting peaceful abortion protesters under the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act (FACE) and the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO), punishing with fines and disbarment attorneys who advance what they call unorthodox theories of law, threatening to revoke the medical licenses of doctors who dare question Dr. Fauci and the Centers for Disease Control, and bringing numerous criminal charges against Biden's leading opponent in the 2024 election.

+ Biden/Harris and their allies have leaned on social media, pressuring them to "deplatform" those whose views do not conform to Biden's orthodoxy.

+ Biden/Harris and their allies have nominated and confirmed federal judges and one Supreme Court justice who believe in the "Living Constitution" and reject jurisprudence of original intent, and who thereby are willing to recognize government powers that are not found in the Constitution.

+ Biden/Harris and their allies have vowed to reinstate *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 decision that created a "right" to abortion even though it is not found in the Constitution, thereby depriving the people and the states of their right to regulate abortion by the democratic process. They have also misused the federal Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act to force the State of Idaho to permit abortions in violation of state law (*Moyle v. United States*, 2024; case remanded to lower courts for further determination).

+ Biden/Harris and their allies have pushed for strict gun control laws, ignoring the warnings of James Madison in Federalist No. 46 and Alexander Hamilton in Federalist No. 29 that an armed populace is a necessary defense against federal tyranny and ignoring the observation of Justice Joseph Story that the Second Amendment is the outer palladium of the defense of liberty.

+ Biden/Harris and their allies have misused federal evidence-tampering charges to excessively punish a January 6 protester (See *Fischer v. United States* (2024), a case that could affect at least 300 other January 6 defendants).

+ Biden and his allies have used illegal and unconstitutional means to alter election laws and voting requirements to encourage and facilitate illegal voting. There are two ways of depriving you of your right to vote: (1) Not allowing you to vote; or (2) Canceling out your vote with the vote of an illegal voter.

+ Biden/Harris and their allies, with the eager cooperation of the mainstream media, have hidden from the public the true extent of Biden's cognitive decline and have left Americans in the dark about who is actually pulling the strings and running the government. This violates a basic principle of representative government: The people have a right to know who is actually running the government. After the debate, the secret is out. Under intense pressure, President Biden has withdrawn from the Presidential race and has endorsed Vice-President Kamala Harris, thus undoing the will of 14 million Democrat voters as expressed in the primaries. Harris, after repeatedly lying to the American public about President Biden's mental state and fitness for office, now seems to be the likely stand-in Democrat nominee. And this is "saving democracy"?

In these and in many other ways, Biden/Harris and the Radical Left have violated constitutional limitations, bypassed Congress and the courts, centralized the powers of government, and forced their agenda upon state and local governments and upon the people. As the Declaration of Independence says, "A Prince [or Princess] whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people."

I make no dire predictions that our constitutional republic, or what's left of it, will end after the November 2024 election. I only say that if there is a threat to "democracy as we know it," that threat comes from Biden/Harris and the Radical Left.

Colonel Eidsmoe serves as Professor of Constitutional Law for the Oak Brook College of Law & Government Policy (obcl.edu) and as Senior Counsel for the Foundation for Moral Law (morallaw.org). He may be reached for speaking engagements at eidsmoeja@juno.com.

This column is adapted and updated from an Eidsmoe column originally published by 1819 News.

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

The Desecration of Arlington's Reconciliation Monument

In the January 2023 edition of the *Alabama Gazette*, in "Robert E Lee, Arlington and the Ministry of Truth" (<https://www.alabamagazette.com/story/2023/01/01/opinion/robert-e-lee-arlington-and-the-ministry-of-truth/2480.html>), I covered the history and subsequent theft of Arlington House by the Federal Government. Spearheaded by the dastardly Montgomery Meigs, the plan was to seize the Lee/Custis property and turn it into a cemetery. This would serve as retribution against Lee and his family since they sided with Virginia and fought for Southern Independence. In 1882, Custis Lee legally regained the rights to the property but opted for financial compensation instead of going through the arduous process of reinterring those buried at Arlington. If Lee could have seen the future, perhaps he would have had the bodies moved?

Fast forwarding to the present, a new crop of radicals has continued to demonize the Southern people who dared to follow in the footsteps of their Revolutionary ancestors. The so-called "Naming Commission" – something akin to Stalinist Russia, set about to rename virtually anything connected to the Southern Independence movement. This band of "merry men and women" include the following: Adm. Michelle Howard, U.S. Navy, Retired, Chair; Brig. Gen. Ty Seidule, U.S. Army, Retired, Vice-Chair; Lt. Gen. Thomas Bostick, U.S. Army, Retired; Jerry Buchanan; Gen. Robert Neller, U.S. Marine Corps, Retired; Lawrence Romo; Dr. Kori Schake; and U.S. Rep. Austin Scott (Georgia). It is doubtful anyone with any integrity would be involved in such a nefarious project, thus, this is what you get.

This Orwellian agenda echoes the observations of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, who lived through similar circumstances and faced similar foes: "A nation that forgets its past can function no better than an individual with amnesia." Even more poignantly, Scottish Patriot William Wallace said, "Any society which suppresses the heritage of its conquered minorities, prevents their history or denies them their symbols, has sown the seeds of their own destruction." Other examples of authoritarianism include the Puritan leader Oliver Cromwell and the Jacobins of the French Revolution, who sought to reinvent history, and, as Abbeville Institute's Brion McClanahan has noted, helped to pave the way for the diabolical, anti-human Marxist theory that lead to the evils of socialism and communism.

In 2023, I met and spoke with John Hill, the closest living collateral descendant of Confederate General A.P. Hill. He described the exhumation of the General's remains in Richmond, Virginia, in 2022 as well as being a pallbearer for the reinterment in Culpepper in 2023. The entire event should embarrass anyone with any dignity but obviously dignity has flown the coop in the once great city of Richmond. Hill described the rude, vulgar, and seemingly illiterate individuals

who dug up his ancestor's grave, making several snide remarks in the process. All the while a shady looking "fed" lurked in the background, observing the event.

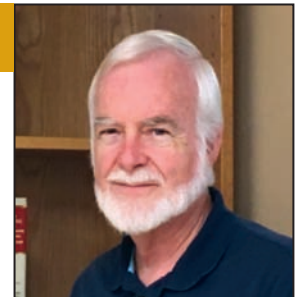
A similar fate played out at Arlington Cemetery. In violation of the law concerning tampering with cemeteries the feds removed the Reconciliation Monument at Arlington. The creator, Jewish Confederate Moses Ezekiel, is buried at the monument's base. Yet, you have "Regime Historians" and "Righteous Cause" mythologists such as James McPherson, Connor Williams, and others who apparently think it is OK to dig up bodies and desecrate graves. Perhaps they are just following in the footsteps of their Union ancestors? You also have Mark "Woke is Wonderful" Milley and Lloyd "Raytheon" Austin. How far has this country sunk to have individuals of such poor character in positions of power? Even Alabama Congressman Mike Rogers failed to fight this agenda, allegedly "working" with Elizabeth "pseudo Pocahontas" Warren.

The destruction of history is a nasty agenda. It is understandable that some feds hate the traditional Christian South. After all, the South believed the Union is voluntary and each State is sovereign and could decide its own fate. Nationalists and globalists hate this. The war against the South has been going on since the 1800s. Now, it appears you can include Jewish Confederates in the long list of individuals to demonize. What kind of person would even risk damaging a grave? Is the plan to create hatred and treat Southerners as something less than human?

Americans deserve better than to have such disreputable people in the government, military, etc. Why would a Southerner want to join the modern military when so many in key positions of power already despise you? What happened to reconciliation? Why did so many actual Union soldiers respect their Confederate foes? Why did Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy, both Roosevelts, etc., have such respect for Robert E. Lee? How far has this country sunk just in the last generation when there is such open hatred for the South, her people, and her history? There are patriots trying to correct the Arlington injustice. Anyone wishing to help can go to: www.DefendArlington.org

*Sources: "30 Best Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn Quotes With Image," BooKey, at: <https://www.bookey.app/quote-author/aleksandr-solzhenitsyn>; William Wallace quotes, A-Z Quotes, at https://www.azquotes.com/author/37913-William_Wallace; and "Robert E. Lee, Arlington, and the Ministry of Truth," John M. Taylor, *Alabama Gazette*, at: <https://www.alabamagazette.com/story/2023/01/01/opinion/robert-e-lee-arlington-and-the-ministry-of-truth/2480.html>*

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



John Taylor



John Sophocleus

Ballots v. Bullets



Comments on last month's *Ballot Box v. Jury Box* column were similar in tone and intellect with responses to past columns explaining our Pax Americana, that is, our so-called 'Peaceful Transfer of Power' as a forced coalition of once independent States. Given the recent flow of history recorded in Butler, PA it seemed timely to analyze how dysfunctional ballots proffer more bullets. Assassination attempts are nothing new in US history - *esp.* under hegemony.

Until provided facts to the contrary, I view this current shooter as little more than another poorly educated youth, confused and in despair (metastasizing in a nation where government is god) gunning for maximum notoriety from his suicide... dare one type *'suicide by cop?'* Still alive, I also omit the name of Reagan's infamous shooter seeking the attention of an actress (I suspect prefers her name forgotten in the matter) by shooting a high profile show-person for notoriety. This aligns with the current Trump assassination attempt - *i.e.*, a famous reality TV showman (another big government/modern democrat 'donning' a Red jersey like Reagan) poorly educated *w.r.t.* political economy yet an accomplished corporate welfare queen.

President Andrew Jackson was the nation's first assassination attempt. Among our most authoritarian Presidents, Jackson was also a 'high-profile' figure and ignorant on political economy. Going outside executive authority on treaties, Jackson's genocide of Native Americans was brutal. Jackson likely did more than any other president to shepherd the Five Civilized Tribes to fight for the 1861-5 Confederacy. Given Lincoln's treatment, seems these Native Americans understood their future. Jackson championed corporate welfare over the general welfare using the tax code to pick winners and losers (Tariff of 1828 - *a.k.a.*, Abominations) with the highest tax to date - average dutiable rate of 61% but did not want fiat money to subsidize the wealth transfers he signed into law.

Tariff of Abominations triggered the Nullification Crisis where war looming between States was avoided by lowering taxes toward a more Constitutional [uniform] result. Umbrage between VP Calhoun and hegemonic Jackson was much uglier and less Kabuki Theatre than the Trump/Pence January 6th show. On January 30, 1835 both of Richard Lawrence's pistols misfired in his effort to shoot President Jackson after leaving a funeral held at the HoR Chamber. Fans of irony may appreciate this 1835 case was the first use of insanity defense successfully for Lawrence to spend the rest of his life [26 yrs.] in an insane asylum. The lauded Francis Scott Key [who penned Star Spangled Banner verses] was the legal mind who led Lawrence's successful defense a 'precedent' later used to acquit the murderer of Key's son.

As tariffs cooled back down to the 20% benchmark rate [Tariff of 1857] and revenues flowed in to pay off Jefferson's Louisiana Purchase all seemed smooth sailing once 'Panic' reinvestments returned toward more market driven results from federal corporate welfare distortions. Enter the newly formed Republican Party (morphed out of the 'protectionist wing' of the Whig Party promoting corporate welfare programs, hegemony and high taxes) to set us on our American soviet path decades before Russian Soviets would herald Lincoln, *et al.* For those not blinded by zeitgeist rhetoric, it was easy to see when Republicans couldn't accomplish their desired wealth transfers politically; they had no problem using bloody military force.

Much more vulgar than Jackson's bluff and bluster, Force Bill, etc. little surprise Lincoln is the first President assassinated given his unconstitutional blockade, call for troops to commit acts of war (*a.k.a.*, Article 3, Section 3 treason) against States, arresting legislators likely to vote in manner he didn't approve, silencing the press, refusing writs of habeas corpus, first conscription acts, first federal gun laws, first federal income tax, first fiat currency... to name a few of his soviet policies. Hard to argue John Wilkes Booth (a well-known actor from Maryland which suffered 'first blood' in Baltimore) was insane as one who watched the John Brown raid 'train wreck.' Some saw a free black (Heyward Shepherd) as the first casualty of this treason episode. By some accounts, Booth attended Brown's hanging and was angered at glorification of Brown's treason at Harper's Ferry. At the close of destroying the States' hard won 1783 independence, our most malicious president called for 'malice toward none' under his 1865 'Pax Americana.' Once again we hear the hue and cry for hegemonic unity from both Biden and Trump crime family type politburo members.

Again for irony aficionados, President Lincoln established the United States Secret Service [USSS] April 14, 1865 - the date Booth shot him, who worked with the Confederate 'Secret Service' in a plot to kidnap Lincoln for a prisoner exchange. How many authoritarian nations across the world parroted 'SS' nomenclature for similar abominations? In keeping with their flawed inception instead of more resources and coordination with Federal Marshals, the USSS was more added bureaucracy as a branch of the Treasury Department explicitly to combat counterfeiting. Given our first American Ruble (*a.k.a.*, Greenback 'fiat money' created March 10, 1862) some estimate approx. half of the Greenbacks circulating were counterfeit. Not until occupied States were allowed back into Congress to curb Republican soviet policies would the Greenback debacle be reversed, Lincoln unconstitutional income tax abolished, etc. A century later, Nixon and the Republicans would put us back on fiat money closing the gold window August 15, 1971.

The Secret Service's mission expanded to include investigating and protecting other federal officials, including the president, vice president, and visiting heads of state beginning with informal and part-time protection of President Cleveland, the first Democrat elected president after war between the states. Most noted as the only president elected to non-consecutive terms, Cleveland was targeted by American Soviets angered by curbing Union Soldier pension abuse, returning Confederate flags and not-signing the Wilson-Gorman Tariff [1894] re-introducing the Republican's first income tax which would be correctly ruled unconstitutional by SCotUS in 1895. By most accounts (including Lincoln's own forecast) if Atlanta had lasted another few weeks - *i.e.*, not surrendered by the November 8, 1864 election, Gen. George B. McClelland would've been elected president and the Republican Soviets would've faded away until the next attempt to end our independence.

Acknowledging a long column, I'll save typing on Presidents Garfield and McKinley authoritarianism/notoriety for another day. Threatening the president has been a felony since 1917 under Woodrow Wilson - the first Democrat elected in 15 years; the start of modern, big government Democrats advancing many soviet programs/policies... most offensive to Libertarians? - The Federal Reserve. Following the RFK assassination (who's son is currently a non-duopoly candidate for president) in 1968 LBJ added USSS protection of President & VP candidates of the 'major' parties to the Secret Service task list.

Entertaining to watch USSS Director Kimberly Cheatle's hubris before the House Oversight Committee questioning the failed assassination attempt on Donald Trump... evoking Janet Reno caliber arrogance on taking responsibility for yet another federal embarrassment by this \$3+ billion/yr. agency. Cheatle seemed surprised at the politburo's bipartisanship. This was not a Mayorkas impeachment where those harmed are the general public. Reno could Texas barbecue children and religious zealots, but don't put the politburo in jeopardy, even more so when a shooter is angry enough to harm heads of the Biden/Trump crime families! My US House Representative doesn't have the intelligence/

integrity to understand DHS Secretary Mayorkas (KGB if you prefer the Russian Soviet acronym over the American) is a symptom; failing to follow the letter and Spirit of the Constitution with all the soviet agency redundancies are the problem.

My Senators (a mediocre football coach and \$574,000/yr. BCA political sellout) similarly have no clue what's the source of the problem, much less looking to the Constitution for solutions. The politburo (Blue and Red Soviets) does understand holding onto their power and wealth-transfers over the general welfare of citizens. I still receive occasional 'hate mail' about agencies to be abolished or incorporated into legitimate ones and reduce redundancies. Amtrak, BATF, CIA, DoE, EDA, FBI, GinneMae, HUD, IRS... NLRB, NSA... to Western Power Administration. The USSS duties would fall under the Federal Marshals' Office. This would reduce 'fiefdoms' which are poor at communication, sharing information and credit, clearly more worried about making their bloated GS pay-grade and retirement than our general welfare.

Dangers to our national security increase with every redundancy and incompetent bureaucrat. Interaction between Federal Marshals and ONI [Office of Naval Intelligence] must be seamless. When a threat by a US citizen is found by ONI, immediately dispatch to the US Marshals Service. If a Federal Marshal discovers a threat from a non-US person, immediately dispatch it to ONI. Compelled to include a few words on the only assassination in my lifetime, President Kennedy, was taking on American Soviets with income tax reduction, secure currency, vowing to end CIA, etc. corruption after the Bay of Pigs lies and angering the 'military industrial complex' with plans to exit Vietnam. Don't look to Trump showmanship for wisdom of this sort, more interested in 'Space Farce' duplication instead of tasking USN experience and success in solving problems of this sort.

Flawed ballots sow bullets. Lincoln and the Republican Party didn't even appear in most the States which tried to separate from his mercantilist policies. In the post-steamship era, any well educated political economist understood ports North of Annapolis with a 47% tariff and those South with 10% would not bode well for Lincoln's corporate welfare ends he was put in power to accomplish. Some see Lincoln's assassination bullet as the last shot in his war of hegemony... sadly many more deaths would occur and the 'Judas rhetoric' legacy of claiming to care about enslaved persons to cloak avarice sowed even more death, despair and hatred to keep his travesty alive several score hence.

Imagine President Buchanan's (reviled by soviet historians) wisdom prevailed and States were **not** forced to remain. No first assassination? No more returning people who escaped via fugitive slave laws? Of course, this was shunned by Northerners who wanted Blacks (free and slave) to fear fugitive slave laws and go up to Canada/leave their State. Continuing private emancipations (49% of Blacks in 1860 Maryland were free in this slave State) and State emancipation laws would have ended slavery in a few decades without this legacy of assassination, death and hate. In fact, Brazil was last in Americas to emancipate in 1888.

Those interested in this may want to (re)read <https://www.alabamagazette.com/story/2021/02/01/opinion/those-who-make-peaceful-divorce-impossible-will-make-domestic-violence-inevitable/2084.html> explaining how violence becomes inevitable when peaceful separation (as designed in the Constitution) is made impossible. Some have reminded me, 'Violence is the language of the unheard.' Jan. 6th was prologue to what true civil war looks like without allowing peaceful exit. Civil war is fighting for control of the **SAME** government. Our wise founding fathers' design made civil war unlikely at best, foolish at worst - a State no longer wanting to be in the voluntary coalition would exit.

Some also recalled the 'Congressional Shooter' [<https://www.alabamagazette.com/story/2017/07/01/opinion/hodgkinsons-disease-how-house-members-progressed-into-larger-targets/1094.html>] who asserted, "Trump is a Traitor. Trump Has Destroyed Our Democracy. It's Time to Destroy Trump & Co." Much like Trump's shooter, the Congressional shooter was also clueless how a traitor is defined in our Constitution, furthermore one can **NOT** find the word Democracy in the 7,591 word document. This doesn't stop Harris/Biden buffoons or Trump/Vance chumps from bantering the word about; seems those who shill loudest for democracy are those 'progressing' us toward the observed oligarchic result. Just as there would be less reason to shoot at presidents if they stayed within their Constitutional authority, there'd be little reason to shoot a powerless Congressperson if we had constitutionally correct representation. Alas, Congressional shooters are more symptoms; the disease is a flawed bi-polar political process producing ever more addicted and demanding parasites dependent upon redistributive government to get their 'fix' as they destroy themselves and our posterity.

In closing, 'money mill parasites' drive the observed outcomes. When the Republican Party told Trump (remember, Trump is a big government Democrat, currently donning the Red jersey who gave to Soviets like Kamala Harris) they'd not pay his legal bills, he made overtures to the Libertarian Party. The parasites got scared they'd lose their cut of donations from the dumb masses and 'Johns' who pay political prostitutes like BCA Britt. The money mill parasites do not care how donations are spent, or the outcome as long as they get their cut. Donations with the Biden crime family at the top of the ticket were sinking, so inject a little more drama to get the money mill going again. These parasites will keep the Kabuki Theatre in full shriek and appearing a close duopoly race until Tuesday, November 5th.

Postscript: In the same deleterious spirit of Boob Riley's Claritin Patent Extension Act and Felon Hubbard's 'Obamacare' Auto-insurance monopolization legacy promoting similar lack of oversight given to BCBS... my pharmacist is gagged. A gag I fear much more than one put upon a failed business- person who benefits from accounting fraud, bankruptcy laws, eminent domain abuse and disuniform taxation. Please read this investigative report on my local pharmacy: <https://www.alabamaexaminer.com/post/beauregard-pharmacy-being-robbed-by-corporate-pharma-and-the-usual-suspects-in-downtown-birmingham>.

God watch over the few remaining investigative reporters like Brice, Moseley and Holbert in Alabama. When asked about this matter, reporter John Brice replied, "PBMs have routinely held independent pharmacists hostage using gag order clauses in the contracts they must agree to in order to distribute prescription drugs. This prevents them from being candid with their customers about lower priced alternatives to the artificially inflated drug costs that the PBMs are fleecing patients' pocketbooks with. If pharmacists violate these gag orders in the interests of consumers, the PBMs wield their onerous contracts like a weapon to cut off the supply of critical medications. It is imperative that members of the press and private citizens exercise their First Amendment rights to decry this abominable state of affairs." Please let Gov. Ivey and your legislator know you've had enough of the Felon Hubbard legacy in our State and ask your local pharmacist about alternatives which may limit the harm to you and our State.

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



Justice Will Sellers

Civil Discourse and Political Reality

I've never understood why Donald Trump seems to attract such a level of hatred and vitriol. There is nothing unusual about political candidates being vilified by opponents, but after an election or a term in office, the level of animosity usually subsides, and attacks focus on policy decisions and not as much on personality.

I experienced some hostilities when I was a Republican presidential elector in 2016. It was my 4th time to be an elector from Alabama, so it was out of the ordinary when a few weeks before the electoral college convened, my mailbox started to fill up with cards and letters imploring me to change my vote. My mailbox became so inundated with Trump hate-mail that my postman, Mr. Meriwether, would leave a large box of mail beside my mailbox, only days later to leave a card that I had to go by the post office to retrieve additional boxes.

Most of the letters were the same, some even with the same typo. But they were all mean spirited and attacked Trump's character and recited all the damage he would do to the country. The hyperbole was amusing and some letters were laced with various conspiracy theories that defied all logic and rational sentence structure. Though I did save the almost 4,000 letters, I ignored them, except to show them to friends. When I moved offices, I'm sure they were discarded.

If the letters were annoying and inconvenient to retrieve, the phone calls boarded on flat earth society members arguing against the marketing of circular globes in schools. The calls started when we were about 10 days out from the electoral tally. After I fielded a couple and realized what was going on, I stopped answering my phone and let these seminar callers leave a voicemail. Once my voicemail filled up, I never deleted the messages lest I provide an electronic forum for disgruntled Hillary voters to vent their angst.

I did listen to several of the calls and was surprised at their tenor and wild accusations about Donald Trump. One call in particular stood out. It was from a young mother who explained that I had a sacred duty to her children, not to start World War III by doing my duty as an elector. The more she advocated her position about Trump blowing up the world, the faster and more hyperventilated her voice became, until she sobbed hysterically and begged me not to kill her children. Thankfully, the time to record a message was limited and she was cut off before she could take another breath.

There was also a caller who told me that he had retained a law professor who could explain how I could void my commitment to the Republican Party and vote for Hillary. It was, of course a complicated process, but the good professor would



explain this path to me. The message reminded me of the public service ads I heard as a child about the dangers of sniffing airplane glue. Apparently, my caller missed the ads and sniffed anyway.

All of this was surreal. Until recently, the electoral college in general and presidential electors in particular were one of those below the radar political events that only party loyalists knew about and participated in. In 2016 all electors pledged to Donald Trump were targeted and mildly harassed until the vote was over. While I never felt personally threatened, the whole experience was my introduction to what some have called Trump Derangement Syndrome.

Instead of getting better it has gotten worse. While 2016 was my last time to serve as an elector, the rhetoric has not subsided. If anything, the volume has increased with the character assassination more juvenile and fantastic.

The idea that any one candidate is a threat to democracy is ridiculous and anyone making such claims was never taught about our Constitution and the checks and balances within our three co-equal branches of government. To believe that any candidate would implement a fascist regime is equally as uninformed as it is impossible. Worse, to compare someone to Hitler or any other autocrat shows not only a lack of civics education but a total failure to understand the depths of depravity Hitler and his ilk possessed. The despots of the last century were murderous thieves and there is no place in our public discourse to use such a comparison to cast aspersions for political purposes.

It is one thing to dislike someone's policies and argue against them in a civil discourse, discussing the merits and consequences of their proposals. But there is no place to demonize and so diminish the character of a candidate that outliers receive the message, whether unintended or not, to physically harm a candidate to prevent a hyped-up disaster they see as existential, but in reality, it is merely actionable political rhetoric.

The incidents of this past weekend reminded me of the inflamed rhetoric I experienced almost 8 years ago. It was just as silly and misguided then as it is now. Political leaders need to learn the lesson of Henry II to realize that their followers listen and might not distinguish hyperbole from hinted instructional direction. Ridding the World of a Saxon priest might be a cathartic statement said under breath in frustration, but retainers seeking future benefits might take it to heart and commit a deed with profound, but unintended consequences.

Will Sellers is a graduate of Hillsdale College and an Associate Justice on the Supreme Court of Alabama. He is best reached at jws@willsellers.com.

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



The Deadly Consequences of Democrat Negligence



Perry O. Hooper Jr.

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



The recent rocket strike that claimed the lives of at least 12 innocent children and teenagers in the Israeli-controlled Golan Heights is a tragic reminder of what happens when our political leaders fail to stand firm in support of our allies. The

Democrat Party's treatment of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during his recent visit to the United States is a glaring example of such failure, and it has led to catastrophic consequences.

Prime Minister Netanyahu's visit should have been a moment of solidarity between two longstanding allies. Instead, it became a display of petty politics and disdain. Vice President Kamala Harris, the presiding officer of the Senate and presumptive Democrat presidential nominee, did not even show up when Netanyahu addressed a joint session of Congress, a first for a sitting Vice President in the modern era. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, who claims to stand with Israel, refused to publicly shake Netanyahu's hand. Worst of all Democrat Speaker Emeritus Nancy Pelosi went as far as to call Netanyahu's speech the worst presentation by any foreign dignitary in American history. Lame Duck Joe Biden was nowhere to be found.

These actions send a clear message to the rest of the world: America's support for Israel is wavering under Democrat leadership. This disgraceful display of disrespect did not go unnoticed by Israel's enemies. Hamas, Hezbollah, and Iran saw an opportunity to strike while the Democrat Party busied itself with virtue signaling and political theater.

The strike on the soccer field in Majdal Shams, a Druze town in the Golan Heights, was the deadliest attack on Israeli civilians since Hamas's brutal assault on October 7. It is no coincidence this attack occurred immediately after Prime Minister Netanyahu was snubbed in Washington. The children playing soccer had no time to take shelter, and the aftermath was chaos and heartbreak. Parents are left mourning their children, and the community is shattered. Yet, where are the Democrat leaders now? Silent. Their previous outcries for the protection of children and civilians in Gaza does not apply to Israel.

The Democrat Party's actions, or rather inactions, have real-world consequences. By failing to show unequivocal support for Israel, they have signaled to terrorist organizations that now is the time to act. The Democrat leaders' cold shoulder to Netanyahu was perceived as a green light by those who seek to harm Israel.

It is a disheartening reality that in today's Democrat Party, there is support for the Hamas terrorists at the expense of Israel, America's staunchest ally. The progressive wing of the party is the voice for Palestinian causes, completely overlooking the violent tactics and terrorist activities of Hamas, an Iranian puppet. This shift in sentiment is evident in the reluctance of most Democrat leaders to condemn Hamas's actions unequivocally, while they are quick to criticize Israel's defensive measures. This troubling trend not only undermines the decades-long, U.S.-Israel relationship, but also emboldens terrorist groups who interpret this ambiguity as tacit approval of their heinous actions. The Democrat Party's current stance reflects a dangerous departure from supporting a democratically elected Israeli government while endorsing groups that perpetuate violence and terror in the Middle East under Iran's influence.

Because of the lack of full support from the Biden Administration and Congressional Democrat leaders, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) have been severely hampered in their efforts to remove Hamas from Gaza.

This tepid backing has translated into reduced diplomatic pressure on Hamas, limited military aid, and mixed messages about the U.S.'s commitment to Israel's right to defend itself. Consequently, Israel's strategic operations have been constrained, as they navigate international scrutiny and political backlash without the unequivocal support they have traditionally relied on from the United States. This lack of decisive support undermines the IDF's capacity to effectively neutralize Hamas, prolonging the conflict and allowing the terrorist organization, heavily backed by Iran, to regroup and continue its assault on Israeli civilians.

Supporting Israel is not, and should never be, a partisan issue. It is a matter of upholding democratic values, defending a great ally, and ensuring stability in a volatile region. Both Democrats and Republicans must recognize that unwavering support for Israel transcends political divides. This bipartisan solidarity sends a clear message to adversaries like Hamas and especially their Iranian backers.

The United States stands united in its commitment to Israel's security and sovereignty. To waver in this commitment is to embolden those who seek to undermine peace and democracy. Now more than ever, it is crucial for leaders across the political spectrum to come together and reaffirm their steadfast support for Israel, ensuring that it has the full backing needed to defend its people and secure a future free from terror.



12 E. Jefferson Street
 Montgomery, AL 36104

Vol. 24, Issue 11
 12 Pages ©2024



The Alabama
Gazette
 Office (334) 356-6700

The Alabama Gazette
 12 pages



TeamTidbits@gmail.com
www.TeamTidbits.com
 334-356-6700

www.alabamagazette.com
alabamagazette@gmail.com



ADVERTISER YOUR BUSINESS IN
 THE ALABAMA GAZETTE!
 (INCLUDES PRINT & ONLINE)

CALL: 334-356-6700

Support our advertisers!
 They make this newspaper possible!

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.



Kyle McKinney



Alabama Public Affairs Specialist
Social Security Administration
4344 Carmichael Road, Suite 100
Montgomery, Alabama 36116



Email: KYLLE.MCKINNEY@SSA.GOV

Cell: (334) 479-1242

Fax: (334) 272-7630

**SOCIAL SECURITY CARDS
ARE SAFER AT HOME**

SOCIAL SECURITY SERVES THE HISPANIC COMMUNITY

For nearly 90 years, Social Security's programs and services have been a lifeline to people throughout the United States, including the Hispanic community. Our retirement, disability, and survivors benefits are just as important for Hispanics. Our Spanish-language website, Seguro Social at www.ssa.gov/espanol, provides information for those whose primary language is Spanish. People can learn – in their preferred language – how to get a new or replacement Social Security card, plan for retirement, apply for benefits, manage their benefits, and much more.

We also provide many publications in Spanish at: www.ssa.gov/espanol/publicaciones. Popular topics include:

- Retirement, Disability, and Survivors benefits.
- Medicare.
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI).
- Social Security cards.
- Fraud and scams.
- Appeals.A
- Benefits for children.
- Payments outside the U.S.

Customers who prefer to conduct business in Spanish can reach a Spanish-speaking representative by calling our toll-free number at **1-800-772-1213**. For more information on how we support the Hispanic community, visit our Social Security and Hispanics webpage at www.ssa.gov/people/hispanics. Please share these resources with friends and family who may need them.

HOW WE PROTECT YOU FROM MISLEADING ADVERTISING AND COMMUNICATION

Social Security works with our Office of the Inspector General (OIG) to protect you from scams that use Social Security as bait. Section 1140 of the *Social Security Act* allows OIG to impose severe penalties against anyone who engages in misleading Social Security-related advertising or imposter communications. OIG may impose a penalty against anyone who:

- Mails misleading solicitations that appear to be from or authorized by Social Security.
- Operates an imposter website or social media account designed to look like it belongs to or is authorized by Social Security.
- Sends emails or text messages or makes telephone calls claiming to be from Social Security.
- Sells Social Security's free forms, applications, and publications without our written approval.
- Charges a fee for a service that Social Security provides free of charge without providing a clearly visible notice that Social Security provides the service for free.

If you receive a misleading or suspicious Social Security-related advertisement, phone call or email, you should let us know right away. Try to capture as many details as you can.

Here's what you can do:

- For suspicious websites or social media accounts, please take a screenshot of the page. Note the website address or social media link – and how you came across it.
- For emails and text messages, capture the entire message and any links or attachments.
- For mail, retain the complete communication, including the outside envelope and all inserts.
- For telephone solicitations, note the caller identification phone number and any company name or call back number provided by the caller or recorded message.

You can help us stop misleading advertising and communications. We encourage you to report possible scams to the *OIG* at oig.ssa.gov/report. You can also call our fraud hotline at **1-800-269-0271** or send an email to OIG.1140@ssa.gov.

To learn more, check out our publication, What You Need to Know About Misleading Advertising, at www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10005.pdf. You can also review Section 1140 at www.ssa.gov/OP_Home/ssact/title11/1140.htm.

Please share this information with friends and family and help us spread the word on social media.

COMBATING ELDER ABUSE

Elder abuse is the intentional mistreatment or harming of an adult over age 60. This abuse can take many forms – physical, emotional, sexual, and financial exploitation, as well as neglect. In the United States, an estimated 1 in 10 adults over the age of 60 experience some form of abuse each year. That number is likely much higher because elder abuse is often underreported – especially in underserved communities.

Abuse victims typically show emotional and behavioral red flags, such as depression, unusual fear or anxiety, or intentional isolation. Many victims are abused by someone they know or trust. It's important to look for unusual changes in behavior around:

- Family members.
- Staff at inpatient facilities.
- Hired or volunteer caregivers.
- People in positions of trust like doctors or financial advisors.

You can help make a difference by checking in with older loved ones. The first step to preventing abuse is to look for signs of mistreatment or physical harm, including bruises, burns, and other unexplained injuries.

There may also be signs of neglect such as:

- Hunger and poor nutrition.
- Poor appearance or hygiene.
- Lack of necessary medical aids like glasses or medications that a caretaker should be providing.

There may also be indications of financial abuse, including:

- Unpaid rent or other bills.
- Sudden changes to a will.
- Unusual changes in money management or habits.
- Large, unexplained financial transactions.
- Allowing someone new to access bank accounts.

If you suspect that a person is a victim of elder abuse, please report it. If you or someone you care about is in a life-threatening situation, **call 911**. If you suspect possible abuse – but see no immediate danger – contact:

Your local Adult Protective Services at www.napsa-now.org/help-in-your-area.
The National Center on Elder Abuse at **1-855-500-3537 (ELDR)**.

You can also find additional local resources by searching the Eldercare Locator for your community at eldercare.acl.gov/Public/index.aspx.

Take some time to call or visit an older adult. Ask if they are OK and listen to what they tell you. Pay attention to signs of abuse or unusual behavior. Most of all, don't be afraid to report suspected abuse. For more information about elder abuse visit www.ssa.gov/payee/elder_abuse.htm.

Please share this information with your loved ones.

SOCIAL SECURITY SUPPORTS TEACHERS

A well-informed instructor can have a powerful influence on their students. That's why we created the Educator Toolkit. This toolkit is easy to use and provides shareable online resources that teachers can use to engage students and educate them about Social Security.

The Educator Toolkit includes:

- Lesson plans with objectives.
- Infographics and handouts for each lesson plan.
- Links to Social Security web pages.
- Talking points.
- Quiz questions and answers.

We value the efforts all teachers make to educate America's young people. As Social Security approaches its 90th anniversary in 2025, we want to help spark important discussions with students about Social Security. You can download the Educator Toolkit at www.ssa.gov/thirdparty/educators.html. Please share this information with your favorite educators.

SOCIAL SECURITY HONORS OUR MILITARY HEROES

DC TREE SERVICE

STUMP GRINDING

DAVID HORN

30 Years of Serving the
Tri-County Area

We are here for YOU!
Just Call -
We'll be there!

Locally
Owned

334-201-4385

Termite Control

ARROW

PEST CONTROL

SERVING THE PUBLIC FOR OVER 50 YEARS!

Thanks for all your
support over the years!

740 MEMORIAL DRIVE GREG BOWEN
PRATTVILLE, AL. 36067 334-365-4610

Community Lifestyles



NOTICE!
PLEASE GO TO OUR WEBSITE
AND VIEW THIS ISSUE AND
UPCOMING ISSUES ALONG
WITH CURRENT NEWS!
www.alabamagazette.com

Honoring Our Heroes



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, writing special stories of the many great veterans in our area that has served in so many of our American conflicts and wars.



Sponsorships are *Limited*
Don't Wait Secure Yours Now!

Help Support Our Veterans

The Inaugural Krulak Classic Charity Golf Tournament of the Krulak Marine Alliance



The Krulak Marine Alliance of Alabama (KMAA) is a Marine led statewide 501(c)(3) organization. KMAA is non-political and non-secular in nature. KMAA is a leader in providing physical, emotional, and financial aid to Alabama's active, reserve and Veteran Marines. They support non-profit organizations serving Marines and non-Marine military veterans. KMAA also provides quality-of-life community service as resources permit. The KMAA members are united in true solidarity of purpose and resolve to aid fellow Marines and their family members in distress and need. The focus is on preventing suicide among Alabama Marines and Veterans fighting Post-Traumatic Stress, Traumatic Brain Injury, and improving the Quality-of-Life for Marines.

Join the Marines for the inaugural Krulak Classic Charity Golf Tournament on September 11, 2024 at the Graystone Country Club at 4100 Graystone Drive, Birmingham, AL 35242. Every swing on the green makes a meaningful impact. Your participation and support help the Marines stand strong for those who have bravely served our nation. To register for the Krulak Classic, go to: www.KrulakClassic.org.

VETERANS CRISIS LINE - DIAL 988 then PRESS 1
www.veteranscrisisline.net



Special Feature Story

Captain Lamont Dewitt Pack: Age 76



From the Brooklyn ghetto of Bedford-Stuyvesant with humble beginnings, Captain Lamont Pack at a joint Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine military recruiting office in Times Square, Manhattan, New York City, he convinced Air Force Staff Sergeant Pulaski to accept his application. He took the Air Force test, qualified for every Air Force job, took, passed, and was selected during the clarinet audition for the 21st Air Force Band at McQuire AFB, NJ. The band master Major had a slot and wanted him badly. The recruiter did not receive any points for him because he did not fall under Project 100,000 that Congress required for the Air Force and Navy to select Colored and other

minorities who did not score high enough on their acceptance test. For the person who wanted to be the smartest person in the world, Captain Pack never thought Air Force entry would embark him on 26.5 years of service.

Captain Pack entered military service June 2, 1967 serving 15 years and was discharged December 10, 1970. He reenlisted December 11, 1970 and served until September 13, 1974. He then served from September 14, 1974 until he was discharged December 31, 1993 at Maxwell Air Force Base serving 11 years as a Physician Assistant (PA). His Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) included Personnel Technician, Personnel Clerk Supervisor, Operating Room Technician and Physician Assistant. He received the following decorations, medals, badges, citations and campaign ribbons: Air Force Commendation Medal with five oak leaf clusters, Air Force Achievement Medal with one oak leaf cluster, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Valor Device with four oak leaf clusters, Air Force Good Conduct Medal with three oak leaf clusters, National Defense Service Medal with Bronze Star, Vietnam Service Medal with eight Service Stars, Overseas Short Tour Ribbon, Air Force Longevity Service Award Ribbon with five oak leaf clusters, NCO PME Graduate Ribbon, Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon, Air Force Training Ribbon with one oak leaf cluster, Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm Device with three oak leaf clusters, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, Air Force Expeditionary Medal and Meritorious Service Medal and Senior Biomedical Science Corps Badge.

Captain Pack was born January 16, 1948 at Savannah, GA, to his parents, Willie Mae and James Pack. Many members of his immediate family served in the U.S. military including his grandfather, father and three male siblings. His oldest brother served in U.S. Navy, younger brother served at Pleiku, Vietnam while Lamont Pack was at Tan Son Nut, Vietnam, and the youngest in high school signed up for delayed enlistment in the U.S. Marines in 1970. He attended school at Savannah before moving north to New York City.

He grew up living in the Bedford-Stuyvesant ghetto which was occupied by 99.9% African-Americans. While there, he and his cousin who loved to fish went fishing at Prospect Park where a majority of Caucasians were, and they were accosted by a group of male Colored youths from the ghetto. He is ever grateful to the New York City Police Department which was similar to the calvary for rescuing them on two different occasions preventing their imminent death from the guns that the gangs had. Because he was an excellent student, he was accepted for attendance at Eastern District High School where he was a minority among Caucasians. He excelled in track, played bassoon in the orchestra and chamber orchestra and clarinet in the school's band and participated in the school's version of the G.E. College Bowl competitions where he was selected as anchor and captain of the 4-member team as well as serving as the sports reporter for the school's newspaper, The Knight. Also, the chamber orchestra was selected to play Carl von Dittersdorff's Symphony in C on television. It was from a part time job that he was able to buy his clarinet and tenor saxophone.

He was voted as "student most likely to succeed" as seen in the high school yearbook. He graduated from high school June 30, 1966. Captain Pack

completed several degrees while serving in the U.S. Air Force with much of this done during the evenings. He received an Associates Art Degree from the Georgia Military College in 1979 and an Associates Art Degree from the U.S. Air Force Community College in 1980. He attended Troy State University at Montgomery, AL. He earned a B.S. Degree in Physicians Associates from the University of Oklahoma in 1982, and he became an officer as a second lieutenant at his graduation. He received a Master's Degree in Public Administration (MPA) from the University of Oklahoma (OU) in 1992. When asked by the OU MPA program selection staff why he wanted the MPA degree, he advised that he wanted to help the people in Public Administration in Lowndes County, Alabama, which was the poorest county in Alabama. After his military service for two years using the G.I. Bill, he studied automotive technology where he became Automotive Service Excellence Certified (ASE) in heating & auto air conditioning, engine repair, auto electric & electronics, automatic transmission, auto parts, and steering & suspension from John M. Patterson Technical College (J.P. Tech) in Montgomery, AL, in 2001 because he did not know anything about auto repair and was cheated by a dealership in Tennessee for over \$1,000 for something costing about \$5.00. He worked AutoZone's night shift on Fairview Avenue while at J.P. Tech.

Captain Pack's extensive military assignments included tours in Thailand, Vietnam and Japan since 1967. When being shipped out from Whitehall Street in NY City, he and one-half of the group were sent to Amarillo AFB, TX, instead of Lackland AFB, TX, because of a meningitis epidemic. He was not fairly allowed by the Major band master to audition for the vacant clarinet position at the Golden Spread Band of Amarillo who broke the reed and told him to play. The band master reported Lamont who refused to play even though several band members said it was not fair and were told to shut-up and mind their business. He was the wrong color.

He completed 37 days of a tough Basic Training as an HQ at Boot Camp at the Amarillo Force Base, TX, with the 3332nd Student Squadron (ATC) in Flight 212 and also completed 12 weeks of training at the personnel tech school on Burroughs 3500 Computer System in the second class where he was a student leader, and he was an honor graduate in both programs. He recalls, "In Basic Training, they punched us in the gut, hit us, kicked us in other places and told us we could complain if desired but never used the "N" word." The first meal was a bowl of raw eggs. On each of the next few days, we were hungry, but like Pavlov's dog we vomited as we neared the Chow Hall. They said we have to be tough because the enemy will treat you worst if you are captured. We understood and accepted it because everyone was treated the same. While in tech school, students were told to turn in a short story on any subject at 0700 hours the next day. The next day, they told Airman Pack we asked for a short story not a novel. This was the second book that he had written. At 12 years old, he wrote a kids' book about ghetto life titled Charlerly D. Roach that he read to cousins, nieces and nephews. In the center-fold, it had a song that he had written although the book was never published. He had written music in high school when taking music theory and practice lessons in Greenwich Village. His short compositions would have been played on ABC, CBS, and NBC television stations, the only three stations available except PBS. He would be paid \$50 for each, but his name would not go on his music and not get any royalties when they were played. He declined the offer. Also, in tech school he was the only student leadership trained in Frederick Taylor's Time & Motion Study and the Scientific Method leadership philosophy while awaiting tech school to start. The Mann family invited him to its church and family meals when he was given a pass on Sundays.

Continued on pages 9 & 10



Captain Lamont Dewitt Pack

Continued from page 8

His first duty station was at the 380th Combat Support Group (CSG) at Strategic Air Command (SAC), Plattsburg AFB, New York, where he worked in personnel for one year. When North Korea captured the U.S. Navy's spy ship the USS Pueblo, he ran the mobility and deployment for B-52 bombers, KC-135 tankers and personnel deployment to Guam. The 380th was there that night when the world learned of the incident the next morning. He became Airman-in-Charge, In & Out-Processing Section, Data Control Division when the five Sgts and NCOIC got orders to Southeast Asia and Vietnam. This left only Airman Pack in the office. His staff was those with one or no stripes that he quickly trained as he had been. He had less than three months to get ready for an upcoming Inspector General (I.G.) inspection and changed everything based on what he was taught in the leadership program at Amarillo AFB, TX. The I.G. gave his department an outstanding rating with laudatory comments, used his policies and procedures as best practices for other bases to follow and made the Colonel Director of Personnel promote Airman Pack to his second stripe to A1C. This was the first time in SAC's and Air Force's history that this department had never gotten a negative write-up. His supervisor, a 2nd Lt who got promoted to 1st Lt (whose father was a Colonel who worked in Hq. Air Force in Washington, DC), said they tried to give A1C Pack a Commendation Medal but was told First-Term Airmen did not get Commendation Medals. Yet, a First-Term airman who worked in Records Section typing and filing was and who also was being reassigned came by to show A1C Pack his Commendation Medal and wanted to see A1C Pack's medal. When A1C Pack confronted the 1st Lt, he was advised that the First-Term Airman was an orphan is the reason why he got the medal. Again, A1C Pack was the wrong color.

He was reassigned to the 635th CSG Pacific Air Force (PACAF), Utapao Royal Thai Air Field, Thailand, in December 1968 for one year. While there, he was directed to report to the flight line to help the passengers deplane from the C-130. Bob Hope and his entertainers landed with his band and then introduced him to the rest of the entertainers including Ann Margaret and Rosey, Grier, the football player. He won Airman of the Month, given "Be Kind to Airman Pack Day" announcements over the PA systems on base and promoted to Sgt. It was here that one of the B-52s bombers blew up on take-off on a bombing mission to Vietnam causing Airman Pack's first of many head traumas with loss of consciousness.

Captain Pack was then sent to Vietnam for 12 months to the 377 CSG (PACAF), Tan Son Nhut Air Base still working in personnel as Special Actions NCO where he experienced the dangers of combat from the Vietcong. He recalls comrades losing arms, legs and heads with bullets passing his own head. Between rockets and ground attacks, he often heard the daily radio broadcast of Hanoi Hannah. He often played his clarinet and read the Gideon Bible which had been issued to him in basic training to relieve the stress. He prayed for deliverance and recited the 23rd Psalm resulting in his experiencing a peaceful calm. In 1970 in Vietnam, the Red Cross notified him that his best friend, his grandfather, had died. For him, the war paused while he remembered his grandfather's many walks, talks and life lessons. He said, "I thank God that I'm not dead." More bad news, at his Bronze Star Medal pinning ceremony, the day before he was supposed to leave, he was denied the medal because he was a First-term Airman who refused to reenlist. The new squadron section commander, on three previous meetings, angrily told Sgt Pack that he messed up his record to get all eligible enlisted to reenlist. Therefore, he fabricated lies about Sgt Pack to Hq. PACAF, saying he does not show up for work, always late for work, and disliked the Air Force by getting out six months early. He refused Sgt Pack's answer to use the G.I. Bill to attend Brooklyn College and then return to the Air Force as an Officer. Sgt Pack refused to take the promotion test to SSgt because he didn't want getting promoted to stop his plans. Ironically that night on a newsreel, he heard President Nixon basically say that there are no jobs available in America. He then sought his supervisor to make plans to reenlist, and it was done 10 days later, and he was assigned to Thailand to fill an urgent needed position. Sgt Pack did not have any record of unfavorable information. Also, the base commander encouraged writing poems. The only one that survived got high acclaim was attached to the daily bulletin that came out monthly entitled, "It's Your Bag, Dad." Colonel Marek, the Base Commander gave Sgt Pack the "Tiger Award." There was no justification for his not being given the Bronze Star.

Next, he served for one year at the 388th CSG (PACAF), Korat Royal Thai Air Force Base, Thailand, and was promoted to SSgt. He was named NCOIC, In & Out-Processing Section and had to get ready for the I.G. in six months. Once again, his section got an outstanding with laudatory comments, requiring other bases to follow these best practices, and the I.G. offered Sgt Pack a position on the I.G. team. This was followed by assignment at the 60th Air Base Group (MAC), McGuire AFB, New Jersey, for one year. He served as one of the 21st Air Force (MAC) Honor Guard members as additional duty. It was here that he competed in base level Tops in Blue on the clarinet winning first place trophy after playing several tunes. When he played "Poor Butterfly" one could hear a pin drop in the base theater and got a standing ovation when he ended playing his jazzy bluesy version of "Swing Low Sweet Chariot." He gave the large trophy to Personnel. Also, he attended 21st Air Force (MAC) Leadership School and was an honor graduate.

He then returned for another tour at Korat Royal Thai Air Force Base for 1.5 years. At this assignment while working in Manning section of Career Control, he was the first person to move personnel in an entire Group and Wing in the Air Force via computer from one overseas base to another and have the personnel present for duty and in pay status at another base before they left. Theoretically Hq. Air Force said that this was possible but could not provide guidance on how to do it, and the Pentagon said it had to be done by a certain date. SSgt Pack found a way to do it during one night with the help of two other people in secret a day ahead of deadline. SSgt Pack was awarded the NCOIC, Officer Assignment position, replacing the Master Sergeant. It was here that he volunteered for the commando mission to help rescue Americans when the Cambodians captured the container ship SS Mayaguez.

Captain Pack returned to serve at the 60th Air Base Group (MAC), McGuire AFB, New Jersey, for one year. In Classification and Training Section, he ensured equality for all Airmen. When a female who had gone through a year of Aircraft Mechanic training and who wanted to be an aircraft Crew Chief on C-141 cargo jets but was given typing and filing office duties for a year by her Lt Col Commander, SSgt Pack rectified the problem insuring she got upgrade training, met a selection board, and attended Aircraft Crew Chief school even though she only had two-stripes on her sleeve. She was the first to be selected, accepted and graduated as female aircraft crew chief. Now her name is directly beneath the pilot's on the jet airplane. Next, a female Load Master and Flight Engineer candidate appeared and succeeded, the first in these fields. The Flight engineer was an officer position, and the female went from enlisted airman to officer. He then switched from Personnel to the Operating Room as a surgical technician upon completing an operating room specialist course at Sheppard AFB, TX, for eight weeks and served at the base hospital at Maxwell AFB, AL, Air University Regional Hospital for three years during 1977-1980. He was promoted to TSgt and attended the SAC NCO Academy, Barksdale, LA. He was an honor graduate where General Jones was given the "Order of the Sword," the highest enlisted personnel recognition that can be bestowed on an officer. He scrubbed on cases until 3:00 p.m. and then worked at St. Margarets Hospital from 3:30 p.m. in the evenings and all-day Saturdays and Sundays gaining experience on cases not done at Maxwell like Open Heart emergency cases with Dr. Cyrus. When he arrived there was usually one patient outside of 8-of-the-10 operating rooms. He scrubbed on every imaginable case, and his Call Sign was "Laparotomy," and in both places' surgeons complemented his anticipation, giving them what they needed before they asked for it. He was selected for MSgt, and his promotion selection number was 0001. He was the first person selected for promotion in the Air Force during that cycle. When he was promoted to MSgt, he took the required "Supervisor Leadership Management Test" and scored 98%, according to a message from Hq. Air Force. This was higher than the Air Force's previous record of 93%. The other two MSgts in Surgery said they scored 30%+ on the test. While there,

later he stopped civilian work and attended Troy State University Montgomery (TSUM) taking science courses at night. He needed five hours or two classes required in residence to get his degree from TSUM. This was allowed for another member who became an officer but left surgery angering the Lt Col supervisor. She denied MSgt Pack the opportunity to do the same at Troy State University in Troy, AL. The hospital administrator staff said the official Troy transcript showed a 4.0 GPA. The Surgeon General of the Air Force then recruited MSgt Pack for the Physician Assistant Program. While at Maxwell AFB, he was selected as a Physician Assistant (PA) student at the University of Oklahoma (OU) Physician Associate Program through the Air Force. After graduating, his three choices for rotating internship, for anywhere in America, were Maxwell, Maxwell, Maxwell – thus, giving him his first, second, and third choices. He returned to Maxwell AFB for one year of internship. After Pediatrics, his preceptor was the Chief of each rotation and his Grands Rounds consisted of him and his preceptor, and he alone had responsibility for each patient's care. It was hard work, but he learned a lot. In General Surgery, during a "laparotomy procedure" the Chief discovered he was ambidextrous and could clamp, tie, and cut with either hand. He said that it was extraordinary and gave him his medical cassette tapes to study for the surgical boards. In OB-GYN, OU required each student to deliver three infants unassisted. Due to a hurricane, he had 10 unassisted deliveries in a three-day period and nearly sleepless nights all requiring the surgical procedure "episiotomy," except for the first delivery.

Captain Pack's next assignment was at the 347 Tactical Fighter Wing (TAC), Moody AFB Hospital, Moody AFB, GA, working as one of two PAs (1st Lt and 2nd Lt) Medical Officer on Duty (MOD), the Physician's Assistant running the Emergency Room. The PAs admitted patients from the ER, freeing physicians from that task. He had two patients in house when on Friday his third day on the job, his first heart attack patient arrived around 5:30 p.m. The patient's wife had driven her retired Air Force MSgt husband in from Florida where Army, Navy, and Air Force hospitals staff made him wait, knowing that his nitroglycerin was not preventing the chest pain. The patient coded and Captain Pack intubated the patient, cardioverted the patient, and when he got a rhythm, admitted the patient in his service under Primary Care using the new Modified Bruce Protocol that he was trained on at Maxwell AFB, AL. He followed the patient for three days and then turned the patient over to Internal Medicine for follow-on care. He was also credentialed as First Surgical Assistant, and the surgeons were impressed with his surgical knowledge and skills.

Captain Pack was then reassigned for four years to Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, Japan, after serving at Moody Hospital for one year. This was an accompanied tour so that his wife could go there with him. He worked family practice and rotating 24-hour ER shifts on weekends as all providers. He was also Chief of Surgery and Chief of Dermatology. Now, a 1st Lt, when he trained with the Navy and U.S. Okinawan Marines in the Combat Advanced Trauma Life Support Course (CATLS) in the field under combat conditions, he was assigned duties as surgeon. He was promoted to Captain. Also, he and his staff taught Emergency Medical Technician (EMT 1) Course for Central Texas College. The students, 85% Marines, and the rest Navy and Air Force were eligible to sit for the EMT 1 National Certification Examination upon completion.

Next, he served at Tinker AFB, OK, working as a recruiter of health professionals as Chief, Health Professions Recruiting Division for the U.S. Air Force with a Medical and Nurse Branch for Oklahoma, half of Kansas and half of Missouri for the 3549th USAF Recruiting Squadron which was tied for last place in the nation. The Air Force Surgeon General promised to give Capt Pack an assignment to Maxwell AFB if he took this Special Duty Assignment. Recruiting Service moved his office to Overland Park Kansas in the middle of his market. The Major that he replaced did not make goal in the three years that he was in charge, but he was given an Air Force Commendation Medal. Before he went to officer recruiting school, Capt Pack held meetings and training with recruiters at Tinker AFB, OK, from the three states and trained on everything involving recruiting. He attended Officer Recruiting Service School, Lackland AFB, TX and Squadron Officer School (SOS) at Maxwell AFB, AL and was honor graduates of both schools. After nine months, the Recruiting Service General said at a meeting at Lackland AFB, TX, that he has never seen such a Herculean rise from last place to first place before. Captain Pack had promised his Commander that this time next year (at the end of the last recruiting year) that they would be first place in the nation. They had the gold badge recruiter and all the other recruiters were silver badges, and everyone was at least 150% to 175% of goal during the three years in recruiting. The 3504 Recruiting Group Commander wanted Capt Pack to be over all the squadrons in the group, but PA Pack wanted to get back to seeing patients. The commander had promised Capt Pack the Meritorious Service Medal. Captain Pack did not get anything because maybe he was the wrong color again.

Captain Pack's final assignment was a return to Maxwell AFB, AL, where he worked in family practice, emergency medicine and as acting chief of dermatology for 12 months. He retired from military service there. At Maxwell AFB, Capt Pack participated in the interservice training with the Army at Camp Bullis, TX, in the Combat Casualty Care Course (C4) in the field under combat conditions. He was assigned duties as surgeon. This was similar to the CATLS course with the Navy and the Okinawan Marines years earlier. The difference here was that after the training they were on telephone stand-by with Maxwell's Air Transportable Hospital to be shipped out that weekend to replace the Field Hospital from another base in Kuwait, due to Saddam Hussein of Iraq's invasion. The advance team had been sent to Washington, DC. Fortunately, the Iraq War ended that weekend and the deployment was cancelled. While at Maxwell AFB, AL, and other bases while performing PA duties, Capt Pack served on committees as Records Review, Pharmacy & Therapeutics, Health promotions, etc. Captain Pack convinced the Air University Regional Hospital Commander to start to improve health care by getting patients involved with providers, and technician staff by using Total Quality Management (TQM), based on his MPA Master thesis, "A Feasibility Study: Total Quality Management in a Health Care Organization," in family practice clinic. A Dental Clinic Dentist pushed for this before PA Pack arrived, but PA Pack convinced the Commander that he was only delegating authority. The commander then started reassigning duties to junior officers that colonels previously held and gave them authority to act helped in the retentions of some of these officers. This combined physician, technician, nurses, PAs meeting into one meeting instead of separate meetings and insured each person had at least one good thing to say about someone else and allowed patients to get involved to give input in what they believed could help improve health care with anonymous written feedback which was posted. The quality of care improved throughout the hospital.

Shortly afterwards, the Air Force changed its management philosophy from Management by Objective to TQM with Maxwell AFB, AL, as the headquarters. In another area, the Air University Command General appointed Capt Pack as Air University Honor Guard Commander with flights at Gunter and Maxwell Air Force Bases. In addition, AL Governor Guy Hunt appointed Captain Pack to Lt Col in the Alabama Militia in the Medical Corps.

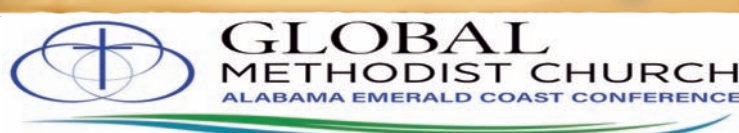
Since his military retirement, Captain Pack worked at Lowndes County, AL, and other AL counties with the AL Department of Health. He also worked with the Baptist Health System in Montgomery as Director of Central Sterile Services and in the same position at Erlanger Health Systems in Chattanooga, TN. In health care at Baptist Medical and Erlanger Health Systems, Central Sterile Services is under Surgical Services. Surgical Services bring in 75% of the hospital's revenue. At both places there was reorganization with a 10% budget cut, the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organization (JCAHO). Inspection was due in six months after he arrived in each location. PA Pack had to standardize policies and procedures throughout all organizations. JCAHO gave an outstanding with laudatory comments to PA Pack's areas of responsibility at the hospitals in both states and as best practices disseminated to other hospitals policies, procedures, spreadsheets, etc. to other facilities they inspected to follow. Working at Erlanger was made more difficult because shortly after PA Pack began work, Erlanger purchased Children's Hospital, two other city hospitals and named them Erlanger North and Erlanger East, built Plaza and purchased four other full-fledged healthcare centers with their own surgery centers and a doctor's office located in a competitor's hospital.

Continued on page 10



Dr. Lester Spencer
President Pro Tem
Alabama Emerald Coast Conference
9001 Vaughn Road
Montgomery, Alabama, 36117
Email: Lester@aecgmc.org
Tel: (334) 245-0260
Web: www.aecgmc.org

Soul Searching...



The Bacchanal and the Communion Table

Why look for life where there is no life at all.
David F. Watson
July 29, 2024

As the Western world chokes on its own decadence, the drag-queen spectacle at the Paris Olympics was its fitting representation. The surprising thing would have been if nothing like this had happened, if we could have had some public spectacle without a celebration of the libertine sexual ethic that has come into full bloom in the early twenty-first century. Drag queens are, as the French say, au courant. The manner of their appearance made many particularly angry since it resembled a mockery of the Last Supper.

A number of social media posts, however, insisted that the drag-queen display was not meant to represent the Last Supper, but a bacchanal—a celebration of the god Bacchus, or, as he is called in Greek, Dionysus. Bacchus/Dionysus is the god of wine and things associated with wine, such as vegetation and festivity. He was also associated with ecstasy, madness, and frenzy. A bacchanal was a frenzied, orgiastic party, a celebration of hedonism.

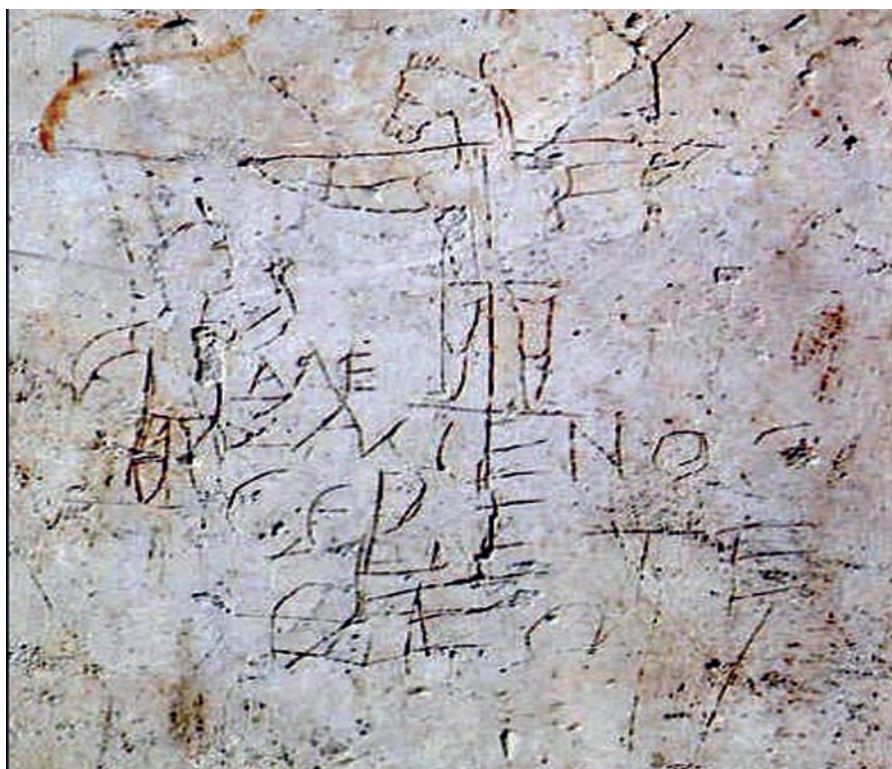
Forgive me, then, if I'm not reassured by the claim that what we saw at the Paris Olympics was only a representation of a pagan orgy.

That said, it really doesn't have to be one or the other. In many ways, a bacchanal is the antithesis of the Eucharist. Both are celebrations at the table, though their meanings could not be more different. One is a celebration of pleasure, the other a representation of Christ's suffering. One is about hedonism, the other about self-sacrifice. One is an adventure in lust and gluttony, the other the embodiment of self-giving love. One glorifies the flesh, one crucifies the flesh. One binds us to the enemy of our souls, the other to their creator and redeemer. Whether we witnessed an intentional mockery of the Last Supper or a bacchanal really doesn't make much difference. The meaning is largely the same.

Now come the snickering denials and evasions from those responsible for the scandalous display. As reported in Forbes, "Anne Descamps, a spokesperson for the Paris games, told reporters on Sunday there was 'never an intention to show disrespect to any religious group' and Thomas Jolly, creative director of the opening ceremony, instead hoped to 'celebrate community tolerance,' according to multiple news outlets."

Yeah... no. You reenacted the Last Supper with drag queens in a scene reminiscent of a celebration of the Greek god of frat parties. It is simply inconceivable that someone didn't say, Hey... This celebration of debauchery is a great idea and all... but do you think it might offend Christians? Of course they knew it would offend Christians. A jellyfish would know it would offend Christians. In fact, I don't know how anyone could suggest with a straight face that wasn't at least part of its intent.

Contempt for Christianity, however, is nothing new. Early Christians were accused of all kinds of things, from atheism to incest to cannibalism. One especially sophomoric rebuke of Christians is a cartoon (technically a graffito) that was inscribed into plaster sometime around the early third century on the Palatine Hill in Rome. It depicts a man named Alexamenos worshipping a crucified figure with the head of an ass. An inscription reads, "Alexamenos worships his god." Below is an image of the graffito, followed by a drawing that clarifies its depiction.



See above, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

People have always found Christianity distasteful. Do we expect that they will no longer do so? Just as in the early days of the faith, Christianity now finds little favor among the upper echelons of society, who prefer the bacchanal to the communion table. The foolishness of the crucified God, the odious renunciation of self, the repellent call not to be served but to serve, the submission of the flesh in union with Christ as a holy and living sacrifice—these are repugnant to those who consider themselves self-made and revel in the will to power.

Paul taught us, "*God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are*" (1 Cor 1:27-28). Now that the social restraints of Christendom have disintegrated, we should expect more of what took place in Paris. Christianity, lived in its fullness, is an offense. There is a reason that the early Christians were accused of "turning the world upside down" (Acts 17:6). Likewise there is a reason Christ taught us, "*Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you*" (Matt 5:11-12). None of this is surprising to Jesus.

Whenever we look upon the darkness of this world, we should sense again the urgency of evangelism. God calls us to invite people into this upside-down kingdom we inhabit. He calls us to lead them from the bacchanal to the communion table, to demonstrate the truth, goodness, and beauty of the Gospel. The bacchanal is undoubtedly fun for a time, but there is no life there. To paraphrase Augustine, it is part of the human condition to look for life in a land of death. But as Peter said to Jesus when many had left scandalized, "You have the words of eternal life" (John 6:68). So he does. And thus so do we.

https://davidfwatson3.substack.com?utm_source=navbar&utm_medium=web

Captain Lamont Dewitt Pack

Continued from page 9

His staff was now dispersed in several facilities. At Baptist and Erlanger, PA Pack encouraged certification and taught Central Sterile Services course for certification tests during duty hours on each of the three shifts, 7-3, 3-11, and 11-7, and he got little sleep during this time period. In both locations, Baptist and Erlanger, 75% of staff became nationally certified, and surgeons frequently visited Central Sterile Services to see the professionals who took care of their surgical instruments. PA Pack made a second pay scale for those who were certified with higher pay and extended pay raise years in the future. Most staff had topped-out of the current pay scale and never could get a pay raise or promotion. PA Pack purchased new sterilization equipment, negotiated surgical instruments and supplies contracts and computerized and made more efficient operation for pulling surgical case to the extent that someone off the street could pull an Open-Heart case with the hundreds of items in 15 minutes. It no longer required an operating room tech with many years of experience. He was a proponent of in-house promotions, and with the help of the housekeeping and foodservice manager, he provided opportunities for advancement for their staff. In physicians' lounge hallway and other walls, he placed excel spreadsheets detailing how Central Sterile Services was performing in each area. Staff morale ran high and at Baptist, the first Central Sterile Services employee of the month who was picked by peers won hospital wide honors. The JCAHO inspectors at Baptist and Erlanger were impressed.

He worked with the AL State Food Stamp Office in Montgomery County, AL, Department of Human Resources. He got the application translated into Spanish. He worked with AL State Public Health Agency as the administrator in Tobacco Prevention and Control Program and then as director of Diabetes Prevention and Control Program. He obtained 501c3 grants for education, treatment, reduction and prevention of Type-2 diabetes with adults and youth. He created the H2O to Go water drinking program and led in the distribution of H2O to Go water bottles. He got flyers on prevention of diabetes printed. He worked with the city of

Tuskegee, AL, in getting installation of sidewalks and walking trails to improve citizens' health with the help of religious leaders, Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Alabama, the city mayor and Cardiovascular Health of Public Health Department. In addition, he worked with the city of Montgomery, AL, where the mayor created a Health Czar position who began organizing marathons, half-marathons and 10Ks walk-run events as well as installation of walking trails, bike paths and bike lanes. His 12 years of employment with the AL Department of Health ended July 31, 2015. He then retired from all employment.

Captain Pack and his wife, Rose, have been married 52 years, and they have two children and five grandchildren. They attend services at the chapel on Maxwell AFB. He is a member of the VFW Smith-Wayne Post 96 and the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 607. He is a talented musician as he plays the bassoon, clarinet and alto and tenor saxophones. He is in the process of learning to play the bugle and the trumpet that the family gave him on Father's Day. He is a member of the Family Karate Center at Montgomery, AL. He is involved in physical activity as indicated by receiving his fourth-degree black belt master of the United Tang Soo Do Association. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019, he assisted with instilling knowledge, discipline and molding youth with character and integrity and adult students at the Family Karate Center under Grand Master Carole Smith in Montgomery.

Pack's conclusions about his military service are: "*It gave me opportunity. I wanted to study music and to play my instruments in an Air Force band at McGuire Air Force Base. God had other plans for me, and he opened other opportunities for different jobs and a way to help other people in addition to reaching people with my music. Also, God gave me tools and talents that I discovered when put to the test to reach my American Dream.*" PA Pack says if you really want to know him better, read his book, "*The Airman of Note, Halfway Decent.*" He would like to be remembered as someone who was helpful. Finally, when asked, "*How could you do all these things?*" He remembered in King James Version, Philippians 4:13, "*I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me.*"

NOTICE! AIR & SPACE FORCES ASSOCIATION CHAPTER 102 COMMUNITY PARTNERS' APPRECIATION LUNCHEON!

The AFA Chapter 102 will hold their Annual Community Partners' Appreciation Luncheon, 10 September 2024, 11:30 am-1:00 pm, at the Maxwell Club. The luncheon is open to the public. Website is up for registration and access information. This luncheon will have three highlights.

First, this is a Community Partners' Appreciation Luncheon, so we'll be honoring and recognizing our 75+ community partners from across the River Region. What are Community Partners? They represent a broad range of businesses, from local shops to national firms with local representation. The AFA Chapter works to introduce, promote, and update the community partners to all things "Blue" as well as now developing insights to Space as well (maybe we'll call it "Blue and Deep Blue" in upcoming events). In addition, the AFA Chapter 102 will reveal at the luncheon one of these energetic Partners as the River Region Community Partner of the Year. Come see how these organizations contribute to the River Region and the relationship with the Region's Air and Space forces.

Second, speaking of energetic, this luncheon will also recognize one outstanding River Region teacher. Catherine Kenny, a STEM and robotics teacher at Pike Road Schools, earned the State of Alabama Aerospace/STEM Teacher of the Year. One of her highlights was a flight during the April "Beyond the Horizon" Airshow with the Navy's Blue Angels as part of their Key Influencer program. The Blue Angels Key Influencer program aims to showcase the hard work and dedication of people who give much to their local communities. Back in April, she received instruction about the Blue Angels and their F/A-18 Super Hornet, went through emergency ejection training, and then took to the skies for an orientation flight where she pulled over 7 Gs during aerobatic maneuvers by her pilot, Lt Connor O'Donnell, Blue Angel #7. The luncheon will not feature high G maneuvers. But, get the chance to show your support for and chat with a great River Region teacher.

Third feature, the Luncheon will have Maj Gen Parker Wright, Commander, Curtis E. LeMay Center for Doctrine Development and Deputy Commander, Air University as the keynote speaker. Maj. Gen. Wright is a 1996 U.S. Air Force Academy distinguished graduate and a career intelligence officer. He has had operational assignments, at the squadron, group, wing and joint commands. Maj. Gen. Wright has deployed in support of air operations over Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Balkans. His staff assignments include Headquarters U.S. Air Force, U.S. Air Forces Europe, and the Joint Staff. Maj. Gen. Wright holds advanced degrees from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government and the School of Advanced Air and Space Studies as well as being a National Defense Fellow at the Center for a New American Security. Prior to his current assignment, Maj. Gen. Wright served as the Director of Intelligence and Information for North American Aerospace Defense Command and United States Northern Command.

Luncheon—please come early for check-in and socializing. It will start promptly at 11:30. Register by going to the Chapter's Web Site (www.afa102.net). **Registration deadline is 3 September 2024.** Questions, please contact the Special Activities Staff at afa.chapter.102@afa102.net. POC: Betty McCoy

Home Town Community News

VETERANS' AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Cheryl Grinstead... July 23rd
 Gerald Hopson Thompson.....August 2nd
 Fenton Wesley Johnson.....August 4th
 Cecil H. Prescot Jr.August 8th
 Patrick Louis Campbell.....August 17th
 Carolyn McMeans..... August 18th
 Neal R. Schultz.....August 20th
 Lisa Renee Davis..... August 21st
 Andrew Carnegie Nolin.....August 22nd
 Henry Craig Jenkins.....August 25th
 Donald Lee Applegarth.....August 30th
 Joseph Edward Boyett.....August 31st



HAPPY BIRTHDAY! August

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 Cindy Bolton
Ty Bolton
Heide Doran | 14 Patsy Norman (72nd)
Ricky Webster (75th) |
| 2 Raymond Cohen
Nichole Lansdon Gibson (50th)
Chloe Taylor Jordan
Moe Parker | 15 Connie Mainor (61th)
Earl Russell (74th) |
| 4 Harry Baker
Eveline & Ernestine Trafford (74th) | 16 Billy Betts (75th)
19 Carl Boyd (70th)
Shannon Grant |
| 5 Chuck Gambrell
Ellie Harper (7th) | 21 Lorraine Hall
Madison Boyd Williams (16th) |
| 6 Tony Drake
Joshua Jones (39th) | 22 Tom Garlington
23 Lamar Higgins
Lindsey Woodall Brown |
| 7 Anna Louise Moseley
Bill Ratliff (89th) | 24 Terri Gulsby
Lori McGough
Mary Iva Sellers |
| 8 Mallory Hitson
Lauren Meredith | 27 Angie Herndon
29 Charlie Blount |
| 9 Audrey Alison
Perry Mason (65th)
Don White | Jimmy Grant (70th)
Diane McLaney
Dawson Moore (7th) |
| 10 Jesse Guffin
11 Shawn Terrell | 30 Mary Ester Cook (91st)
31 Chloe Mills
Sallie Rhodes
- Betty Maddox |
| 12 Trisston Burrows
13 Bobby Boyd (64th)
14 Darlene Fuller Davis | |



Patricia Boyd Killough

If you have a birthday or anniversary, please email us and we will include your family and friends!
God Bless!



Retired Alabama Supreme Court Justice Henry Mark Kennedy

May 5, 1952 - July 17, 2024
 He was a beloved resident of Montgomery, AL, passed away peacefully at his home, surrounded by family, on July 17, 2024. A service was held on Monday, July 22, at the First United Methodist Church of Montgomery to honor Justice Kennedy's life and contributions to the community.

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

- | | |
|---|---------|
| Burton, Lary Miner - 76 | July 1 |
| Harbin, Jr., Dr. Thomas "Tom" Frank - 72 .. | July 2 |
| Suggs, Kermit Francis - 78 | July 2 |
| Jordan, Charles Wayne - 83 | July 4 |
| Reese, Johna Faulkner - 57 | July 4 |
| Carroll, Chester Coen - 87 | July 6 |
| Ford, William "Bill" Guy - 65..... | July 6 |
| Borders, Glenn - 95 | July 9 |
| Boyd, Barry Malone - 58 | July 10 |
| Norman, Barbara Jean Gardner - 70 | July 14 |
| Booher, Rosalie Dianne - 85 | July 16 |
| Hutchinson, William "Bill" - 90 | July 16 |
| Gayden Jr., Dr. Lewis Ruben - 82 | July 19 |
| Sawyer, Donal "Don" Duane -76 | July 19 |

Happy Anniversary

- | | |
|---|---|
| 2 Mike & Laura Lane | 19 Rob & Minerva Tate |
| 5 Michael & Jackie Moseley | 21 David & Elizabeth Miller |
| 7 Todd & Nikki Windham | 25 Bill & Jane Grubbs |
| Zach & Magan Grambling | 27 Johnny & Regina Johnson
Barbara & Tommy Ratliff |
| 11 Mack & Susan Terrell | 28 Dr. Karl & Brenda Stegall (59th) |
| 13 David & Julie Livingston
Tim & Cherie Meadows | 29 Mike & Deborah Kirk
Bill & Sharlotte Younklin |
| 19 Jason & Shawn Adams | |

FIRST CHOICE
WOMEN'S MEDICAL CENTER

Worried about privacy?
CONFIDENTIALITY IS OUR PRIORITY.

Website: firstchoicemontgomery.com

Phone: (334) 260-8010

Mon. - Thurs. 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM
 Fri. - 8:30 - Noon

380 Mendel Pkwy E Montgomery, AL 36117

Elmore County Pregnancy Center

104 Company St., Wetumpka, Alabama
 @elmorecountypregnancycenter
 Call (334) 567-1955

Today's Woman



The Value of a Woman. Be very careful if you make a woman cry because God counts her tears.

By: Amanda Walker

TEARS & LAUGHTER

The Midlife Writing Crisis....

I have not been writing as consistently as I used to. Entirely by choice. Meaning, there are not any problems between myself and any of the newspapers or outlets I write for. It is entirely me.

First, I have been writing for over 30 years now and I guess I am stepping back to see what I think of it all. I take it that is normal.

The world of media has changed. There was a shift that came along with Covid. I do not feel I have the same freedom of speech I once had. I feel this way because I have been squelched over simple things. Nothing major. Just enough for me to know that there has been some steering within the wonderful world of journalism. Independent thinking has become as dead as humor.

It may be changing again. Let's hope so. There are some gaping holes in media you can see through currently. If nothing else, the way people have been lied to about President Biden's declining health that has been blatantly obvious for years. Many journalists were, and some still are, hesitant to comment on it let alone write about it, because they fear repercussion.

These same journalists who lied about Joe Biden's health will now attempt to mislead people about the accomplishments of Kamala Harris as they rush to embrace her. They won't question so much the questionable way her party has landed her at the top of the Democratic ticket.

I have always admired journalism. Growing up my mother was a writer and unknowingly to either of us at the time, I was a bit of an apprentice to her. I would spend time with her at the newspaper office. I learned through her how to cover features or events and conduct interviews.

With that of course came the opportunity to meet and get to know other writers and editors, many of which are gone now. They

have passed away or retired. My mother retired over a decade ago. Now she is battling brain cancer. She was diagnosed in November of 2022. Last week, she became a hospice patient. I can't pretend that I am not affected, just as all family members of cancer patients are affected.

Add to it the fact that my youngest daughter is still in an extended rehab program that is just over four hours away. She has been there since January 10. She is doing great. So great. She is so healthy now. Her mind is clear, and she is growing and changing and excelling in so many ways. She is learning to use her experiences to help others. I am proud of her. She tells me sending her there saved her life. I know she isn't exaggerating. She survived a drive by shooting, a near overdose, and violence from her former boyfriend. I am grateful she is alive. I assume with time; the haunting of the past will subside.

It has been difficult to navigate my way through all of this without it sometimes bleeding over into my writing. The weight of it does not allow space for much creative energy.

As much as I have always enjoyed the craft of writing - being able to weave thoughts and words into something with meaning or humor or feeling, as much as I have always respected the profession of journalism...what I appreciate the most, what every writer will be wise to remember, is the audience. The readers.

And I guess as I weigh what matters, y'all are what keeps me writing. I don't say it enough...but thank you.

Amanda Walker is a columnist and contributor with AL.com, The Birmingham News, Selma Times Journal, Thomasville Times, West Alabama Watchman, and Alabama Gazette. Contact her at Walkerworld77@msn.com or at: <https://www.facebook.com/AmandaWalker.Columnist>.

Trisston's Tidbits:

By: Trisston Wright Burrows

Ms. Wheelchair
 America/Alabama 2005

site.trisstonwrightburrows.com



"What Will Spill Out?"



Imagine this.... You are holding a cup of coffee when someone comes along and bumps into you or shakes your arm, making you spill your coffee everywhere. Why did you spill the coffee? You may reply, "Because someone bumped into me!!!"

Nope. Wrong answer. You spilled the coffee because there was coffee in your cup. Had there been tea in the cup, you would have spilled tea. Whatever is inside the cup is what will spill out.

"A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. The tongue of the wise adorns knowledge, but the mouth of the fool gushes folly." Proverbs 15:1-2

Therefore, when life comes along and shakes you (which WILL happen), whatever is inside you will come out. It's easy to fake it, until you get rattled. So we have to ask ourselves.... "what's in my cup?"

When life gets tough, what spills over for you? is it joy, gratefulness, peace, and humility? Or is it Anger, bitterness, harsh words and reactions? Life provides the cup, YOU get to choose how to fill it.

"Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you." Ephesians 4:32

Today, let's work towards filling our cups with gratitude, forgiveness, joy, words of affirmation and kindness, gentleness, and love for others.

Many Blessings!

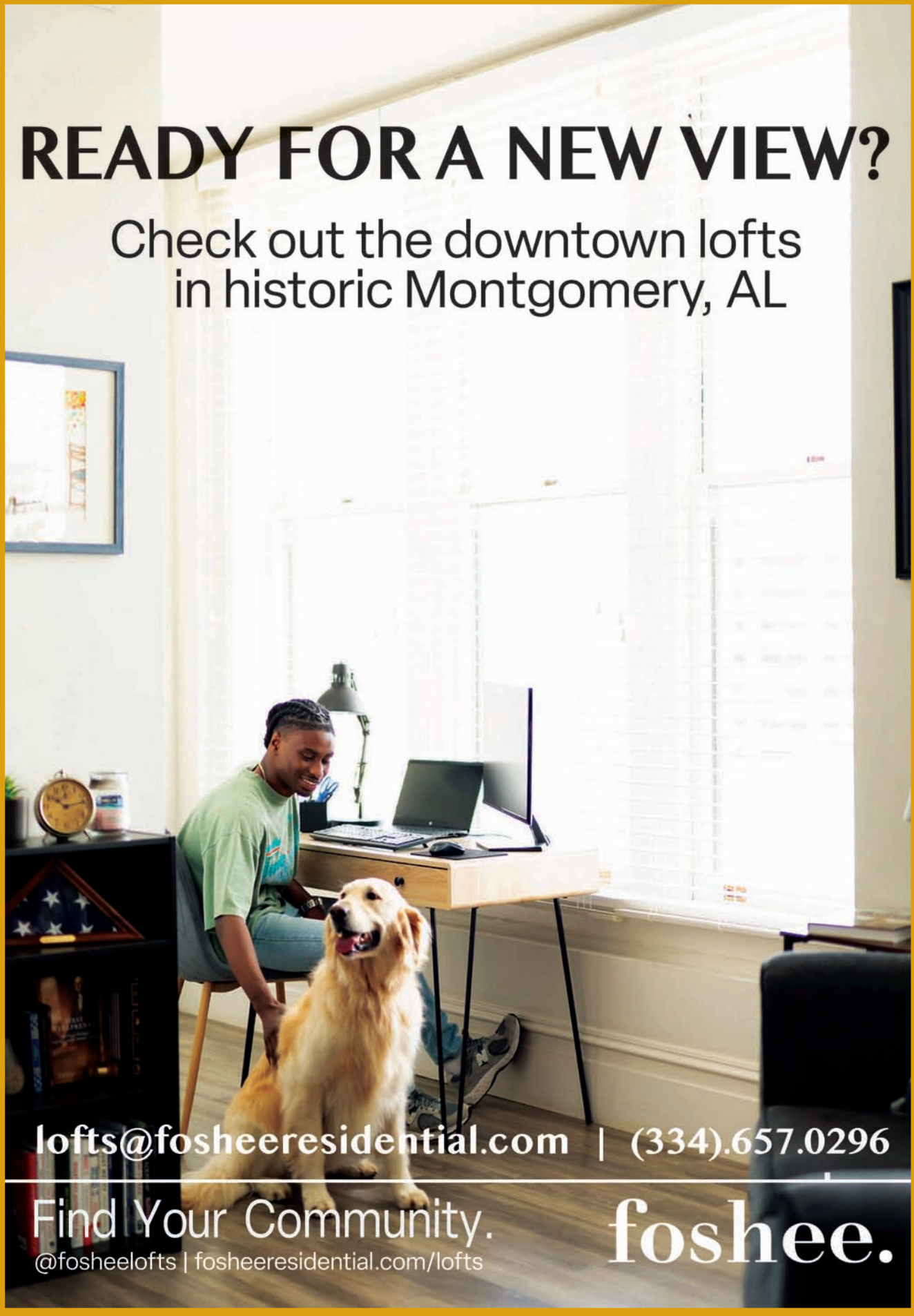
Independent Distributor

Healthy Living starts here!

Alice Cole (334) 467-0867
<https://us.shaklee.com/site/acole/storefront>

READY FOR A NEW VIEW?

Check out the downtown lofts in historic Montgomery, AL



lofts@fosheeresidential.com | (334).657.0296

Find Your Community. @fosheelofts | fosheeresidential.com/lofts **foshee.**

HELP US PRINT THE TRUTH!
ADVERTISER YOUR BUSINESS IN THE ALABAMA GAZETTE.
 CALL:
334-356-6700
 PLEASE LEAVE A MESSAGE.



WWII Veteran, Robert Shafton Kohn



Technical Sergeant Jason R. Hughes



Chief Warrant Officer 3 Jeffery Mathews

We hope you enjoy reading the Alabama Gazette as much as our Veterans!



Judge Peggy Givhan

SOUTHERN GARDENING Potpourri for AUGUST

As they say, the month of August is the dog days of summer because it is so hot and humid. For that matter, this whole summer could be termed the dog days of summer. One thing I have noticed in all this heat and humidity has been the absence of bud worms on my many geraniums. Every summer from about the end of June until fall, I have to dust my geraniums with Dipel and reapply when I water or it rains. No need for Dipel so far this year.

There are several garden tasks which need to be completed before the end of the month. First one is to shear back begonias, geraniums, zinnias, cosmos and impatiens by over one third from the top of the plant. This one task will ensure that these flowering plants will not get top heavy, look leggy or break off. The shearing or like I say, the haircut, allows for new growth and invigorates the plant. A flush of new blooms and leaves will emerge within a couple of weeks to be enjoyed until a hard freeze. Then after the cutting back, you will need to fertilize. Please be very careful to avoid getting granular fertilizer on the leaves of begonias as it will burn them. Either use Osmocote or a liquid fertilizer to avoid the problem. The next job in the garden this month is weeding, and cutting back any spent perennials. Dead plant material will surely attract garden pests so we need to remove this debris.

I have had a terrible time this summer at the farm with armadillos rooting through and trampling dusty miller, vinca or whatever. Almost complete devastation. Scram works well, but if too rainy it has to be reapplied often. I hate to admit that I have fantasized about the murder of these varmints.

This month we can sow seeds to add to the fall garden beds. The seeds most reliable to sow this late would be zinnias, cosmos, and cleome. So act fast in order to give you great cut flowers all fall.

PLANT OF THE MONTH: PLUMBAGO--Ceratostigma

A friend of mine, Robert Cole, who is a retired Architect and good gardener, called not too long ago extolling the virtues of Plumbago. He is absolutely right. Plumbago is a tropical woody stemmed plant which starts blooming at the end of June or first of July and continues until frost or even a hard freeze. It is also known by the common name leadwort. The pale to electric blue blooms are feathery and if planted in a mass, a certain show stopper. I grow them in pots so I can cut them back and bring them indoors for the winter. However, if planted in the garden, they would need to be heavily mulched after cutting them back to the ground. They like partial shade and well drained soil. Another advantage to owning Plumbago is that they drop their dead blooms. They are readily available in Montgomery.



GOOD GARDENING



gary@outdoortruths.org

A Float Down the River



Gary Miller

I don't how many times I have crossed a ridge thinking I was some place that I wasn't. I don't how many times I have crested a hill thinking I'll be able to see something I didn't. I don't know how many times I have rounded a bend to discover an additional path to the place I was going. I recognize this truth weekly. One of my hobbies is cycling. I've been riding for several years, and sometimes the places I ride are difficult. As a result, I'm always looking around the corner thinking I have reached a certain marker that will give me hope that I've almost reached my destination. You may say I'm too unfamiliar with the road, but I'm not. I'm just not always paying attention. Just this morning, I rounded a curve, thinking I had an additional distance to travel. But I was pleasantly surprised that I was closer than I had thought. Most of the time, this is not the case. Most of the time, I find there's another hill, another ridge, or another path. And I sigh.

Many of you can already identify with my plight. You, however, may be experiencing these events in a more meaningful place. You are hoping the present hill you are climbing is the last one. You are praying the end of the painful journey you have been on is just over the next ridge. You are anticipating this bend to be the last one. You are hoping the light at the end of the tunnel is actually a light- and an end. You are tired of the fight. I feel for you. And I'm sorry you are going through this dark time. But let me ask you to keep climbing. Keep putting one foot in front of the other, even though you are not sure where the path is leading. Keep moving and keep trusting - even though you are confused. Remember, your understanding of the problem or its solution is not a prerequisite for a good ending. Your trust is all that's needed. And even that is only needed in a small supply. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths." ~Solomon

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 way banking should be.



BRANTLEY
 BANK & TRUST CO.

Brantley : (334) 527-3206 9402 North Main Street
 Ramer : (334) 562-3257 105 Main Street
 www.Brantleybank.com

