

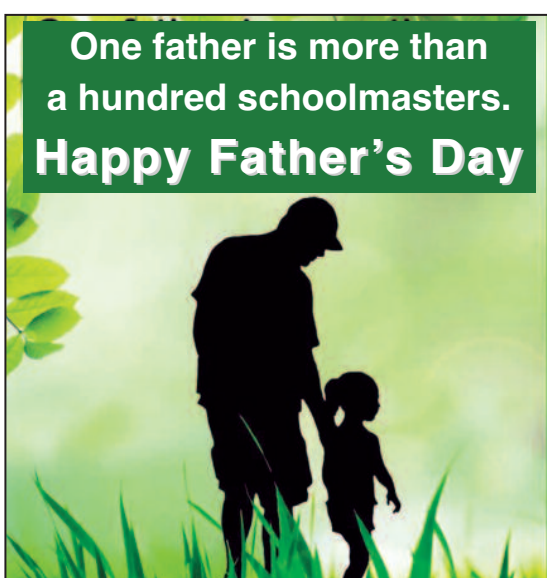
TRUMP VERDICT... GUILTY!

ALL 34 INDICMENTS! ONLY TIME WILL TELL.

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of EVIL is for good men to do nothing." – Edmond Burke

Sentencing on July 11, 2024

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"And let us never forget in honoring our flag, we honor the American men and women who have courageously fought and died for it..."
-President Ronald Reagan

BOEING'S STARLINER HAS SUCCESSFULLY LAUNCHED



On Wednesday, NASA astronauts Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams were safely launched into Earth orbit on the first crewed flight test aboard Boeing's Starliner spacecraft. The Boeing Starliner is on a mission that will take it to the International Space Station (ISS).

Much of the work on Starliner was done at the United Launch Alliance (ULA) facility in Decatur. ULA is a jointly owned and operated subsidiary of Boeing and Lockheed.

U.S. Senator Tommy Tuberville (R-Alabama) said on X, "Congratulations @ulalaunch on the successful launch of the Atlas V rocket. Once again, Alabama is leading the way in space exploration and research."

Congressman Dale W. Strong (R-AL05) said on the social media platform X, "Boeing, @ulalaunch, & @NASA on the first successful crewed launch of the Starliner Spacecraft. This launch was the result of collaboration and years of dedicated work, much of which took place right here in North Alabama."

The astronauts lifted off at 9:52 a.m. CDT Wednesday on a ULA Atlas V rocket built in Alabama from Space Launch Complex-41 at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida on an end-to-end test of the Starliner system. ULA's rocket engines are built by Blue Origin at their new factory in Huntsville.

Bill Nelson is the administrator of NASA.

"Two bold NASA astronauts are well on their way on this historic first test flight of a brand-new spacecraft," said Administrator Nelson. "Boeing's Starliner marks a new chapter of American exploration. Human spaceflight is a daring task – but that's why it's worth doing. It's an exciting time for NASA, our commercial partners, and the future of exploration. Go Starliner, Go Butch and Suni!"

For years after the Space Shuttles were retired, NASA astronauts had to catch rides on Russian spaceships to go to the ISS. Thanks to NASA's Commercial Crew Program that is no longer the case and both crewed and uncrewed missions can be carried out by American built and designed spacecraft – of which Starliner is the state of the art.

The flight test will help validate the transportation system, launch pad, rocket, spacecraft, in-orbit operations capabilities, and return to Earth with astronauts aboard as the agency prepares to certify Starliner for rotational missions to the space station.

Starliner has previously flown two separate uncrewed missions, including a test to and from the space station. There has also been a pad abort demonstration with the spacecraft.

Mark Nappi is the Vice President and program manager of Boeing's Commercial Crew Program.

"With Starliner's launch, separation from the rocket, and arrival on orbit, Boeing's Crew Flight Test is right on track," said Nappi. "Everyone is focused on giving Suni and Butch a safe, comfortable, ride and performing a successful test mission from start to finish."

During Starliner's flight, Boeing will monitor a series of automatic spacecraft maneuvers from its mission control center in Houston. NASA teams will monitor space station operations throughout the flight from the Mission Control Center at the agency's Johnson Space Center in Houston.

Steve Stich is the manager of the Commercial Crew Program at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston.

"Flying crew on Starliner represents over a decade of work by the Commercial Crew Program and our partners at Boeing and ULA," said Stich, manager. "For many of us, this is a career-defining moment bringing on a new crew transportation capability for our agency and our nation. We are going to take it one step at a time, putting Starliner through its paces, and remaining vigilant until Butch and Suni safely touch down back on Earth at the conclusion of this test flight."

Starliner will autonomously dock to the forward-facing port of the station's Harmony module at approximately 11:15 p.m. Thursday, June 6, and remain at the orbital laboratory for about a week.

Wilmore and Williams will help verify the spacecraft is performing as intended by testing the environmental control system, the displays and control system, and by maneuvering the thrusters, among other tests during flight. They will then join the Expedition 71 crew of NASA astronauts.

NASA's massive Space Flight System (SLS) is the successor to the Apollo missions and will be used to return humans to the Moon by the end of the decade and will launch humans to Mars by 2040. Starliner and the other Commercial Crew vehicles are the successors of the Space Shuttles and will be the work horses of man's work in space in Earth orbit for decades to come.

Thousands of Alabamians at Boeing, at ULA, at NASA, at Blue Origin, and at dozens of other contractors working with them are working on advancing the American space program to new heights.

To connect with the author of this story, or to comment, email brandonmreporter@gmail.com

Brandon Moseley



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

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Father Day
June 16th!**



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/>



Roads Important and Political

Many of you took to the roads to travel over Memorial Day. I am sure this resulted in rumblings and discourses about the deplorable conditions of Alabama's roads. Most of you, if you went anywhere, had to travel on I-65. Most Alabamians live along the I-65 corridor.

I-65 is approximately 366 miles from the Tennessee-Alabama line to Mobile. It is a nightmare. I can attest to the frustration of being stuck on this highway. I travel on I-65 from Montgomery to Birmingham at least 100 times a year. My guess is that I am relegated to being in a parking lot four out of 10 times. I am delayed for important meetings and television interviews. In recent years I have begun to start my journey an hour early in anticipation of a delay. When I call to apologize for my tardiness, I end my call with if there is a worse road to travel in the country, I want to see it.

Indeed, I-65 south of Hoover is the busiest road in the state. According to ALDOTS traffic count, they average 130,000 vehicles per day. Many of you have experienced this I-65 nightmare, including Lt. Governor Will Ainsworth.

The Lt. Governor and the majority of state senators are advocating for six lanes for the entire I-65 thoroughfare. The Alabama State Senate recently approved a resolution that urges the Alabama Department of Transportation to prioritize improvements and additional capacity along I-65. This needs to be a priority for our state. As the main artery in the state, I-65 is traveled by tourists, truckers, businesspeople, and everyday Alabamians, who simply need to get from Point A to Point B in a timely manner in order to live their lives. When people are at a standstill on I-65 for hours on end, it hurts our tourism, our economy, and our industrial recruitments.

In defense of Governor Kay Ivey, she has worked to make a difference in regard to Alabama's roads. She made passage of a gas tax a priority of her administration and tenure in office. She has put her legacy in place by rebuilding Alabama with her gas tax/road building initiative.

She was criticized by some for raising taxes. She displayed political courage and statesmanship, and knew we had to have infrastructure to keep up with other states in growth and economic development.

However, we may not have gone far enough. We may not be keeping up with other states. If she was going to be criticized for a 10 cent a gallon increase, she should have gone for 20 cents. Then maybe we would be able to compete with our sister states like Florida.

It has recently been brought to my attention an unbelievably amazing fact. The State of Florida Department of Transportation has 10 divisions and all 10 have the same amount of money. The panhandle of Florida adjacent to Alabama is one of the 10 divisions. The panhandle Florida division alone has more money than the entire state of Alabama highway budget.

Florida has built four lanes from the beach to almost the Alabama line. They are awaiting Alabama meeting them with a four-lane highway 167 through Enterprise and to 231 in Troy. Many of you who traveled to the Florida coast this weekend probably wished that four lane was completed and you were also wishing that I-65 had six lanes.

Speaking of the Florida coast, for many years both political history students and readers have asked me why the panhandle of Florida is not part of Alabama. When looking at a map it appears the panhandle should be a part of our state. Indeed, both politically and demographically, as well as topographically, the panhandle of Florida and south Alabama are one in the same.

The answer is we were offered the entire panhandle, including the beaches and coastline more than once for almost nothing over a century ago. We refused to take it. At that time, the South and especially Alabama, were totally agriculturally oriented. Everything was about could you grow crops on land. Folks looked at the sandy soil and thick brush in the sparsely underdeveloped territory and said anybody would be crazy to want that land. Plus, it was occupied by Seminole Indians who were fierce and protective of their territory. Alabamians said hell no to fighting Seminole Indians and thorny bushes for land that was nothing but sand and you could not grow anything on it.

Well, that sand and beaches are worth something today. It is estimated that within the next seven years one million new people are going to move to the panhandle of Florida.

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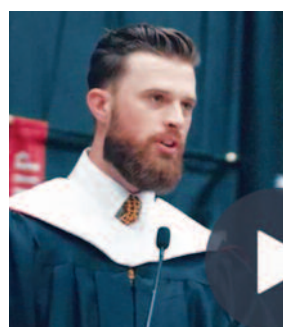


Robservations...

By: Rob Tate

BITS AND PIECES #20

1. Harrison Butker: By now, I am sure all of you have heard of the controversy over Kansas City Chiefs kicker, Harrison



Butker, and his commencement speech that he gave at Benedictine College last week. It is amazing to me how much hate his speech has brought out. This is especially true of our forever tolerant and woke lunatics on the left. It is hard to understand so much misplaced and unchanneled anger.

Whenever something like this comes up, and it always does, my suggestion is not to listen to the idiots who continually spout lies and misrepresentations of the truth, but go right to the source. Unlike most people who have something negative to say, I can at least say that I have read Butker's entire speech. Yes, the whole thing. Actually, I have read several parts more than once so I can speak to what he was saying. For those who have negative things to say about either his speech or him personally, especially those who have not read what he said, all I can say to you is, "Shut up." You don't know what he said and you cannot understand what he is saying. **1 Corinthians 2:14 says, "But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised."** This is where many of you fall.

The man said NOTHING wrong. Just because what he said does not line up with many a warped world view, it doesn't mean he was wrong. So, tell me what is so wrong with family values? What is wrong with saying the most important job you have in life, in the long run, is raising great, socially and well-adjusted, God fearing, and productive children? Is murdering babies more important to you than raising them? If so, might you need a true gut check? I read this morning where some Jesuits are bashing him. Why? Because he called out many in the church who are not doing what they are supposed to do. What many failed to do during the COVID pandemic. Was it bad for him to say it is wrong for men and women in a relationship to live together before marriage? Was it wrong for him to talk about those who after college walk away from the faith? Was it wrong for him to point out the danger of too many families without a dedicated father in the home and the inevitable cycle of violence it breeds? Did he argue that women need to be barefoot and pregnant, never leaving the house? Did he say that women should never seek a career of their own? Of course not. He did not say or imply any of these things. He did, however, honor his wife with nothing but praise and saluted her for believing her most important job is raising their children. Shame on her according to the left.

The man gave a very Catholic oriented commencement speech at a Catholic college. What did people expect him to say? Stupidity and hate reigns. It is hard to imagine that over 200,000 people have signed a petition to have the man fired and kicked off the team. This is at the same time video shows P-Diddy beating the snot out of his girlfriend while people are calling for forgiveness. Shame on the NFL actually putting out a press release saying that Butker's opinions are not the opinions of the NFL because they support inclusion and diversity in every way. Except if you are Christian, I suppose. As for Harrison Butker, the man has my respect. 100%.

2. Amal Clooney: I just read where actor George Clooney's wife, Amal, was instrumental in getting an arrest warrant issued for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Really? An arrest warrant. This is just another sign of people losing their collective minds. In today's world, let's just admit that anti-Israel really means anti-Semitic. If Clooney was so concerned about "crimes against humanity" done in Israel, where is the arrest warrant for Chinese General Secretary Xi Jinping and for what China is doing to the Muslim Uyghurs or the Tibetans. Oh I know why, Jinping is not Jewish. What about the Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi? That's right, he just died in a helicopter crash. Had he lived, was there any effort to issue a warrant for him in his treatment of dissidents within his own country? That's right, he wasn't Jewish.



Clooney Foundation for Justice

People can cloak their hatred in many ways but it still lingers in the background, just waiting to get out. The expression, "From the river to the sea..." is such an example. I watch these idiot kids on college campuses, many who

are not even in college, protesting Israel and they seem to forget that Israel was attacked by Hamas back in October. I had a friend who used to say, "If you cannot take a joke, don't start a war." That whole, "Fool around and find out" thing is definitely in play right now. Israel has a right to defend itself and to end this war as they see fit. Can you imagine the world coming to the Allies in 1943 and saying, "Look guys. The Germans and the Japanese have had enough. You have to stop all this military action stuff. Too many bad guys are dying. Oh, and Hitler, he gets to stay in power, he gets to plan future attacks against you, and those camps he's running, you must leave those alone. In the Pacific, just pack up your gear and go home. We are tired of seeing war." Exactly how would we have responded to that? The bottom line here, from my vantage spot, is anti-Semitism is alive and well in the world today. Let's not confuse that with any legitimate desires to see the conflict in Israel end.

3. Student Loan Debt: I guess President Biden has allocated another \$6 billion to his cause of forgiving student loan debt. There is so much to this insanity. To make this short and sweet, go to budgetmodel.wharton.upenn.edu and read some of the details of both of Biden's plans for the redistribution of wealth. Just to give you a little nudge, did you realize that 750,000 of the people enrolled in these programs are "residing in households who on average earn \$312,977 per year." Yup, our tax dollars are paying for these people. How many of you out there earn more than \$312,000 per year?



6 BILLION!

4. Shooting at Mexico de Tipico Restaurant: Two nights ago, some thugs shot one of the nicest men you will ever meet in the back parking lot at the Mexican restaurant on Taylor Road.



Luckily, he will survive but he had to have his hip replaced. The violence in this city has to stop. I am not calling for many of the worthless walks for peace that people like to dream up but accomplish nothing but how about some real boots on your neck tactics and strategies?

When I taught operational planning in the Air Force, we always dealt with objectives and strategies. An objective, for arguments sake is simply what you want to accomplish. A strategy is how you plan on achieving your objective. But without a clear objective, knowing exactly what you want to do, you CANNOT have a clear strategy. It is impossible. Mayor Reed, do you get this? Without a clear objective, people will continue to run amok in our city. A classic example is letting people out on bail who have shot and injured another person. I would give them bail set at \$835,000,000. In other words, you are not getting out. Sorry, not sorry. "But our jails are overcrowded." So? Guess what, if you didn't shoot that person, you wouldn't be in jail. Pretty simple how that works.

The cold calculus of truth comes down to this. What is more important, the criminal's comfort or the lives of your law abiding citizens? It is that simple. This is as far as you need to look. In my current book, I talk about the bombing of the German city of Dresden in 1944-45. For almost 80 years people have stated how horrible it was. How wrong it was. I approach it from another angle. For example, as the Commander of RAF Bomber Command, a man charged with sending bombers out almost every night to targets in Germany, who was more important, German civilians or British civilians, soldiers, sailors, and airmen? The answer is both painful but easy to find if you honestly look for it. Hard decisions must be made. Dresden was obliterated for good military reasons. What about the criminal elements vs. law abiding citizens. You choose. Remember, doing nothing is never a valid strategy. But if you do not have a good, clearly defined, measurable, attainable or decisive objective, you are doing nothing but wasting money and spinning your wheels. To do nothing means getting masses of people, no matter how much they love Montgomery, to pull the handles on the proverbial ejection seat and get the heck out of dodge. From the perspective of many of us watching from the outside, this city does not have a valid objective for the increased crime and thus, they have no idea of how to correct it - i.e. no valid strategy. **Prove us wrong.**

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Ronald A. Holtsford

What is the role of attorneys in the military?



We think about D Day that occurred this month on June 6, 1944, now eighty years later. What an incredible amount of planning that went into this invasion into German held French territory. What great loss of life and devastation. It was an incredible team effort on the part of the Allies which included many nations but as well many disciplines from the highest command on down. Balloon tanks, trucks and other vehicles were created and placed in England to throw off German spies regarding the buildup of forces for an invasion. Meteorologists were heavily relied on to pinpoint the best time for invasion to include when tide conditions would be optimal for landing on the shore. I don't see that any attorneys were used but I imagine there was some usefulness to the operation.

United States military attorneys have been used for well over a century. Most notably they are known to defend and prosecute the crimes of those in uniform but also to defend and prosecute war crimes. They are also available to produce powers of attorney and Last Wills and Testament for those in uniform, especially for those being deployed to conflict zones. This has been maybe the mainstay of their duties until Vietnam.

Somewhat during Vietnam and mainly thereafter, attorneys have been called on to be legal advisors for combat situations. Some military leadership argue that attorneys may be called on to make combat decisions rather than the combat leaders. In truth, the role of attorneys in a combat control center are as advisors and their input limited by senior commanders.

Some of the areas that attorneys may be utilized mean that the attorneys may be at a control center far from the conflict or may actually be somewhat close to the situation in order to have the best real time information available when quick decisions must be made.

As inhumane as war is, there are rules and laws that belligerents are to follow. By doing so, the intent is "... limiting the effects of war by protecting both combatants and noncombatants from unnecessary suffering, safeguarding the fundamental human rights of those who fall into the hands of the enemy, and facilitating the restoration of peace", as found in Legal Support in War: The Role of Military Lawyers, Lohr, Rear Admiral Michael and Gallotta, Commander Steve, Chicago Journal of International Law, Volume 4, #2, p. 465. Military lawyers must have an intimate knowledge of the Geneva Convention. As a for instance, it was determined that al Qaeda detainees are not prisoners of war under that Convention, When terrorists seek harm of the people of a state, then the military lawyers must determine how those detained may be treated especially when the detainees may have the appearance of civilians.

In naval situations, terrorists or maybe even state endorsed combatants may fly the flag of another country or appear to be a civilian or commercial craft. If indeed

the flag of another nation flies on a naval vessel then military lawyers must determine how such vessel may be approached.

"Law of war compliance requires more than pre-battle participation in the planning process. During hostilities, planning and staffing for upcoming actions is continuous. Legal advisors are embedded in all phases of the targeting process, including the intelligence collection apparatus, where they examine photos and other information regarding potential targets. In this arena the legal advisor provides guidance on LOW principles such as military necessity and proportionality. Other staff planning efforts also require legal review to ensure that international sovereignty issues are recognized, use-of-force standards are followed, operations are conducted within the bounds of domestic law, and international mandates under which US forces might be operating are observed." Legal Support in War: The Role of Military Lawyers, Lohr, Rear Admiral Michael and Gallotta, Commander Steve, Chicago Journal of International Law, Volume 4, #2, p. 471.

Military lawyers are a part at the three main levels of military operations. The first being the President and the Secretary of Defense, the second being the operational military commanders and all of those subordinate which carry out the plans and finally the combatants on the ground, the pilots in the air and those at sea that employ the weapons of war. Most operational procedures include the commanders and the lawyers in the command center, but on occasion for larger operations such decision making may funnel through the Pentagon.

Lt. General Nathan B. Forest once said "War means fightin' and fightin' means killin'". War is not quite that simplistic as you see above. When one considers what goes into planning operations of war, it's not just the military commanders but also the many support personnel that advise the commanders on the various aspects of the operation in order that it be a success and affect only combatants as possible.

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

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

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"Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We don't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our children's children what it was once like in the United States where men were free"

— Ronald Regan



John Martin

THE EFFECT OF THE GOLD STANDARD!

Franklin Delano Roosevelt was one of several ruthless U. S. presidents who has been grossly overated by numerous historians. If his ratings had been based on the quantity of his actions, they could be considered correct, but based on the devastating harm that he did to our nation much of the time, they were very, very wrong. In fact, if we wanted to rank our presidents correctly, with rare exceptions, the best ones were the ones who did the least—who refused to tamper with our constitution and wanted to leave people alone. That is a quality that very

few people in any government are willing to stand up and support (example: Calvin Coolidge—one of our all-time greatest presidents).

In the 1932 election, shortly after the crash of 1929, lying, conniving FDR won handily with his promises of a 25% reduction in federal spending (a huge lie, of course) combined with pie in the sky, mostly unconstitutional "New Deal" schemes that he claimed would kick start America's economy into prosperity.

He also made another big promise to preserve America's gold standard. Back then, anybody could walk into a bank and cash in a paper \$20 bill and walk out with a bright gold double eagle containing .967 oz of pure gold. With the dollar thus fixed, politicians and shysters could not tamper with the value of our money.

According to official records, our gold reserves in 1933 were 4 billion dollars. At \$20.67 per troy ounce, that equated to about 6,000 metric tons—193 million troy ounces. The total face value of US Treasury Gold Certificates issued from 1905 to 1928 totaled to more than another 16,000 metric tons (515 million troy ounces). At that time, the American dollar was by far the strongest currency in the world.

But inside, FDR hated the gold standard. He became very paranoid about private citizens hoarding gold, in spite of very little evidence of many people actually doing it. And with the gold-based dollar, along with federal taxes still at low levels, he could not ramp up enough money to finance his grandiose pipe dreams.

On March 6, 1933, barely two days after his inauguration, FDR kicked off his dastardly plan with a four-day national banking shutdown "until Congress could act." On March 8, just two days later, he publicly claimed the gold standard would be safe. Why not? America's gold reserves were the largest in the world.

But on March 11, after just three more days, he decreed another executive order that prevented banks from making payments in gold—another big lie.

Then on April 5, less than a month later, he signed his infamous Executive Order 6102 "forbidding the hoarding of gold coin, gold bullion, and gold certificates within the continental United States" that "forbade the hoarding 'of gold or silver coin or bullion or currency', under penalty of \$10,000 fines or ten years' imprisonment or both." This prohibition remained in place until 1974, when President Gerald Ford finally signed a bill to repeal it.

All people within the U. S., both Americans and foreigners, were paid \$20.67 per troy ounce for their gold with paper "Federal Reserve Notes" that were backed with nothing.

By May 10, the government had seized \$300 million in gold coins and \$470 million in gold certificates, equivalent to \$770 million dollars (37 million troy ounces). At today's prices, (April 19, 2024, @ \$2,397.60/oz), that equals 88.71 BILLION DOLLARS.

On June 5, 1933, FDR took the United States off of the gold standard. Then he finished his grand scheme with his 1934 Gold Reserve Act, which revalued gold from \$20.67 to \$35 per ounce, effectively seizing 40% of everybody's savings and

bank accounts—an unconscionable act of theft by FDR and the federal government.

He did it with almost no resistance from Congress, who should have been vigilant and taken immediate action to halt this devastation and impeach our great traitor.

FDR even asked a fellow, blind, Democratic, Oklahoma Senator, Thomas Gore, for his opinion. He quickly replied, "Why that's just plain stealing, isn't it, Mr. President?"

Now with his huge windfall, instead of his promised 25 percent reduction in federal spending, FDR was set to double federal spending during his first term, which he did—Another big lie.

And of course, with the gold tether completely severed, the Federal Reserve Bank could print and inflate all of the money it pleased without any restrictions. FDR's reckless authoritarian spending follies, combined with massive tax increases and abusive official actions, continued for another eleven years—until 1945—when he finally died.

Today, America is far more vulnerable than it was in 1933. Even though our dollar is still holding on as the world's primary reserve currency, it is now "on the ropes." We ostensibly have about 8,200 metric tons of gold at Fort Knox and another 5000 in the basement of the New York Federal Reserve building, but we don't really know it is still there. However, we do know that Russia, China, India, and a few others are currently hoarding massive amounts of gold. Can anyone even imagine what might happen if they succeeded in capsizing our reserve currency status?



Executive Order 6102 also deep sixed the famous 1933 St Gaudens Double Eagle. The order halted all gold coin production and mandated all 1933 minted coins to be destroyed. About 20 St Gaudens were stolen and led to a Secret Service warrant for arrests and confiscation of the coins. In 2002, a legal survivor sold for over \$7.5 million.

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Col John Eidsmoe

GENESIS 2:7 AND EXODUS 21:22-25 – DO THESE PASSAGES JUSTIFY ABORTION?

Abortion supporters generally shy away from Scripture, because numerous Bible passages demonstrate that the preborn child is a human person.

But grasping at straws, they sometimes point to two passages that they think support the pro-abortion (I will not use the term pro-choice, because the baby isn't given a choice) position. They cite **Genesis 2:7**, claiming that this passage proves that life begins at birth rather than at conception, and **Exodus 21:22-25**, claiming that this passage proves that Hebrew law did not provide legal protection for unborn babies. In this column I will demonstrate that these passages, when properly translated and interpreted, strongly support the pro-life position.

Genesis 2:7: The Breath of Life?

“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”

The term translated “living soul” in the King James is *nephesh/neshemah*, which means person or living being. Various translations say “living soul” (World English), “living being” (New International), “living soul” (Aramaic Bible), “living creature” (Literal Standard Version), “and the man began to live” (Good News Translation), “and the man started breathing” (Contemporary English Version), and others.

Some argue from this passage that one isn't fully a human person until he takes that first breath, but an analysis of this verse does not support that position.

First, this is a one-time event. The formation of Adam does not answer the question whether human life begins in the womb, because Adam was never in a womb. He was the first man, and he was formed out of the dust as an adult, mature human being. Obviously God had to give him a soul/spirit, because there was no other way he could get one. Never has anyone else been formed out of dust; not even Eve, who was formed out of Adam's rib (**Genesis 2:21-24**). Adam was formed out of inorganic matter, the dust of the earth, but Eve was formed out of organic matter, Adam's rib. Before God breathed into Adam the breath of life, Adam was something like a clay statue. This has been true of no one else since the time of Adam, and God has not breathed into anyone else the breath of life.

Second, even if we concede that one must breathe air in order to be human, the fact remains that the preborn child uses oxygen. He just takes it in through a placenta rather than through his mouth and nostrils. There are certain medical procedures by which air is inserted into the womb, and occasionally the preborn child will take a gulp of air during that procedure. Does that mean the child then becomes a person, even temporarily?

Birth is simply a dramatic change of environment by which the child begins to breathe for himself. This by no means makes him any more a person than he was before.

Exodus 21:22-25::

Legal Protection for Unborn Children?

In the King James Version the passage reads:

“If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him: and he shall pay as the judges determine. And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.”

The key phrase is in verse 22, and the King James translation is essentially accurate: “her fruit depart from her.” But a few translations have rendered this to mean “miscarriage.” The Contemporary English Version reads: “Suppose a pregnant woman suffers a miscarriage as the result of an injury caused by someone who is fighting. If she isn't badly hurt... .” The Good News Translation says “so that she loses her child, but she is not injured in any other way.” Translated this way, abortion defenders reason, damages are owed for injury to the mother but not for the death of the preborn child. Therefore, the life of the preborn child is entitled to no legal protection.

Foundation for Moral Law

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I respectfully suggest that an analysis of the Hebrew words used in this passage demonstrates that these translations are erroneous. The word rendered “fruit” is *yehled*, which is found 89 times in the Old Testament. In every other passage in which the term is used for child, it refers to a normal childbirth. In no other passage does it refer to anything less than a human person.

The word for “depart” is *yatsah*. Wherever this word is used in reference to childbirth (**Genesis 25:23-26, 38:28-30, Ecclesiastes 5:14, Jeremiah 20:18**), it refers to a normal childbirth, with the possible exception of **Numbers 12:12** where it may refer to a stillbirth but not a miscarriage.

If Moses had wanted to speak of a miscarriage, there are two Hebrew words he could have used: *shakol*, which he used for miscarriage just two chapters later in **Exodus 23:26** and which is also used for miscarriage in **Hosea 9:14**. Or he could have used *nephel*, which is used for miscarriage in **Job 3:16, Psalm 58:8, and Ecclesiastes 6:3**. But instead, Moses used the words which denote normal childbirth, and I am convinced that Moses, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, said exactly what he meant and meant exactly what he said – a premature but live birth.

And the word for “mischief” is *ahsohn*, which can mean anything from death to a sore finger. Some dogmatically assert that this refers only to harm to the mother, but the fact that it appears right after normal childbirth demonstrates that it includes harm to the child as well.

Armed with this knowledge, let's look at the passage again. Two men are fighting. One is the husband of a pregnant wife, and the passage presupposes that he is in the right and the other party is the aggressor. Somehow, the wife gets involved; maybe they roll in her direction, or maybe she comes to the aid of her husband. She is struck, goes into labor, and gives birth prematurely. If there is no harm to the wife/mother or child, the aggressor will pay the husband/father the damages he has caused to him by starting the fight. But if there is injury to either the wife/mother or child, the Hebrew *lex talionis* or law of like punishment applies. This is the principle of “let the punishment fit the crime,” and it even includes the death sentence for causing the death of the wife/mother or child.

Most translations recognize this. The original 1977 New American Standard Bible said “so that she has a miscarriage,” but the 1995 version corrected this error so that it reads “so that she gives birth prematurely.” Other translations include the New Living Translation (“gives birth prematurely”), Berean Study Bible (“her child is born prematurely”), Geneva (“her child depart from her”), Holman Christian Standard Bible (“so that her children be born prematurely”), Brenton Septuagint Translation (“her child is born imperfectly formed”), Coverdale Bible (“ye frute departe from her”), New International Version (“she gives birth prematurely but there is no serious injury”), and many others.

Many Bible passages establish the personhood of the preborn child. When Elizabeth, who was carrying John the Baptist in her womb, came into the presence of Mary who was carrying Jesus in her womb, she declared (according to Luke the physician in **Luke 1:44**) that “the babe leaped in my womb for joy.” And David proclaimed in Psalm 51:5, “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.” **Luke 1:44** establishes personhood before birth; **Psalm 51:5** carries personhood all the way back to conception.

And Exodus **21:22-25** gives the life of the preborn child the same legal protection afforded to the life of an adult. In the current abortion debate, the Exodus passage might be the most important of all.

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Injustice in New York and a Dark Day for America

The recent New York court proceedings that found Donald Trump guilty are nothing short of a disgraceful mockery of justice. This entire charade was never about upholding the law but about targeting a political opponent in a brazen, shameless display of judicial activism. The kangaroo court in New York has crossed every line of

decency and integrity, and every American, regardless of political affiliation, should be outraged. Let us be clear: this is a sham trial, orchestrated by partisan hacks who are hell-bent on destroying a man who dared to challenge the status quo. From day one, this witch hunt was never about seeking the truth or upholding the law. It was about silencing a political opponent and sending a chilling message to anyone who dares to defy the liberal elite.

This is not merely a legal proceeding; it is a calculated assault on our democracy, orchestrated by an administration that is hell-bent on obliterating its political adversaries. With this verdict, the Biden Administration has crossed a dangerous line, exposing its willingness to subvert the rule of law and wield the justice system as a bludgeon against its opponents. The chilling implications of this abuse of power cannot be overstated – our republic teeters on the brink of tyranny.

From the very beginning, it was clear that this case was driven by a deep-seated animosity towards Donald Trump. The so-called “evidence” was flimsy at best, yet the court steamrolled ahead, hell-bent on securing a conviction. It is no secret that the New York legal system is infested with partisan actors who will stop at nothing to destroy anyone who dares to challenge their ideological dogma. This was not a fair trial; it was a predetermined political hit job.

Let us talk about the judge. This is a judge who has shown a blatant disregard for impartiality. His bias was evident in every ruling, every objection overruled, every piece of exculpatory evidence dismissed. How can we trust a legal system where judges are allowed to wield such unchecked power, effectively playing the role of prosecutor, jury, and executioner?

And the media! Oh, the mainstream media was complicit every step of the way. They have been salivating over this for years, perpetuating a relentless campaign to smear Trump and influence public opinion. They fanned the flames of hysteria, twisting facts and outright lying to create a narrative of guilt before the trial even began. Where is journalistic integrity? Where is the commitment to truth?



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Perry O. Hooper Jr.

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



The Biden Administration, through this outrageous verdict against Donald Trump has now digressed to a Banana Republic dictatorship. In such regimes, the rule of law is a farce, weaponized to crush political opposition and silence dissent. By egging on the New York courts to pursue this politically motivated conviction, the Biden Administration has shown a willingness to undermine the very foundations of our democracy. This is not the behavior of a fair and just government, but of a corrupt power structure that will stop at nothing to maintain its grip on authority, mirroring the tactics of autocratic regimes that prioritize power over principle.

This verdict is not just an attack on Donald Trump; it is an attack on every single American who believes in fairness and the rule of law. It sets a dangerous precedent where political adversaries can be hounded and harassed through the courts, undermining the very foundation of our democratic society. Today it is Trump; tomorrow it could be you.

We must not stand idly by while the justice system is weaponized for political gain. We need to demand accountability from those responsible for this travesty. We need to support Donald Trump as he fights back against this injustice. And most importantly, we need to reclaim our courts from the clutches of those who would use them as tools of political retribution.

In these troubling times, we must stand firm, speak out, and refuse to be silenced. The future of our republic depends on it.

Donald Trump will undoubtedly have the last laugh, as the American people will see through this sham of a trial for what it truly is: a desperate and transparent attempt to silence a political outsider who dared to challenge the status quo. The orchestrators of this farce underestimate the intelligence and resilience of the American public. They forget that we are a nation built on principles of fairness and justice. The blatant bias and manipulation that have marked this case will only strengthen the resolve of Trump's supporters and open the eyes of many others to the corruption and deceit at play. In the end, this miscarriage of justice will backfire spectacularly, galvanizing a movement that will not rest until true accountability is seen.



John Sophocleus

Col. Ramsby: Southern Prep Academy's 12th President

Long time readers will recall past columns on **Lyman Ward Military Academy** [LWMA] now donning the more apropos **Southern Preparatory Academy** [SPA] nomenclature. After reader responses on Robert's troubled presidency at AU, it is delightful to write this month's column on a Presidency which promises a much brighter future with a proven track record of having the righteous Spirit to lead **Southern Prep** in the way of conditioning and graduating fine young gentlemen toward the sound mind, body and Spirit result SPA champions... gentlemen of this 'rare mettle' are in very short supply.

Since 1898, 11 have presided over this esteemed Academy - i.e., an average duration of over 11 years. Only 11 Academies of this sort remain in our coalition of States... shrinking toward zero last I checked. This leadership role over so many young souls is a daunting task of great responsibility. Colonel Corey M. Ramsby is undoubtedly up to the task as provided in SPA's April 22, 2024 announcement: <https://southernprepacademy.org/blog/col-corey-m-ramsby-announced-as-12th-president-of-southern-preparatory-academy/>

Ramsby will come to SPA in August with an accomplished 30 years of experience and leadership duties. He'll retire as Maxwell Air Force Base's Reserve Officer Training Corps Commander with an impressive record of recruiting, educating, and developing future leaders. Emphasizing a mission-oriented approach and commitment to academic excellence soundly buttressed by practical leadership experiences, Col. Ramsby is 'well prepped' to pilot SPA to new and improved record altitudes.

Col. Ramsby's stellar journey lifted off as a distinguished Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps Program graduate at Purdue University in 1994. In various operational and staff roles, among the more notable include senior leadership positions at Space Force and Cyber Command - e.g., 55th Communications Group at Offutt AFB, the 375th Communications Squadron at Scott AFB, and the 54th Combat Communications Squadron at Robins AFB, among others.

Readers wanting more specifics, Ramsby served in crucial deployments supporting operations Desert Fox, Southern Watch, and Enduring Freedom. Awards and decorations recognizing his noble service include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, Defense Meritorious Service Medal... enumerating a few. Reportedly, "Col. Ramsby's leadership has left an indelible mark on every organization he has served, from the Headquarters of the United States Space Force to the Joint Chiefs of Staff." Indeed reassuring someone of Col. Ramsby's accomplishments, intellect and integrity taking the helm at SPA.

To truly appreciate what a blessed endeavour SPA is for students, it is something wonderful to observe... the classrooms, the pomp and circumstance of parades and to just watch and listen in the mess hall. One of SPA's Class of 2024 most decorated cadets is Sean Turner, headed to West Point. I had the complete pleasure to sup with this fine young gentleman at Col. Sweeney's (incoming Chair of the SPA Board of Trustees) banquet table on Patriot's Day. Cadet Turner is as good as any of my top honours students at AU. A short clip of Cadet Turner's Valedictorian Address may be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WH4glmMj2zc>

Consider this quote from a **Southern Prep** Alum's parent, who was very active in the president's search on the SPA Board of Trustees:

"As a parent of a 2019 graduate, I had the pleasure of watching Southern Prep positively develop my son's work ethic, attitude, and grades, allowing him to graduate as a strong leader. I serve on the Board of Trustees because I know how valuable this school is to our boys, our families, and our society. We are fortunate to have such a military school in Alabama, which is one of only 11 such schools in the nation. The structure and discipline is what our boys need to mold them into strong men.

I am extremely excited about the new President, Colonel Ramsby. With his expertise & leadership, I am confident SPA will position itself to adapt to new opportunities while remaining true its core values."

Wish I observed as much commitment, effort and sound vetting in University president searches as I witnessed in SPA's thorough search to hire Col. Ramsby.

Decades ago, what shepherded me to **Lyman Ward** (now **Southern Prep**) was the Academy's accomplished, loyal cadre of alumni, who... when called into service, are impressive. I pray Col. Ramsby seeks out their advice and support. The first Alums to earn my attention were outstanding Lyman Ward grads performing as exceptional students in my AU econ classes. SPA preps well for a military career and many other paths in life. As long as I'm able, I'll guest lecture at SPA whenever given each blessed (re)invite. One of the more impressive Alum quotes obtained for this column is as follows:

"Many folks in my family attended this Institution. Some graduated... some did not. At least one started there soon after it opened. His family played a part helping Dr. Lyman Ward build the school from the first organizational meetings. He and his parents are buried at Camp Hill Cemetery. I have what is left of his diploma from 'The Southern.'

This school has gone from ploughshares to swords and now both ploughshares and swords. Our family has possession of a class ring from The Southern Industrial Institute and one from Lyman Ward Military Academy. I hope one day we'll have at least one from Southern Preparatory Academy, now the Official Military Academy of Alabama.

As a graduate of this institution, my life transformational moment took place when a Regular Army Major, The Senior Army Instructor, presented me with "The New Cadet of The Quarter" award. He asked which college I was going to after graduating from Lyman Ward? After some hesitation, I replied "I do



Southern Prep Academy's April 22, 2024 Announcement

not know sir!" He then moved onto the next cadet in the awards formation. I stood there in shock. No member of my immediate family even graduated from High School, much less College. I'd never been asked that question in my life.

After making the best friends in my life and being mentored by the most amazing group of people outside of my family, I went to a military college and graduated four years later. Many of my LWMA brothers graduated from the same military college that the Major and I graduated from.

I crossed paths with my LWMA brothers all over the world. Mostly military men. Even the Major that gave me the award and "The Question" back at LWMA. The Major was a Lieutenant Colonel, Infantry Battalion Commander when I served in the same Infantry Division with him in Germany. We had meetings with other LWMA men there as well.

This theme repeats itself to this very day. This week alone I've spoken on the phone with at least eight of my brothers. We're not all the same and didn't spend our productive years in the same military and civilian professions but have a bond and code which remains unbroken.

The best thing that I ever did! Many fellow Alumni are ready to be mustered into service to support Col. Ramsby as the 11th President of our cherished Academy."

In full disclosure, I'm a humble supporter of SoPrep, from buying bricks in remembrance of alums, to guest lecturing students and most importantly a monthly donor of this jewel in Camp Hill, Alabama. Please welcome and say a prayer for Col. Ramsby and also join me in of support SPA. Col. Ramsby's leadership will inspire and empower students. My 30 years in academia were more successful because of my real world leadership skills/experience and understanding from my many years at Ford Motor Company; an important, integral part of the job is inspiration as well as a good example in mind, body and Spirit.

It is time to give up childish things (idolizing sports, fancy trips, homes and other materialistic detritus) and engage in endeavours which will matter as the relentless evil envelops us. Ask your legislator to make student savings accounts available for all military school students in Alabama ROTC. Give Alabama families with students in any Junior/High school military academy in our State first preference for student savings account funds to support rising youth who may soon be called upon to defend our State. Even more simple, but nonetheless important, those who know good children being raised to live up to the sort of conditioning and preparation SPA champions, inform them of this jewel in East Central Alabama. "Free range children" as my mentor calls them are great candidates. Home schoolers with children finishing elementary school grades may find SPA a sound transition into junior/high school education worthy of consideration.

Typing this on Memorial Day, fitting to close recalling SPA graduates wounded and who sacrificed their lives in combat. Total combat deaths currently exceed 658,000 souls and increasing since our first war for independence. Probable a few of these fine young men I've met and guest lectured at SPA will suffer wounds and similar sacrifice in their military service. To again reiterate from past columns - I pray we live up to such great suffering and sacrifice. If unable to support our cadets and the mission of SPA, please make the commitment to care enough for those serving you to impede such honourable men from being abused and squandered by those sending them in harm's way. Executives, legislators and judges these past several score have little to no respect or understanding of the Constitution which authorizes engaging our military... even something as simple as the commitment to declare war and define the objective for deploying our nation's finest. God is watching, hard to imagine favorably

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Postscript:

**Theophilos Chris Katechis
June 29, 1945 – April 24, 2024**



Theo Katechis passing brought a flood of kind phone calls and messages evoking many blessed memories. As the Greeks say, Eonia Imnemi - i.e., may Theo's memory be eternal through Christ he held so dear. Buried on Holy Thursday in Montgomery - it is the most compelling service of the year to me and Theo was in my prayers that Thursday evening. A Holy day for a good soul to take their final resting place in this world... some of the Alabama politicians I've held dear would connect at Chris' Hot Dogs. Every time I ate there it would remind me of my maternal grandfather's restaurant near the Capitol Building in Raleigh, NC where politicians would come eat some good Greek "Soul Food" and ask his thoughts on the 'issues du jour.' Long before I would become an Alabama Gazette columnist, Theo suggested I take a copy as he was certain I'd appreciate some of the articles... many thanks Theo.

THE GAZETTE STAFF SENDS ITS SYMPATHY AND PRAYERS TO THE FAMILY OF THEO KATECHIS.



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HISTORICAL NEWS WE CAN USE!



Justice Will Sellers

The Magna Carta's Constitutional Tradition

Bloodless revolutions are the exception, not the norm. Indeed, history is replete with wars pitting various national or regional groups against one another for territory or other economic benefit.

Survival of the fittest was not a theory but was a present reality for most of the history of the world, and the slogan "might makes right" was the equivalent of the rule of law in many places.

Merge these ideas with the concept of the divine right of kings, and you have a formula for arbitrary government that changes with the whim of the ruler.

For much of the world, this is how government functions. The ruler, the most powerful politically or militarily, governs absolutely, and any edict issued by the sovereign supersedes any constitution, law, ordinance, declaration or resolution.

But civilization has another tradition that exalts the law above the unfettered discretion of any ruler and balances the power of government to make certain that authority is disbursed and not concentrated in one place where it might be subject to abuse.

This tradition prominently manifested itself 809 years ago on a small meadow called Runnymede about 25 miles from London. It is remarkable, if not miraculous, that in 1215, the seeds of constitutional government were planted in written form contained in the Magna Carta.

That a king and his subjects could have a disagreement and resolve their dispute in contractual form was an alien idea. Normally, any dispute with the ruler would have dire consequences like banishment or worse, death. To think that more than 800 years ago, reasonable minds could meet, argue and come to terms and prepare a written form of resolution is fantastic.

Magna Carta is thus arguably the first rendition of a bloodless revolution. And this revolution was and continues to have significant repercussions for which we are all beneficiaries, as it worked to create rights on several levels.

Indirectly, the Great Charter put to lie any notion that the English king was above the law and could do whatever he wanted. To the contrary, it created a balance of power in that the country would have a form of advice and consent by allowing the king to do some things within defined boundaries but requiring the nobles to agree to actions beyond those limitations.

Obtaining the consent of the nobility was not always easy, and from Magna Carta forward, parliament developed as an institution to limit the power of the sovereign.

But in addition to creating and recognizing a system of government, Magna Carta also acknowledged and confirmed two guiding principles for civilization.

First, the agreement recognized that kings could not have access to unlimited revenue and raise taxes indiscriminately. Controlling a sovereign's purse strings is perhaps one of the most significant aspects of constitutional government, and the ability of representatives in parliament to limit spending created a monetary veto over the policies and initiatives that rulers might implement.

While debates about certain policies might rage, and the merits could be reviewed, a quick way to cut to the chase was to stop the money flowing into the king's

coffers. Limiting the public treasury forces all sovereigns and other rulers to prioritize their initiatives and decide what is critically important.

In the 13th century, kings had not yet learned how to debase coins or print money, so once the authority to tax was curbed, there was no way the sovereign could abuse his subjects by forcing them to support public projects they opposed. Limiting the ability to tax is still a staple of representative government and advanced civilization.

In fact, one feature that spurred the development of self-government were protests in various forms against confiscatory taxes when the people had no role in approving the levy or consenting to the expenditure of public funds. Magna Carta may rightly be viewed as the first in a long line of tax protests that limited raising revenue by confiscating property from the emerging middle class.

As if spawning the "no taxation without representation" movement was not enough, Magna Carta also recognized and put into writing some of the initial concepts Americans cherish as part of the Bill of Rights, a remarkable achievement for the Middle Ages. Thus, it established a legal tradition of individual rights that many countries have yet to come to terms with, much less implement.

None of these rights were as advanced, broadly implemented, or as absolute as we might like today, but it was a start, and a good start at that. Magna Carta in a written format supported these concepts which are now a part of advanced civilization: uncensored press, security of property, equality before the law, habeas corpus, regular elections, sanctity of contract and jury trials.

But, like any contract or other agreement between disputing parties, there must be an enforcement mechanism. Something or someone must guarantee that each side will abide by the agreement. To do this, Magna Carta provided that the barons could confiscate the king's property if the terms of the charter were violated.

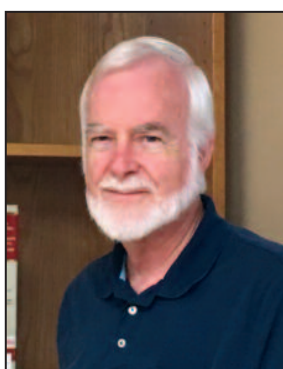
Like most contracts today, there was a requirement to put the king on notice of a violation and give him a chance to cure or otherwise correct the violation, but, if the king refused to relent, then the property could be taken. The barons were required to swear an oath to support this enforcement mechanism.

In short, the nobilities' allegiance became less of an obligation to the king and more of an obligation to Magna Carta. This concept is expressed even today in that oaths in America are not to any individual, but to the Constitution. Magna Carta started the concept of loyalty to a contract of rights, not to an individual.

While not perfect by any means, the Magna Carta was the first example of a bloodless revolution in which the rule of law and rights in contracts lead to the advancement of civilization and the beginning of constitutional government.

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John Taylor

Jefferson Davis, Federalism, and Consensual Government

In the modern world, we are encouraged to demonize certain individuals and idolize others. For years, those who control the narrative have promoted Abraham Lincoln as an individual to be admired and, sometimes even lionized. As a proponent of centralized power and government/corporate partnerships, Lincoln had and still has many like-minded supporters. Lincoln has also been lauded for his role in ending slavery despite the fact he supported the Corwin Amendment, favored

colonization most of his life, and admitted the Emancipation Proclamation (which had no constitutional basis) was strictly a "war measure." Also omitted is the allegation that Lincoln owned and sold slaves, a subject covered in Kevin Orlin Johnson's *The Lincoln in the White House: Slanders, Scandals, and Lincoln's Slave Trading Revealed*. After Lincoln's death, Rev. William Barton, Robert Todd Lincoln, William H. Townsend and other apologists destroyed or concealed records of many of his activities and misdeeds. Much of the Lincoln legacy is, in reality, a myth.

On the other end of the spectrum, Jefferson Davis has been designated as someone to demonize. Davis was an agrarian who believed in State sovereignty and voluntary Union, and he had slaves. Although most people consider present-day and past slavery to be nefarious, Davis was known for his leniency. For example, on Davis' Briarfield plantation (Mississippi), many overseers were Black and there was a sense of order and efficiency. Davis relied on Black plantation managers such as James Pemberton and Ben Montgomery to maintain productive operations. Echoing the philosophy of Davis' older brother, Joseph, both corporal punishment and overworking were prohibited, the slaves were well fed, and "A slave jury judged slave transgressions, with Davis often commuting severe sentences."

Although a Democrat, Davis could be described as a "Jeffersonian republican." In the mold of agrarians, e.g., Thomas Jefferson and John Taylor of Caroline, this political philosophy supports federalism (States' Rights) and decentralized power, whereas, Lincoln consistently advocated centralized power, central banking, corporate welfare, and protectionism. Davis was a traditional conservative and Lincoln, like many Republicans of his era, was a political leftist—despite the rantings of modern neoconservatives and folks like the "neoconish" Lincoln-lover Mark Levin. Socialists (including National Socialists), fascists, communists, etc., revere Abe Lincoln and despise decentralized government. Over time, Democrats have changed dramatically whereas the Republican Party is pretty much the same as it was from the beginning.

In 1846, Davis identified the only source of the federal government's power: "I answer, it is the creature of the States; as such it could have no inherent power,

all it possesses was delegated by the States." Davis understood the States, i.e., the people of the individual States, are sovereign. The federal or general government is not sovereign; it is simply the agent of the States.

Echoing the Declaration of Independence, Davis maintained his belief in secession, stating, "the supremacy of the truths on which the Union was founded...I shall die, as I have lived, firm in the States' rights faith." Davis understood secession is a reserved right of the people of the individual States and that government that does not represent its constituents is illegitimate. Davis made this argument during his Farewell Address in the Senate Chamber at the U.S. Capitol on January 21, 1861: "I hope the time may come again, when a better comprehension of the theory of our Government, and the inalienable rights of the people of the States, will prevent any one from denying that each State is a sovereign, and thus may reclaim the grants which it has made to any agent whomsoever."

Davis went on to say:

"Then, Senators, we recur to the compact which binds us together; we recur to the principles upon which our Government was founded; and when you deny them, and when you deny to us the right to withdraw from a Government which thus perverted threatens to be destructive of our rights, we but tread in the path of our fathers when we proclaim our independence, and take the hazard. This is done not in hostility to others, not to injure any section of the country, not even for our own pecuniary benefit; but from the high and solemn motive of defending and protecting the rights we inherited, and which it is our sacred duty to transmit unshorn to our children."

Post-war, Davis was asked about a pardon. He responded, "If it were all to do over again, I would again do just as I did in 1861." Believing in consensual government is very American and requires no pardon. That American precedent was validated when the colonies seceded from the British Empire. There is no wonder why there is an effort to "cancel" Davis and others who believe in the "radical" idea of government by consent.

Sources: "Jefferson Davis' Farewell Address," Senate Chamber, U.S. Capitol, January 21, 1861 *The Papers of Jefferson Davis*, Rice University, at: <https://jeffersondavis.rice.edu/Content.aspx?id=87>; "The Declaration of Independence," Thomas Jefferson, at ushistory.org; Jefferson Davis—The Unforgiven, by Grady McWhiney, Beauvoir Press, 1989; Union At All Costs: From Confederation to Consolidation, by John M. Taylor; "10 Things You May Not Know About Jefferson Davis," by Christopher Klein, History.net at: <https://www.history.com/news/10-things-you-may-not-know-about-jefferson-davis>; "Abraham Lincoln Is a Hero of the Left," by Matthew E. Stanley, Jacobin, at: <https://jacobin.com/2023/02/abraham-lincoln-historical-memory-american-left-emancipation-of-labor-racial-justice>; Jefferson Davis' birthday is June 3rd and has been recognized in Alabama since 1901; NOTE: In the "Woke Marxist" world we live in, even the great centralizers, e.g., Lincoln, Wilson, FDR, etc., do not always escape criticism.

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U.S. SENATOR ~~X~~ FOR ALABAMA

May we never forget their sacrifices and honor them by making sure our children know the truth about our great country and what happened on the beaches of Normandy"

WASHINGTON – Today, U.S. Senator Tommy Tuberville (R-AL) honored the brave soldiers who risked their lives on the beaches of Normandy during a speech on the Senate floor. Senator Tuberville spoke about his dad, Charles Tuberville, who, at 18 years old, participated in the operation at Utah Beach. Senator Tuberville emphasized the lessons the current generation can learn from the heroism the soldiers like his dad displayed 80 years ago.

"This week marks the 80th anniversary of the Allied invasion of Normandy—Operation Overlord. June 6, 1944, was one of the most significant events in human history.

In those early morning hours, more than 24,000 soldiers and 1,200 aircraft conducted a massive, daring airborne assault behind enemy lines. This was done to isolate the coast and prevent the enemy from reinforcing its defenses. Then, at dawn, the largest amphibious assault ever conducted—160,000 U.S., British, and Canadian troops poured out of 6,900 ships and vessels to storm the beaches against crushing enemy fire. Omaha, Utah, Gold, Juno, Sword, the beaches' names are still famous today.

The first days were not promising for the Allies. But slowly, over the next several weeks, the Allies extended their tenuous foothold and amassed more and more forces, eventually numbering two million on these beaches of Normandy. After a German counterattack in early August failed, the breakout would begin. Paris would be liberated just weeks later on August 25. And then five days later, the enemy would withdraw back across the Seine into Germany—[marking] the end of Operation Overlord.

Losses were severe—[on] June 6th, D-Day, alone, the allies suffered more than 10,000 casualties. At [the] Operation's end, that number would swell to nearly a quarter of a million, including more than 153,000 wounded and 72,000 killed or missing—more than was killed in the entire war in Vietnam.

Most of D-Day's participants were young men in their teens and early twenties. Men with little or no combat experience and their whole lives in front of them landed on those beaches. Men like my father, Charles Tuberville, a farmer from Arkansas who was not yet 19. [...] I can't imagine what it must have been like to carry such an incredible burden at such a young age—to leave your family and loved ones knowing you might not make it home. My dad would tell you it's because it was their duty. They loved their country, and their country needed them. They also understood that America and the freedoms we enjoy were worth fighting for. I think of those men today and I can't help but worry for my sons and this country's future.

In the months leading up to this important 80th anniversary, we have been inundated with images from college campuses across our nation. We have seen young people of similar age to the D-Day heroes protesting in support of terrorists—openly calling for the destruction of the society and freedoms that my dad and all these men paid for on D-Day with their blood.

So, how do we get here? How did we go from producing the type of men and women who are willing to die on the beaches for freedom and our Constitution [...] to college students who are openly supporting groups that chant 'death to America?' Sadly, our education system has failed the younger generation. Many of our major universities are more concerned with woke ideology than with quality education. They have no interest in teaching students the truth about our country and our founding principles.

Many of our students are being taught to hate this country—to hate America—and the results speak for themselves. More and more, high school students today can tell you everything you want to know about the made-up 'gender spectrum.' They can carry on a conversation about that. But you know what? They struggle to read at grade level and do basic math. Our progressive education system, controlled by teachers' unions, has made us ranked 26th in the world in math [...] and 6th in reading. It's embarrassing. It's unforgivable. The teachers' unions try to silence parents and cover for incompetence while our children are suffering.

Merit is now problematic as our nation has been taken over by the Marxist Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, or better known [as] DEI, ideology. This woke teaching sows division by teaching our kids to resent each other. Think about that for a minute. Our young people are the greatest resource that we have. But we are failing them. I worked in the education system for 35 years and I'm embarrassed. I'm appalled. All to appease a radical ideology that has taken over this country.

As a result, the Army has had to lower its standards because many enlistees can't meet the minimum requirements. You heard that right. We've had to lower standards—our standards both mentally and physical[ly].

We can learn a lesson or two from those heroes like my dad who bravely served and stormed the beaches 80 years ago [on] Thursday. Those men and women were united in the belief that America was a country worth fighting for. So, please join me, especially this Thursday, in honoring the brave heroes who risked [their lives], and in many cases gave their lives for freedom and what we have here today.

May we never forget their sacrifices and honor them by making sure our children know the truth about our great country and what happened on the beaches of Normandy that day June 6, 1944.

Senator Tommy Tuberville represents Alabama in the United States Senate and is a member of the Senate Armed Services, Agriculture, Veterans' Affairs, and HELP Committees.

2024 Luncheon to honor the Gathering of Eagles Montgomery Air & Space Forces Association Chapter 102

By Dr. Stefan Eisen Jr., Col (ret) USAF

The Wynlakes Country Club Ballroom was "buzzing" this past May 9th, as the Montgomery Air & Space Forces Association (AFA) Chapter 102 hosted a most memorable luncheon that honored six notable aviation and space legends, the "Eagles". These Eagles were selected by the 2024 Air Command and Staff College (ACSC) students. ACSC is the lead organization for the Gathering of Eagles (GOE) the program that selects and hosts the Eagles.

The GOE idea began in 1980, when retired Brig. Gen. Paul Tibbets (Enola Gay pilot) visited ACSC. During his visit, he shared his remarkable experiences with the ACSC students, which then sparked an interest to hear first-hand from other trail blazers. The first official GOE event, initially known as "Great Moments in Aviation History," took place in 1982. A small ACSC faculty and student group was chartered to develop this aviation heritage program, encouraging the study of aviation history and celebrating the contributions of aviation pioneers. This annual aviation event continues to honor the legacy of airpower, and now space and cyber power, as it helps inspire future leaders.

The GOE luncheon is another avenue for closer interaction between the River Region communities and Maxwell AFB. Over 150 guests gathered to enjoy fellowship and get to meet and visit with these living legends. The 2024 Eagles included:

1. SFC (Ret) Clifford Newman, a Vietnam Special Forces team leader. As well as controlling close air support to aid troops in contact, he also led the first combat high-altitude low opening jump in U.S. history.
2. For 50 plus years, Lt Gen (Ret) David Deptula's served the USAF. He was a key in Desert Storm's planning and execution. He flew 80+ F-15 combat missions while the Combined Joint Task Force Operation Northern Watch Commander. He continues to shape air, space, and cyber power as the Dean of the Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies for the Air & Space Forces Association.
3. Lt Col (Ret) Tim "Rhino" Bennett flew combat sorties in both the F-15E and F-16. He has the first, and only, air-to-air kill in the F-15E...using an air-to-ground weapon!
4. In Vietnam, Capt (Ret) Guy Gruters flew 412 combat missions as a Forward Air Controller in both the O-1 Bird Dog and F-100 Super Sabre, coordinating

attacks on hundreds of enemy positions. On one perilous mission, he was shot down and held POW for 1,912 days. As a POW, he cared for Medal of Honor recipient Capt Lance P. Sijan as well as leading and teaching his fellow prisoners tap code communications.

5. Dr. Natalie Crawford is a Senior Fellow and Distinguished Chair for Air and Space Policy at the RAND Corp. She excelled in many roles, most notably as Vice President and Director of Project Air Force. Twice, she earned the Air Force's Decoration for Exceptional Civilian Service. Dr. Crawford also earned the Air Force Analytic Community's Lifetime Achievement Award, the Lt. Gen. Glenn Kent Leadership Award, and the Vance R. Wanner Memorial Award from the Military Operations Research Society.

6. From May 2020 to June 2022, Gen (Ret) Jeffrey Harrigan served as the United States Air Forces in Europe and Air Forces Africa Commander. Also, he concurrently served as the commander of Allied Air Command and director of the Joint Air Power Competence Center. With over 4,100 hours in the F-22, F-15C, A/OA-37 and MQ-1, he was also instrumental in the development of the F-22 and F-35. A combat-tested warrior, he flew in Operations Just Cause, Iraqi Freedom, Inherent Resolve, Atlantic Resolve, and Allies Refuge.

The luncheon was opened by Chapter President Scott Key, Col USAF (Ret). Rick Plaskett, Lt Col USAF (Ret), sang the National Anthem, followed Bishop R. Lawson Bryan's invocation. Larry Carter, Col USAF (Ret) worked tirelessly to create a one-of-a-kind video presentation that recognized each of the Eagle's contributions. Col Matthew Berry, the ACSC Commandant, provided remarks on the lasting impact of these Eagles and their interaction with the current ACSC students. Even after the luncheon ended, and it's usual to see people exit quickly, GOE Luncheon guests and Eagles continued to visit and exchange stories, putting an exclamation mark this event's impact on the guests.

The AFA Chapter 102 would like to extend a special thank you to the many sponsors. Their support was instrumental in the luncheon's success. Thank you to PowerSouth for being the Presenting Sponsor. Thanks also go out to the Platinum Sponsors; First Command, Servis 1st Bank, and the City of Montgomery. Also, thank you to the Gold Sponsors; MAX Credit Union, Goodwyn, Mills, Cawood, Montgomery Chamber of Commerce, Southeast Cherokee Construction Incorporated, Troy University, and Industrial Partners, LLC.

While this event is complete, there is plenty of action in the "wings"! An AFA Community Partner Appreciation Luncheon is set for 10 September at the Maxwell Club. The invitation is open to the community at large; look for the reservation link soon at <https://afa102.net/>. For information on becoming a Community Partner, link to <https://afa102.net/community-partners/>. The information is at the bottom of the web page. Have a great summer!

ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

was transformed into a solemn gathering place where the true cost of freedom is deeply felt and profoundly



honored. Thousands of visitors, from grieving families to grateful citizens, converge upon this hallowed ground to pay tribute to the over 400,000 American heroes who rest here. This is highlighted by the somber laying of the wreath on the tomb of the unknown soldier on Memorial Day. The rolling green hills, adorned with rows of white marble headstones, serve as a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made by our brave servicemen and women. As flags flutter in the breeze the annual observance at Arlington stands as a most powerful testament to the enduring spirit of patriotism and the unwavering gratitude, we owe to those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our nation's freedom.

Arlington is a sacred place, a living testament to the bravery and dedication of American service members. Every headstone represents a story of courage, a life given in the defense of liberty and justice. These are

men and women who left behind families, dreams, and futures to stand against tyranny and protect the freedoms we hold dear.

Yet, this Memorial Day weekend, as we honored their memory, we continue to witness a disturbing trend on college campuses. There, students—spoiled by the very freedoms our fallen heroes secured—are engaging in protests that support terrorist groups like Hamas. These demonstrations are not just a slap in the face to our service members but a glaring sign of ignorance and disrespect for the values that underpin our society.

Hamas is a group that employs violence, terror, and oppression, antithetical to everything our nation stands for. The men and women buried in Arlington fought and died to protect us from such threats, to ensure that democracy, freedom, and human dignity prevail. How, then, can we reconcile their ultimate sacrifice with the actions of those who, from the comfort of their privileged lives, champion causes that stand against these very principles?

As we reflect on the solemnity of Memorial Day, it is deeply troubling to witness protesters burning the American flag, an emblem of the freedoms they so carelessly exploit. This flag, a symbol of our nation's values and ideals, has been carried into battle by countless soldiers who believed so fervently in what it represents that they were willing to give their lives for it. These brave men and women carried the flag with honor and pride, often into the very jaws of death, to ensure that the freedoms and rights it symbolizes would endure for future generations. Their ul-

time sacrifices stand in stark contrast to the actions of those who desecrate the flag, displaying a profound ignorance of the price of their liberties and a blatant disrespect for the heroes who died to protect them.

It is disheartening to witness the cowardice of faculty and administration at elite colleges who sheepishly support these flag-burning protestors, pandering to their misguided demonstrations instead of standing firm on the principles of respect and patriotism. These academic leaders, entrusted with shaping the minds of future generations, choose to cower in the face of controversy, fearing backlash more than they value the sacrifices that afford them their freedoms. By enabling such disrespect, they betray the legacy of the soldiers who died for the very liberties these protestors abuse. Instead of fostering a genuine understanding of the sacrifices embedded in our nation's history, they capitulate to a vocal minority, thereby dishonoring the brave men and women who gave their lives under the flag that now lies in ashes.

As the echoes of Memorial Day observances at Arlington National Cemetery fade, the profound impact of honoring our fallen heroes remains. These brave men and women sacrificed their lives to safeguard our freedoms, and it is our duty to remember and cherish their legacy. In the words of Lee Greenwood, "And I'm proud to be an American, where at least I know I'm free. And I won't forget the men who died, who gave that right to me." This sentiment resonates deeply as we reflect on the sacrifices made by our servicemen and women. Let us carry their memory forward with pride and gratitude, always standing united under the flag they so valiantly defended.

By: Perry O. Hooper Jr.

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

Empower Your Community: Cast Your Vote for **Caroleene Dobson**

By: **Dr. Nicole Jones Wadsworth,**
Economic Developer, Mediator, and Legislative Spouse



An important seat is at stake in Alabama's newly redrawn Congressional District 2, and the future of our community and country hinges on voter turnout. The pressing issue of how much folks have left in their pocket-books after payday affects every Alabamian, transcending party lines. To all residents of Congressional District 2, the choice is clear: vote for Caroleene Dobson in November. A vote for Dobson is a vote for a stronger Alabama economy and a revitalized national economy, promising a better future for us all.



Americans have faced significant economic challenges due to inflation, which has eroded their purchasing power and strained household budgets. The rising cost of essential goods and services, such as food, housing, healthcare, and transportation, has outpaced wage growth, leaving many families struggling to make ends meet. For low- and middle-income households, the impact is particularly severe, as a larger portion of income is dedicated to necessities. Savings have also been devalued, diminishing the financial security of those who had set aside funds for emergencies or future investments. Furthermore, businesses have been forced to raise prices to cope with increased production costs, leading to a cycle of price hikes that further exacerbates the financial burden on consumers. This environment of sustained inflation has created economic uncertainty, making it harder for individuals and families to plan for the future and maintain their standard of living. This affects every American, regardless of political affiliation.

In today's dynamic and often unpredictable economic environment, it is critical to elect leaders who have strong economic leadership and who can help implement sound fiscal policy. Electing Caroleene Dobson to Congress offers a pathway to achieving these goals through the implementation of proven economic principles that prioritize growth, stability, and prosperity for all Americans. Republicans like Caroleene Dobson shape economic policies that foster a pro-business environment that encourages investment, innovation, and job creation - noting that it is the private sector that creates the jobs, not government officials. By reducing regulatory burdens and implementing tax cuts for small businesses and corporations, Republicans strive to create a favorable climate for economic expansion. Lower taxes increase disposable income for consumers and enable businesses to reinvest in growth and hire employees, leading to a robust economy. When people are working, and have money leftover to save or spend, we all benefit.

Caroleene Dobson represents the promise of a brighter future for Alabama's District 2. As a political newcomer, Dobson brings a fresh perspective to the table, unencumbered by the entrenched interests and partisan gridlock that often plague career politicians. Her innovative approach and willingness to challenge the status quo are precisely what District 2 needs to address its unique challenges. First and foremost, Dobson's commitment to economic growth and job creation stands out as a vital component of her platform. With her extensive background in business law, she brings a wealth of knowledge and experience that is crucial for crafting policies that stimulate the local economy. Dobson's focus on reducing taxes, cutting unnecessary regulations, and supporting small businesses and the everyday Alabamian will help create a more favorable environment for economic development, directly benefiting the residents of Alabama's 2nd District.

Caroleene Dobson's background in law also makes her a formidable advocate for justice and the rule of law. In an era where legal and constitutional issues are increasingly at the forefront of national

discourse, having a representative with a solid legal foundation is invaluable. Dobson is committed to upholding constitutional principles and ensuring that legislation respects individual rights and liberties. Her legal acumen will be instrumental in addressing critical issues such as tax reform, protection for small businesses as well as corporations, protecting civil liberties, and ensuring that the legal system works fairly for all citizens, as it is written. Her legal expertise equips her to navigate complex legislative issues, ensuring that laws are not only sound and enforceable but also equitable and reflective of the community's needs. Dobson's ability to scrutinize and draft legislation with precision will help prevent unintended consequences and foster more robust and effective governance.

Lastly, Caroleene Dobson's values align closely with those of her constituents, making her an authentic and relatable representative for Alabama's 2nd District. Her deep roots in the community and her understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing her district ensure that she is well-positioned to advocate effectively on their behalf. Dobson's conservative principles, combined with a pragmatic approach to governance, offer a balanced perspective that seeks to uphold traditional values while addressing contemporary issues. Electing Caroleene Dobson to Congress would mean having a dedicated and capable advocate who is truly invested in the prosperity and well-being of her community. In an era where trust in government is waning, Caroleene Dobson stands out for her honesty and accountability. Voters can trust Dobson to make decisions based on principles and the best interests of District 2, rather than succumbing to external pressures or special interests.

In these pivotal times, casting your vote is more than just a civic duty—it is a sacred act that connects us to the enduring legacy of our forefathers, who fought tirelessly to secure the freedoms we cherish today. Each vote is a powerful homage to their struggle and a crucial step in ensuring that their vision of a just society, governed by the will of the people, remains vibrant. By participating in the electoral process, we not only honor their commitment to self-governance but also safeguard the rights they so valiantly won for us. Voting is a profound way to acknowledge the sacrifices made by countless brave men and women who have fought and continue to fight for our freedoms. Every ballot cast preserves the principles our armed forces defend and guarantees that our collective voices shape the future of our nation. Each vote is a tribute to their courage and a testament to our unwavering commitment to the values they uphold. On Tuesday 5 November 2024, let us stand united in this critical moment and cast our votes for Caroleene Dobson, who embodies these principles and will lead Alabama's Congressional District 2 with honor.

Thank you

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WITH THE TRUMP VERDICT THE REPUBLIC HAS FALLEN!



DR. BILL CHITWOOD

I will proudly vote for a convicted felon for President of these United States in November.

Thursday's verdict-guilty on all 34 counts was shocking but not surprising.

How could it be surprising? We've known from the outset this was a sham trial in a kangaroo court, a purely political bit of theatrical lawfare intended to persecute the presumptive nominee of the Republican Party.

Even after the verdict, there's a fair amount of confusion as to just what law President Trump supposedly violated. What is certain is that this case had previously been investigated and rejected at both the state and federal level, only to be picked up again by an obviously biased DA. The judge in the case is an "acting judge" who somehow was "randomly selected" to preside over three Trump-related trials, has donated to a "Stop Trump" organization, and has a daughter who makes bank working for Democrat campaigns. Conflict of interest? Judicial bias? Grounds for recusal? Of course not, when the defendant is Donald J. Trump!

It's almost gilding the lily to talk about how the jury was selected from the voter rolls in a district that voted 90%+ for Biden in 2020. A change of venue to, say, upstate New York or West Virginia would have risked the case going before an unbiased or ethical judge and jury, and that just couldn't be allowed.

This was never intended to be a fair trial. It was only ever intended to be just one act in this election year's performance of To Kill A Movement, starring Donald J. Trump, with a supporting cast of millions of MAGA deplorables.

MSNBC all but admitted this when Ratchet MadCow & Co. tried to frame legitimate criticism of this judge, venue and prosecutor's judgment as President Trump and his supporters trying to "undermine the rule of law." The only thing notable about MSNBC's reaction is that they look like they actually believe this drek. In their eyes, Alvin Bragg is a relentless crusader fighting to right wrongs, statute of limitations be damned! Judge Merchan is a paragon of moral rectitude and legal sagacity seldom, if ever, seen on this earth. And Trump, naturally, is a vile Threat To Our Democracy™ who must be stopped at any cost.

Predictably, the Left have been in a state of quasi-orgasmic bliss since the verdict was announced. Social media exploded with their gushings of "Guilty!" and "Lock him up!", and we can expect that to continue for several days. After multiple failed attempts, the Left have finally scored a concrete victory against Trump. Again, as MadCow said, "we now know what it is to put a former President on trial and see that trial to fruition."

Indeed, we do, Ratchet. Indeed we do. Even better, we now have the Bragg Precedent to follow-namely, that there are no statutes of limitation where former Presidents are concerned. I see no reason why that precedent couldn't extend to former senior administration officials as well. There are two Clintons and an Obama that shouldn't rest easy after this verdict. Lest you think I'm just being

silly, Megyn Kelly discussed this very thing on Thursday (which I saw after I'd already drafted this piece).

Regardless of the outcome of the inevitable appeal, President Trump has now been convicted in a case where a recent poll showed 82% of Americans think he's innocent-and we'll be reminded of this conviction again on July 11th at the President's sentencing.

FYI, the Republican National Convention begins on July 15th. Are the Rikers Island facilities up to managing Presidential Nominee Trump broadcasting his acceptance speech from his cell? Somebody might want to look into that...

The reaction from the rest of the nation was about what you'd expect. Shock, that any jury, even one from deepest blue New York City, would return a guilty verdict based on such a shoddy case. Surprise, that having a proven liar and self-confessed thief as the prosecution's star witness wouldn't sink the case. Outrage, at the judge's antics, bias and conflicts of interest. Sadness, at the realization that the Republic has indeed fallen, replaced by an illegitimate Regime, a Banana Republic like we used to make fun of.

We're the Banana Republic now, and it's not funny at all.

Right after the verdict there was intense anger from Trump's supporters on social media, but that seems to have morphed into a simmering rage and determination the likes of which I've not seen in my lifetime. It's highly significant that Trump's campaign donation site crashed on Thursday evening, and social media was swamped with posts of people donating after it came back online. Countless videos have gone up, variations on the theme of "Don't care-still voting for Trump."

Have there been tears? Yes. But, the tears have been a tiny minority compared to the anger and steely resolve. The general consensus is that the Dems have gone too far, and that this must not, will not be allowed to stand.

My own personal favorites are those people saying this verdict has sealed the election of Trump as the 47th President in November. Given a halfway honest election, I can't disagree. With a stolen election like 2020? Well, #CivilWarII was also trending Thursday evening.

The Left have misjudged their entire lawfare campaign from Day One. The harder they've attacked, the higher Trump's climbed in the polls. They think they've finally won, but they have no idea just what kind of beastie they've poked. When they realize what they've done-that they've awakened the MAGA dragon at long last-they'll have no choice but to fight like the cornered rats they are to win in November.

Why? Because when Trump wins in November, we, the MAGA base, will remember May 30th. We'll remember what the Left did and has done from November 3, 2020 onward. We'll remember, and we'll insist that justice be done. We'll remember, and so will Donald J. Trump-the convicted felon I will proudly, joyfully, gleefully vote for this November.

Dr. Bill Chitwood is a retired Child, Adolescent and Family Psychiatrist who does political consulting and media relations. He is the author of Beyond Maga, available on Amazon under his pen name, Doc Contrarian. He can be found on Substack and social media as @DocContrarian.

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Community Lifestyles



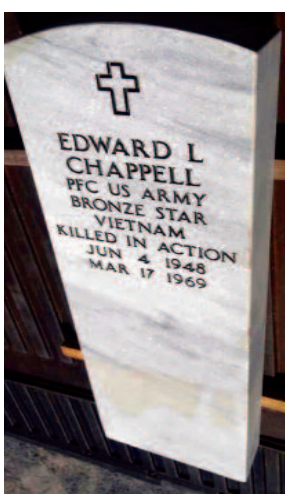
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Honoring Our Heroes



Military Marker Installation for PFC Edward L. Chappell

On May 19, 2024, a grave marker was installed for Private First Class (PFC) Edward L. Chappell who was killed in action March 17, 1969 serving in the US Army 191 Light Artillery (BDE) Field Artillery in combat in Quang Ngai, Vietnam, during Vietnam War. PFC Chappell was posthumously awarded the Purple Heart, the Vietnam Service Medal, the Vietnam Campaign Medal and the Good Conduct Medal. The upright grave marker was installed in a ceremony in the Greater Mallards Chapel AME Church Cemetery in Autauga County, AL, May 19, 2024. Funds for the grave marker were raised by the Old Autauga County Historical Society and alumni of the Autauga County Training School. Military honors were led by members of Chapter 607 Vietnam Veterans of America with a Color Guard, the firing a three-volley salute, the careful 13 folds of the American flag symbolic of the tri-cornered flag and a description of the Missing Man Table.



Central AL Veterans Health Care System Memorial Day Inter-Faith Service

An Inter-Faith Memorial Day Service was held May 23, 2024 at the West Campus of the Central AL Veterans Health Care System. The Master of Ceremony was VA Chaplain Jeffrey Dephouse. The presentation of the colors was conducted by members of Chapter 607 Vietnam Veterans of America followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and the singing of the National Anthem. VA Chaplain John Bailey gave the invocation. Readings from the Bible were given by Fr. Andrew B. Jones, Pastor of St. Jude Parish. A Prayer of Remembrance was given by Rabbi Scott Looper, Temple Beth Or. Chaplain Jeffrey Dephouse presented the names of four veterans who had passed away during the last year and presented a certificate to a family member of the deceased veteran. A tribute to 11 veterans who had passed away during the past year was given by a volunteer from the American Red Cross, and a commemorative coin was given the veteran's family member.

Memorial Day Ceremony Vietnam Veterans of America Central AL Chapter 607



A Memorial Day Ceremony was held by members of the Vietnam Veterans of America Central AL Chapter 607 on May 28, 2024 in the Greenwood Cemetery in Montgomery, AL. The Ceremony was held to commemorate the deaths of 58,200 Americans who lost their lives in Vietnam during the Vietnam War. Over 2.7 million served there, and today only 400,000 are still alive.

Col John Eidsmoe served as Master of Ceremonies. Jessie Donaldson, President of Chapter 607 gave the invocation and described the history of casualties during this War. A Color Guard present the flags followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag and the singing of the National Anthem. The reading of names of Vietnam War deceased military from the local area were presented with the 13 Folds of the Honor Ceremony and a description of the meaning of each item on the Missing Man Table. Taps were played by James Quackenbush, a member of Bugles Across America.



JUNE BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. James Dozier - June 2nd | 8. Ronald Urquhart - June 23rd |
| 2. Julie Martin Harris - June 3rd | 9. William E. DePoorter - June 24th |
| 3. Pete "Jiggs" Bowdoin - June 7th | 10. John M. Vickery - June 24th |
| 4. Maxine Mullins - June 10th | 11. John Willam Schmidt - June 26th |
| 5. Dorris Cobb Norris - June 10th | 12. Edwin Lloyd Faulkner - June 29th |
| 6. Marvin Kent Speigner - June 10th | 13. William Joseph Heath - June 30th |
| 7. Stefan Eisen - June 19th | |

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

Major Lee Jamerson Stuckey: Age: 44



Major Lee Jamerson Stuckey served 22 years with 6+ years as an Enlisted Infantryman and 16+ years as an Officer in the United States Marine Corps. His Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) as an Enlisted Marine was a Machine Gunner, and once commissioned he served as a Logistics Officer with various leadership billets throughout his career. He received the following medals, decorations, citations and ribbons: Purple Heart (for wounds received in Iraq in 2007), Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal, Navy Commendation Medal with a "V" for Valor in combat, Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal and Combat Action Ribbon.

Major Stuckey was born April 1, 1980 to his parents, Alva and Letha Stuckey in Montgomery, AL. He graduated from Marion Military Institute in 1998, and then he attended Auburn University for one year. He enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserves in 1999, and he then returned to his university education after he completed all of his required Infantry training. He graduated from Auburn University in 2004 with a B.S. Degree in Supply Chain Management while attaining the rank of Sergeant as an Infantry Marine. Once he completed his college degree, he was accepted into the Marine Corps commissioning program and began his training in Quantico, Va.

Major Stuckey completed Marine Boot Camp at Parris Island, S.C., attended the School of Infantry and Machine Gunner School at the Marine Corps Base Camp LeJeune, N.C., and Officer Candidate School in Marine Corps Base Quantico, VA. He served the majority of his military career at Camp LeJeune, N.C. Major Stuckey served three combat tours in Iraq. One tour was as an Enlisted Infantryman during the invasion of Iraq in 2004 and two subsequent deployments as an Officer. Major Stuckey suffered a brain injury from an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) while serving in Iraq in 2007. He also served another deployment during 2014-2015 in Romania when Russia was invading Ukraine and a few short deployments to Albania and Korea. He officially retired from his Marine Corps service in September 2021 at Camp LeJeune.

During his active duty service, Major Stuckey received a Master's Degrees in Organizational Leadership from Marshall University in 2016 and a Master's Degree from the University of New England in 2020.

Since his military retirement, Major Stuckey has been involved with running several nonprofits and a for profit business. He serves on the nonprofit boards for America's Heroes Enjoying Recreation Outdoors (AHERO), the Central Alabama Prescribed Burn Association (CAPBA), Romanian American Mission (RAM), Operation Phoenix, and he runs a for profit company, Habitat Heroes Outdoors (H20).



Major Stuckey is the founder and leader of America's Heroes Enjoying Recreation Outdoors (AHERO) which connects veterans and first responders through outdoor activities as a means to recover from their physical wounds and psychological trauma to reintegrate with American life at Major Stuckey's farm near Tuskegee in Macon County, AL, at the Warrior Lodge.

Major Stuckey and his wife, Tama Doull, have been married for one year and enjoy living on their farm in Central Alabama while his wife is working on a degree in Wildlife Enterprises from Auburn University. Major Stuckey says, "The wedding picture is of a happy ending to an extremely stressful but fulfilling Marine Corps career. I left my career with the wife that God planned for me and only met her because of my Marine Corps career. Life has its seasons and it's now time to enjoy a less traumatic and more peaceful time with my wife and family. She is retired German Infantry and now helps me run AHERO through her volunteer time and AHERO FARMS."



Major Stuckey's conclusions about his service in the U.S. Marine Corps are: "It was the solid foundation that I will be able to build upon for the rest of my life. I want to leave a positive legacy and live a life for those that we lost overseas." He would like to be remembered as a man who did everything to glorify God by helping his community.



Chief Master Sergeant Dr. Beverly Hill: Age 64



Chief Master Sergeant (CMSgt) Dr. Beverly Hill served 26 years in the U. S. Air Force. Her Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) included: (1) Administrative Specialist for 21 years, (2) special duty as a Professional Military Education Instructor and Manager for four years, (3) returning to her AFSC as Air Combat Command Information Management Inspector General Chief Enlisted Manager and finally as (4) Defense Attaché's Office Operations Coordinator in Kosovo. She received the following medals, awards, citations and badges: Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with four oak leaf clusters, Air Force (AF) Commendation Medal with one oak leaf cluster, AF Achievement Medal with one oak leaf cluster,

AF Organizational Excellence Award with four oak leaf clusters, AF Good Conduct Medal with seven oak leaf clusters, National Defense Service Medal with one service star, Kosova Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, AF Ribbon Long Tour, AF Overseas Short Tour, Air Force Longevity Service with five oak leaf clusters, USAF NCO PME Graduate Ribbon with two oak leaf clusters, AF Training Ribbon and United Nations Medal.

CMSgt Dr. Hill was born December 18, 1959 to her parents, Freddie and Ida Mae Davison-Orr in Macon, GA, where she was reared. She graduated from Northeast High School in 1978 and then attended Crandall Business College for 18 months and received a diploma in Secretarial Sciences in 1980. She volunteered for military service and joined the U.S. Air Force October 13, 1981.

CMSgt Dr. Hill completed AF Basic Training at Lackland AF Base, TX, for six weeks and was assigned to work as an administrative specialist. She was sent to Wurtsmith AFB, MI, for 3.5 years during January 1982 - July 1985 where she worked as an administrative assistant until she was sent on her first overseas assignment to Spangdahlem, Germany, where she worked as the NCOIC in charge of supply administration for four years during 1985 -1989. She returned to the U.S.A. and served at Robins AFB, GA, for six years during 1989 -1995 as mainly the NCOIC of Logistics. Next, she was transferred to Maxwell AFB, AL during 1995-2003 where she served in three capacities, namely, (1) NCOIC in Executive Services at the AFOTC Headquarters during

1995-1997, (2) AF Senior NCO Academy in Executive Services during 1997-1999 and (3) Professional Military Education Instructor during 1999-2001. She then served at Maxwell AFB Gunter Annex, AL, during 2001-2003 and served as Director of Resources at the Gunter NCO Academy. Next, she served as Air Combat Command Inspector General Chief Enlistment Manager during 2003-2006 at Langley AFB Virginia. She then reported for a one year remote assignment to Kosovo as the Defense Attaché's Office Operations Coordinator during 2006-2007. CMSgt Dr. Hill retired from all military service July 1, 2007.

Since military retirement, CMSgt Dr. Hill worked as a civilian contractor with the AF 26th Network Operations Squadron as a DNS Operator during 2008-2009. During her military service, she earned a Master of Science Degree in Adult Education from Troy University in 1999. She attained her doctoral degree in Educational Leadership and Management from Capella University in 2016 using the Post-911 GI Bill.

She then worked as a civil servant during 2009-2021. First, she worked as an Instructional Systems Specialist at the AF Career Development Academy for nine years. Next, she worked in faculty development at the Thomas N. Barnes Center for Enlisted Education at Maxwell AFB Gunter Annex during 2017-2019, and then she worked at the AF Chaplain Corps College at Maxwell AFB during 2019-2020. She worked as the Chief of Evaluation at the Ira C. Eaker Center for Leadership Development during 2020-2021, and since 2021, she continues there as the Dean of Academic Affairs.

CMSgt Dr. Hill and her husband, Wyatt, have been married 39 years and they have one son and four grandchildren. They are members of the Mercy Baptist Church in Montgomery, AL, where she serves on the Outreach Committee, and he serves with the audio-visual ministry. She is a member of the Montgomery Military and Veterans Commission and serves on Leadership Montgomery's Executive Board. They enjoy attending plays at the Shakespeare Festival and the Montgomery Biscuits' baseball games.



CMSgt Dr. Hill's conclusions about her military service are: "I was always prepared when opportunities presented themselves. It meant that I could go as far as my gifts and talents could take me while being the best citizen for my country."

100 Woman Walk and Roll Women's Veteran's Day

The Central Alabama Veterans Healthcare System and Women's Health will be hosting a 100 Woman Walk and Roll Women's Veteran's Day celebration on June 12th, 2024 starting at 10:00 a.m. CST. Female Veterans will participate in a ½-mile or 1-mile walk around the Tuskegee campus. Once they cross the finish line, they will receive flowers for their time, dedication and the sacrifices that they made while serving our country. For registration, visit the web site at: <https://tinyurl.com/woman> For answers to questions about this event, contact Sheila Austin at: Sheila.Austin@va.gov



Corporal Vernon Wallace Young Jr. : Age 76



Corporal (Cpl) Vernon Wallace Young served four years on active duty and two years in the inactive Reserve in the U.S. Marine Corps. His Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) was Tank Crewman (1811). He received the following medals, awards, ribbons and citations: Vietnam Service Medal, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with one star, National Defense Medal, Navy Achievement Medal with Combat V, Sharpshooter Badge and Good Conduct Medal.

Cpl Young was born November 2, 1947 in Cincinnati, OH, to his parents, Wallace and June Young. Because his father's employment as a sign-painter involved moving often to many cities and states in the southeast, he was reared in a lot of places.

At age 17, he volunteered and joined the U.S. Marine Corps at the Marine Recruiting Station in the U.S. Post Office in Montgomery, AL, on a 120 day program beginning service June 14, 1965. He reported for duty at the Marine Corps Base Camp LeJeune, N.C. He finished recruit training in the Marine Corps Boot Camp where recruits are transformed into the world's most elite fighting force through 13 weeks of rigorous training. Recruits acquire the knowledge, discipline, teamwork, and fitness level required of a Marine through physical training, classroom instruction, and developing combat skills. He then was trained as a tank fighter while at Camp Lejeune. He began service with the Charlie Company C Company 2nd Tank Battalion 2nd Marine Division. While stationed at Camp Lejeune, he was sent to Cuba twice in 1965 and in 1967 to the Marine Corps Security Forces Co. at Guantanamo Bay where the Marines served with additional training with tanks.

Cpl. Wallace volunteered to serve in the Vietnam War. He was stationed near the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) at the 17th parallel in Quang Tri province that was established as the dividing line between North and South Vietnam. While near the DMZ, he served at the Rock Pile, a solitary karst rock out cropping north of Route 9 and south of Route 9 and south of the former DMZ. The karst landscapes were hazardous landscapes with sinkholes, caves, enclosed depressions, disappearing streams, springs and sinkholes for Marines in combat. It was also known as Elliot Combat Base and known in Vietnamese as Núi Mọt. The Battle of Khe Sanh (21 January -21- July 9, 1968) was conducted in the Khe Sanh area of northwestern Quảng Trị Province, Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam), during the Vietnam War. The main US forces defending Khe Sanh Combat Base (KSCB) were two regiments of the United States Marine Corps supported by elements from the United States Army and the United States Air Force (USAF), as well as a small number of Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) troops. These were pitted against two to three divisional-size elements of the North Vietnamese People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN).

The US command in Saigon initially believed that combat operations around KSCB during 1967 were part of a series of minor PAVN offensives in the border regions. That appraisal was later altered when the PAVN was found to be moving major forces into the area. In response, US forces were built up before the PAVN isolated the Marine base. Once the base came under siege, a series of actions were fought over a period of five months. During this time, KSCB and the hilltop outposts around it were subjected to constant PAVN artillery, mortar, and rocket attacks, and several infantry assaults. To support the Marine base, a massive aerial bombardment campaign, Operation Niagara, was launched by the USAF. In the first three months, over 114,810 tons of bombs were dropped by US aircraft and over 158,900 artillery rounds were fired in defense of the base; while U.S. forces lost 1 KC-130, 3 C-123, 35 helicopter destroyed, 23 aircraft and 123 helicopter were damaged during the campaign. US forces used the latest technology to locate PAVN forces for targeting. Additionally, the logistical effort required to support the base once it was isolated demanded the implementation of other tactical innovations to keep the Marines supplied.

Since mid-January, 1968, U.S. Marine recon patrols had detected large numbers of enemy soldiers' infiltration into the vicinity of Cam Lo. Cpl Young served 19 days in combat at Cam Lo, a sprawling village 14 kilometers south of the DMZ,

situated along the south bank of the Cam Lo River. Cam Lo was also where Route 9, the vital east-west artery from Dong Ha to Khe Sanh, intersected Route 561, the main supply route leading north to Marine fire support bases at C-3, C-2 and Con Thien. The ground between the Cam Lo River and the DMZ, intersection formed the southwest corner of the area the Marines in northern Quang Tri province, and it was called Leatherneck Square, a scene of many bloody encounters between U.S. Marines and NVA the previous year and had been declared a free-fire zone after the removal of all civilians during Operation Hickory in May 1967. Many thousand of refugees, both voluntary and involuntary had settled around Cam Lo in shabby South Vietnamese government refugee camps that the Marines called Tin City and Cam Low.

In a major intelligence coup, South Vietnamese security forces captured Doan Cu, the Viet Cong district chief. Documents detailing Communist plans for a major offensive in the Cam Lo district were found. Rumors of an imminent enemy attack ran rampant throughout the civilian populace, and some villagers built sandbagged shelters in their homes. Mining incidents along Route 9 began to increase. In response, the Marines doubled their night ambush efforts meeting with frequent success.

The North Vietnamese Army 's (NVA) first effort to interdict Route 9 occurred on January 24, when an artillery ammunition convoy from Dong Ha to Camp Carroll was ambushed just as it was preparing to turn off Route 9 onto the access road leading to the camp. A reaction force from Camp Carroll broke up the ambush, and the NVA retreated into the hills. Three days later, a unit from the elite 320th NVA Division, which had been the principal victor over the French at Dien Bien Phu in 1954, tangled with Lt. Col. Lee Bendell's 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines (3/4), in a fierce daylong fight for a hill (called 'Mike' hill) overlooking Route 9. Bendell's Marines prevailed. During the peak of the battle a Marine sergeant had run past an Australian soldier with an armload of machine gun ammunition. He offered him the can of beer he had in his free hand. He said, "You Marines surely know how to fight a war." During combat, he was blown against the tank. Cpl. Young suffered a serious injury to one hand when an enemy's fire on his tank resulted in his injury as he attempted to jump back inside the turret of his tank on the 4th of July. His finger still has a piece of shrapnel in it. He contacted malaria while in Vietnam. Although he was scheduled to be medevaced out of combat for treatment, for more than six hours, he delayed boarding a helicopter to assist the loading of other Marines who were more seriously wounded. Cpl Young left Vietnam October 28, 1968 completing his service as a tank commander of two tanks in combat for 12 months and 19 days

Cpl Young's conclusions about his Marine military service are: "I trained at Camp LeJeune, and I trained at Boot Camp so I could serve. Vietnam was on my mind until I volunteered. I told my mother that I would be back. I wanted to fight in Vietnam. The Marine Corps is a good place to start and to get a sense of direction. I thought that it was my duty to go. I was just a young Marine. I don't regret going in, and I don't regret getting out. I was proud to serve. Marines fight. Marines die. That's what we do, but the Marine Corps lives forever. Semper Parati! Do or die."

After his military service, Cpl attended a heavy equipment school in Charlotte, N.C., where he learned to operate bulldozers. He worked in Bradenton, FL, with Warren Brothers Construction Company for three years. He returned to Montgomery, AL, and worked with AL Asphalt Company. He worked 25 years as an iron worker building paper mills with Daniels Co., CNK Co. and Yont Co. He retired from all employment in 2006. He belongs to the Marine Corps Vietnam Tankers Association and has attended its conventions throughout the nation. (A video of Cpl Young describing the ambush at the Cam Lo River can be found at the web site: www.usmcmvta.org). He belongs to the Spring Creek Baptist Church of Honorville, AL.

Cpl young and his wife, Toneia, have been married 55 years. They have four children, 14 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.





Kylie' McKinney



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**SOCIAL SECURITY CARDS
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SOCIAL SECURITY OMITS FOOD FROM IN-KIND SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE CALCULATIONS

Supplement Security Income (SSI) provides monthly payments to adults and children with a disability or blindness. It also provides monthly payments to adults aged 65 and older, who have limited income and resources. SSI benefits help pay for basic needs like rent, food, clothing, and medicine. People applying for and receiving SSI must meet eligibility requirements, including income and resource limits.

Under our current rules, we include food assistance as unearned income when calculating In-Kind Support and Maintenance (ISM). We understand this rule could affect your SSI eligibility or reduce your payment amount, so we made changes. Beginning September 30, 2024, we are no longer counting food that someone gives you as income when we figure SSI payments. This new rule removes a critical barrier for SSI eligibility due to informal food assistance from friends, family, and community networks of support.

For more information on the SSI program, including who is eligible and how to apply, visit www.ssa.gov/ssi.

Please share this with those who may need it.

10 WAYS TO PROTECT YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION

Identity theft affects millions of people each year and can cause serious harm. Protect yourself by securing your personal information, understanding the threat of identity theft, and exercising caution.

Here are **10** things you can start doing now to protect yourself and your loved ones from identity theft:

1. Protect your Social Security number by keeping your Social Security card in a safe place at home. Don't carry it with you or provide your number unnecessarily.
2. Be careful when you speak with unknown callers. Scammers may mislead you by using legitimate phone numbers or the real names of officials. If they threaten you or make you feel uneasy, hang up.
3. Create strong, unique passwords for each of your accounts. Use different passwords for different accounts so if a hacker gains access to one account, they can't access others.
4. Never give your personal or financial information in response to an unsolicited call or message, and never post it on social media.
5. Shred paper documents that contain personal information, like your name, birth date, or Social Security number.
6. Protect your mobile device from unauthorized access by securing it with a PIN, adding a fingerprinting feature or facial recognition. You can also add a password and adjust the time before your screen automatically locks.
7. Regularly check your financial accounts for suspicious transactions.
8. Avoid internet threats by installing and maintaining strong anti-virus software on all your devices—including your mobile device and personal computer. Use a virtual private network (VPN) to stay safe on public Wi-Fi. Do not perform activities that involve sensitive data, like online shopping and banking, on public Wi-Fi networks.
9. Protect yourself on social media by customizing your security settings and deleting accounts you no longer use. Also, double check suspicious messages from your contacts, as hackers may create fake accounts of people you know.
10. Never open a link sent via unsolicited email or text message. Type in the web address yourself. Only provide information on secure websites.

We encourage you to create your own personal **my** Social Security account to track your earnings record. For more information, please read our publication, *Protecting Personal Information*, at oig.ssa.gov/files/21-540_Protecting_Personal_Information.pdf. Contact us if you see suspicious work activity on your record. You could be a victim of identity theft.

Please share this information with your family and friends.

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Three WWII Combat Veterans Celebrated Birthdays!



Brigadier General (BG) Marvin Kent Speigner

served in the U. S. Army for 35 years. During WWII, he served as a machine gunner in the Infantry. The mission was to defeat and expel the Imperial Japanese forces.

BG Speigner arrived on beaches aboard the Landing Ship Tanks (LST) making the amphibious landings with the Infantry wading

ashore. The conditions of combat were terrible during mostly rainy seasons fighting the Japanese who didn't want to ever surrender. He served there on three beachheads until just after the Japanese surrendered August 5, 1945, following the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. BG Speigner reflects upon his service to America saying, "I was serving my country. I enjoyed it. I was in construction before I joined the military, but I didn't feel about it like I felt about the military. At the end of the day in the military, I always felt that I had accomplished something."

Two WWII veterans celebrated their 99th birthdays during May.



Charles E. Lynn

Joseph Simon served in the U. S. Army as a combat engineer and demolition expert in New Guinea and the Philippine Islands. Joseph states, "My military service means a lot to me. I have a lot of memories both good and bad. It is something that I am proud of having served because I think that the people who served during WWII are no better than those who are serving now, but they were a lot younger and a lot less prepared than those who go into the service now."

Charles E. Lynn celebrated his birthday May 23, 2024, and Joseph Simon celebrated his birthday May 29, 2024. Lynn joined the United States Army Air Corps and served as a gunner in a turret in the bottom of B17's flying 35 missions from England over Germany without injury. Lynn states, "I served my country. I would do it again."



Joseph Simon

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO TELL US ABOUT YOUR FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS

Do you receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI)? If so, you need to tell us about any financial accounts you own, alone or with someone else. That's because SSI is a needs-based program, and eligibility is determined by your resources as well as your income. Examples of financial accounts include:

- Checking, savings, and credit union accounts.
- Christmas club accounts.
- Certificates of deposit, also known as CDs.
- Stocks and U.S. savings bonds.

What you need to tell us

You need to tell us about changes to your financial accounts or account balances to ensure you receive the correct SSI payment amount. Let us know if you:

- Open a new account.
- Close an account.
- Add a joint owner to an existing account.
- Increase your account balance over the SSI resource limit of:
 - \$2,000 for an individual
 - \$3,000 for a married couple living together and receiving SSI.

Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Accounts

ABLE programs allow people with disabilities to save money without losing important benefits, including SSI. We exclude ABLE accounts with balances less than \$100,000 when determining SSI eligibility. To learn more about ABLE accounts, visit www.ssa.gov/ssi/spotlights/spot-able.html.

How to Report Changes to Your Financial Accounts

Call us toll free at **1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778)**, weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Contact your local Social Security office. You can find your local office at: www.ssa.gov/locator.

Additional Information

For a complete list of SSI reporting responsibilities, please refer to the publication *What You Need to Know When You Get SSI* at: www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-11011.pdf.

Please share this information with those who need it

READY TO RETIRE? APPLY ONLINE WITH SOCIAL SECURITY

It's never too early to start planning for retirement and our online tools can help. Go to www.ssa.gov/myaccount to access your personal **my** Social Security account to get an estimate of your retirement benefits based on your earnings record. Once you have an account, you can use our Plan for Retirement tool to see how your benefits can change at different ages. Don't have a personal my Social Security account? You can create one at www.ssa.gov/myaccount.

You can also use your personal my Social Security account to see your entire work history and make sure we have all your wages recorded correctly. We base your benefit amount on the earnings reported to us. If you find any errors in your work history, read our factsheet, *How to Correct Your Social Security Earnings Record* at www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10081.pdf.

When you're ready to apply for Social Security retirement benefits, you can complete our online application in as little as 15 minutes at www.ssa.gov/retirement. We will contact you if we need any further information. You can check the status of your application using your personal account.

You can apply online for Social Security retirement benefits, or benefits as a spouse, if you:

- Are age 62.
- Are not currently receiving benefits on your own Social Security record.
- Have not already applied for retirement benefits.

Want your benefits to start no later than 4 months in the future. (We cannot process your application if you apply for benefits more than 4 months in advance).

Note: If you were born on the first or second day of the month, you meet this requirement in the month of your 62nd birthday. If you were born on any other day of the month, you do not meet this requirement until the following month.

Find out more about retirement benefits at www.ssa.gov/retirement.

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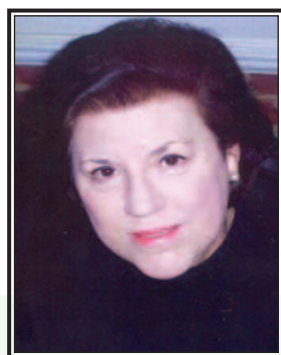
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Judge
Peggy Givhan

SOUTHERN GARDENING Potpourri for June GARDENING WITH THE FAMILY

By now the 2024 school year is over, so congratulations to all of our Seniors in the River Region. Perhaps our gardening parents can make gardening a family affair and encourage these Seniors and others to get their hands in the dirt. What a wonderful way to connect with nature. If my history is correct in our early

history, children were expected to lend a hand in gardens and farms across the country. Maybe this would be a good alternative to watching T.V. or playing video games. **KEEPS THE CHILDREN OFF THE STREET.**

Recently, I was in Virginia visiting my sister, and marveled at a beautiful weigela she had in her yard. Sometimes we forget about this shrub in our area because many prefer azaleas. This shrub was about 5 feet tall, and about 4 feet wide with gorgeous spiked bright pink blooms. I believe the variety she has grown is "sonic". These blooms do well as cut flowers and thrive in zones 4-8.

Across our country, there is great concern for the honey bee populations. I think it behooves all gardeners to include plants that attract honey bees. I include many below:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Monarda (bee or bergamot) | 9. Lavender |
| 2. Sweet clover | 10. Mint |
| 3. Anise hyssop | 11. Oregano |
| 4. Lemon balm | 12. Borage |
| 5. Catmint | 13. Basil |
| 6. Sage | 14. Chives |
| 7. Rosemary | 15. Thyme |
| 8. Echinacea | 16. Garlic |



One thing I did differently this spring for my pot garden was to allow some pots of mums, which had overwintered, to bloom at their natural time. Since these plants were older and larger than the new purchases, they really filled in some holes. Most were yellow, and some a burnt orange. In order to have mums in the fall, one must constantly cut back all the small bloom heads until September and then let them bloom. I would not recommend planting mums into the garden as they multiply like weeds. Best to keep them contained in pots.

PLANT OF THE MONTH

Zinfin Doll

For those who can not have enough hydrangeas, there is a new variety on the block. It is a hardy hydrangea named Zinfin Doll. It does well in mixed borders or perennial beds, or as a backdrop in any garden setting. Called a showstopper, these plants are stuffed with huge creamy white blossoms which transcend to bluish pink and then to dark rich raspberry panicles. The deep green foliage makes these bloom heads pop. In our area, probably best to plant in the fall.



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GOOD GARDENING.

We're approaching that time of year when gardens start "turning to squash", as Momma used to say. Yellow squash and its cousin zucchini are everywhere! They're inexpensive, filling, and complement a wide range of other dishes. One of my favorite ways to use squash and zucchini together is this simple recipe, which roasts fresh veggies into a healthy, versatile side dish.

Baked Squash & Zucchini

You'll need:

3-4 yellow squash and 2-3 zucchini
1 Tbsp olive oil
½ tsp salt
½ tsp ground black pepper
1 tsp Italian seasoning mix (or other)
Parmesan cheese, grated, for garnishing



To make:

Preheat your oven to 425 degrees F.
Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper (which works better) or aluminum foil.
Quarter (unpeeled) squash and zucchini lengthwise, then slice into 1" pieces. Try to make the pieces as uniform as possible so they roast evenly
In a large mixing bowl, whisk together olive oil, salt, pepper and spice blend
Add chopped squash and zucchini to the oil and spice mixture, toss gently to coat.
Arrange pieces in a single layer on the baking sheet. (Crowding or layering them makes them roast unevenly.)
Roast for 6-8 minutes, then use a spatula to turn them once before returning to oven for another 6-8 minutes (total time 12-16 minutes), or until evenly browned.
Remove from oven and let cool for 2-3 minutes, transfer to a serving dish and garnish with parmesan cheese.

Serve warm

This dish works well with Greek, Cajun and other seasoning mixes. I always try to keep the amount of squash and zucchini equal, but you can vary this according to your preference.
Squash Casserole is a Covered Dish Supper go-to that everyone knows how to make, but few make well. If you want to impress someone with your culinary skills--don't make squash casserole. There are excellent recipes out there that are a bit complicated, but what I do instead is a tasty, quick & easy squash casserole that takes less than 40 minutes, start to finish. Best of all, if you keep some canned squash and onions on hand, everything else in it is probably something you've already got, as well.



Are you willing
to close the distance?



Gary Miller

I was pressing to get on these two gobblers. I knew since it was the middle of the season and the first thing in the morning, that after they flew off the roost the gobbling would end. So I chose to gamble a little and get in their bedroom. Since it was already breaking day, I knew I had the chance of being seen. I was right. But fortunately I was only seen by two hens that were roosted just above my set-up. They shortly flew away from me and more importantly, away from the two gobblers who were only about seventy-five yards away. After the hens left, I softly called to see if the toms were still interested, and they were. They responded loud and clear. A little later they flew down and never offered to gobble again. But I was close enough to see them when they landed. After a little coaxing, a dead tom lay at my feet. This is not the first time that I dared challenge getting between the hens and the gobblers. I know if I can separate the two, the path for them to reunite runs through me. But there is a risk. It is one that many times I am unwilling to take. Most of the time, I prefer to rest on the side of caution, patience, and surety. Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. One method, however, is not always the best, but I like getting close – real close.

There is something about closeness. If you have ever witnessed the hot air coming from the nostrils of a wild animal on a cold day, you know what I mean. If you have ever been greeted by a coyote while you're calling a turkey, you know what I mean. Closeness focuses the mind and the perspective. No longer is the image a panoramic one; it is now zoomed in on one particular subject. Everything else is mentally cropped from the picture. Sometimes God calls each one of us to do the same. His words to us are so gripping, yet so quiet, that it compels us to draw a little closer in order that we might hear more, and more clearly. At these times He is not satisfied with where we have been sitting. That view is too general – too encompassing. He wants to bring one thing to our attention, and in order for Him to do that; we must be willing to draw a little closer. Are you willing to do that? *Are you willing to close the distance? Are you willing to risk putting yourself in God's path? The results might not be certain, but your success will be.*

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

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Quick Squash Casserole

You'll need:

4 (14 oz) cans of squash and onions, drained (I prefer Margaret Holmes brand)
1 ½ cups of bread crumbs OR butter crackers, crushed.
(Ritz or equivalent), divided.
1 ½ cups shredded cheese
½ cup sour cream
2 eggs
1 tsp garlic powder (or 1 tsp minced garlic)
¼ tsp salt
¼ tsp ground black pepper
½ cup grated Parmesan cheese, divided
2 Tbsp chives, chopped (optional)
4 Tbls (½ stick) butter, melted

To make:

Preheat your oven to 375 degrees F.
Butter an 8 x 8 casserole dish. (I rub the dish with my ½ stick, then set it aside.)
In a large mixing bowl, lightly beat the eggs, then mix in sour cream, salt, pepper, garlic, ¼ cup Parmesan cheese, ½ cup shredded cheese, ½ cup bread or cracker crumbs, and the squash and onions. Mix gently but thoroughly.
Pour squash mixture into casserole.
For topping: melt butter, whisk in remaining Parmesan cheese and chives, then add remaining bread/cracker crumbs and mix well.
Cover squash mixture with topping, spread evenly.
Bake 30-35 minutes or until topping is golden brown and casserole is bubbling.
Remove from oven and let cool before serving.
You can easily vary the flavor of this dish by using different types of grated cheese--I prefer a blend of white and yellow cheeses as this gives a rich, complex sauce. I've also been known to omit the freshly chopped chives and just throw in some parsley flakes.
Another way to jazz up this casserole is by adding a small can of diced water chestnuts (drained) and several dashes of hot sauce. This gives it a little heat and a little extra crunch, which makes it stand out from the run-of-the-mill squash casserole.

If you absolutely must use fresh squash (because you've got tons of them), slice 12-15 squash into ½ inch thick slices, lightly sauté with 1 large chopped Vidalia onion, drain, and add as above.

Eat well, and enjoy!

Submitted by: Dr. Bill Chitwood

Home Town Community News



HAPPY BIRTHDAY! JUNE

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 Larry Pugh | Julie Echols |
| 2 Christian Grant | Kelly Kilgore |
| Pat Moseley (85) | 15 Angie Ashurst |
| Mike Moseley (85) | Greyson James Looney |
| 3 Margie Johnson | Caty Jane Turnipseed |
| Kade Wallace | 16 David Morrow |
| 4 Denver Taylor Moore (5) | Danny Ratliff (50) |
| 5 Braden Crowe | Terri Ratliff Taylor |
| Michelle Crowe | Carson Tucker |
| Lane Carter Johnson | Garrett Tucker |
| Maggie Mills | Anna Shay Wasden |
| 6 John Michael Higgins | 17 Susan McGuire |
| Jimmy Messick, Sr. (80) | 18 Jonathan Lowe |
| 7 Jeannie Handey | James "Hotshot" McGuinty (91) |
| Frank Litchfield | 19 David Vinson |
| James Stanley | 20 Linda Reynolds |
| 9 Faye Boyd (67) | Michael Taylor |
| Laura Smith | 21 Mary Raley |
| 10 Chelese Beck | 22 Nita Tidwell (101) |
| Jeffery Horton | 23 Thomas Berrey |
| Seth Lumley | 24 Alice Ivey |
| Justin Manning | 25 Janet Treat |
| Melinda Newell | 26 Jan Morris |
| Kent Speigner (101) | 27 John Donahey |
| 11 David Livingston | 28 Paul Hanson |
| Ashley Owens | Tricia Norris |
| Brody Ratliff | 29 Ansley Brown |
| 12 Gary Crowe | Kristiane "Krissey" Hilton- |
| Charlotte Gaston | Davis (31) |
| Beverly Ming | Dot Rebren |
| Mackenzie Richardson (16) | 30 Kathy Blount |
| Madilyn Sellers (16) | Gordon Davis |
| 13 Rachel Miller | Wyatt Echols |
| 14 Kerry Brown | Jonathan Killough |



Patricia Boyd Killough

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

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

Harris, Travis Edward (43).....	May 10
Butler, Joseph Sim "Big Sim" (80).....	May 11
Dease, Betsy Marie (52).....	May 13
Caraway III, Rayford "Al" (64).....	May 14
Cochren, Sylvia Mullins Sorrell (80).....	May 14
Mercer, Jr., James Augustus (87).....	May 14
Rhodes, Sandra Ann (82).....	May 14
Cherry, Patricia Backus (89).....	May 15
Karizay, Theresa (97).....	May 15
Mullins, Frances Claiborne "Clai" (77).....	May 16
Rambo, Helen V. (80).....	May 16
Harrelson, Deborah Jo (74).....	May 17
Westbrook, Melody Jean (62).....	May 17
Batley, Margaret Ann Wilson (91).....	May 18
Lerner, Charles Edward (89).....	May 18
Carlin, Linnea Ann Claussen (73).....	May 19
Busler, Robert Wesley (67).....	May 20
Waller, Ruth McIntyre (97).....	May 20
Seales, Rev. Antonio (MPD Chaplain) (51).....	May 21
Dobbs, Terissa Eloise Beers (73).....	May 22
Kyzar, Sarah Sharpe (87).....	May 23
Thomason, Patrick Allen (76).....	May 24
Gough, Rodney Kevin (71).....	May 25
Morrow, Daniel Lee (73).....	May 25
Hall, Mable Ruth Barnes (80).....	May 26
Ellis, Pamela (63).....	May 28
Davis Jr., William Thomas (82).....	May 29
Miller, Teresa Gail (64).....	May 30
Mozingo Sr., Robert Earl (84).....	May 31
Atkins, Marilyn (83).....	June 1
Burlingame, Gayle Evans (82).....	June 1
Jeffcoat, William Chadwick.....	June 1
Wentling, Safiye (64).....	June 1
Butland, Albert Wayne (73).....	June 2

Happy Anniversary

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 Bill & Harlan Ratliff (68th) | 12 Bobby & Nicole Burton |
| 2 Tony & Kate Smith | 15 Tim & Stacy Nester |
| 3 Tom & Vivian Ledbetter | 18 Lera & Kim Evans |
| Rick & Ann Pascal | 21 Mr. & Mrs. Wayne Cobb |
| 4 David & Janet Hite | 22 Mr. & Mrs. Mike Crutchfield |
| Budd & Connie Jones | 23 Mike & Mary Pat Sikes |
| 5 Larry & Sandra Pugh (53rd) | Matt & Melanie Smith |
| 6 Shayne & Patrice Wasden | Dan & Marcelle Thompson |
| 7 Ken & Karen Deavers | 25 Mike & Brenda Moseley (62nd) |
| 8 Slade & Skeeter Rhodes | 26 Billy & Shirley Rotton |
| Johnny & Jean Sport (68th) | 28 Vance & Ruth Cordle |
| 11 Jason & Hope Marsh | 29 Billy & Betty Gallops (55th) |
| Mr. & Mrs. Steve Young | 30 Gary & Linda Beaty |
| Tommy & Jennifer Champion | |

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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 old piano on the porch...

I don't even know why it is sad to me. It represents a time long before I was even born – and I'm dancing around the just over the half century mark.

The only way I had any awareness of the piano being there is because it sits on the porch of a house facing Monroe County Road 47 in the community of Old Texas. That is one of the many backroad route options from my house to Red Level in Covington County.

My husband was raised in Red Level. His mother – who I used to affectionately call the rattlesnake of Red Level – still lives there.

The tension with my mother-in-law used to be a recurring theme in my column. I would give occasional updates. Then one day I don't know what happened, but all the animosity just melted away. We can look back and laugh now.

We decided the problem was that we were too much alike and both Gemini. So, if your mother-in-law isn't all that crazy about you, don't give up quite yet. I mean, it may take longer than it takes to pay off your mortgage before it changes, and you may have to step outside of your personality a couple times, but don't give up hope.

I had noticed the old piano on the porch of the abandoned house for years. The house is behind what was once a country store at the turn in Old Texas for years. It became a bit of a mental landmark for me.

Every time I passed it, I would be reminded of a time I had never known – this massive upright, either mahogany or oak – just sitting there as if waiting for familiar fingers to return to its ivory keys.

By the time I was born, most households had televisions, many of them color. Every-

one older could easily remember just a few short years prior when it was a radio around which everyone gathered.

But before radio, it was the piano that served as the wide screen television. They were played for entertainment, celebration, and soul searching. Friends and family alike would circle them and sing. It was...the way it was, until the radio came along.

In a few decades, the popularity of radio would suffer the same fate as the piano. But for some reason, seeing that piano on that porch reminded me of another time.

In passing, I would try and imagine how that must have sounded – the acoustics of a wooden room – in such an otherwise silent place.

I can't remember the piano not being on the porch. I have been making the trek for almost 30 years. It sits like it was waiting for someone to return to get it. It waits through the summer when the kudzu vines climb the columns, and it is there at Christmastime when the cold wind blows.

It is still there even today, but the last time I passed I noticed the old house had surrendered to time and circumstance. It had collapsed within itself, and the roof of the porch followed suit. It covered the piano.

I don't know why I find it sad. I guess I miss the time it represents. I won't be able to see it when I pass anymore. It is strange. I can't see it, but I can almost still hear it.

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



Be A Buffalo

We all deal with storms in our lives. Whether financial problems, health scares, or relationship issues, no one's life is free of challenges. And we often don't get to choose which storms pass through our life. The only choice we usually have is how we respond to those storms.

A dear friend recently shares with me a great metaphor looking at the different reactions between a herd of cows and a herd of buffalos when a storm approaches. The cows make what might seem the logical choice. They try to run away from the storm.

However, the problem is that cows are not very fast and hence can't outrun the storm. Soon they get caught by the storm, and instead of outrunning it, they are running along with it, extending their pain and suffering.

The buffalo, on the other hand, do not try to run away from the storm. But they do not wait until it's over either. Instead, they charge directly towards the storm. The buffalos run straight through the storm and, as a result, spend way less time in pain and frustration than the cows. By approaching the storm that way, the buffalos actively minimize their suffering.

I had not heard his metaphor before.

It really got me to thinking about life and responding to challenges. Which approach do you take? Do you try to run away from it, thinking you can outrun it or that the problem will take care of itself? Or do you face your life's storms head-on and deal with them proactively as soon as they approach?

Dealing with challenges head-on might seem harder, but ultimately, it is the easier choice. You only prolong your frustration and suffering if you act like a cow.

Friends, choose to be the buffalo and face life's storms head-on. You got this! If you want to be in the driver's seat of your life, then start acting like a buffalo.

"Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Don't let your heart be troubled or fearful." John 14:27

Many Blessings!



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Soul Searching...



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Developing A Positive Attitude

Most of us have heard or read many a message about the importance of having a positive attitude. However, if you are like me, I need to be reminded regularly in my life journey about the powerful impact my attitude has on myself and others around me! To a great degree, your attitude will determine your impact, your peace and your legacy.

My absolute favorite quote about the importance of a positive attitude is from Chuck Swindoll: "The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failure, than success, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness, or skill. It will make or break a company, a church or a home. The remarkable thing is that we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change the past. Nor can we change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We also cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is a our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10 percent what happens to me and 90 percent how I react to it. And so it is with you--- we are in charge of our attitudes."

Over the years, I have remembered and often quoted this to my myself and to others. Much of life truly is determined by how we respond to people and to situations. Our success in life and in business, regardless of the business we are in, is greatly determined by our attitude. We have all known people who had all the gifts, skills and head knowledge to be very successful yet for some reason they never seem to fully reach their potential. There are many others who may be somewhat lacking in formal education and/ or great skills, yet they have been able to reach a high level of success in business and significance in life. I believe that one of the key determining factors to their success has to do with their positive attitude. A positive attitude is a game changer and is often the key determining factor.

In a study done several years ago, The Carnegie Institute concluded that 15 percent of success is due to skill development, education and technical training. The other 85 percent is due to personality, and the key personality trait the research identified was attitude!

So, how does one keep a positive attitude? It's easy when everything is going your way and life is good. And, while some people seem to possess a naturally positive attitude, I believe most of us have to work at it. But how do you develop and maintain a positive attitude through the many ups and downs of your life as well as your business? Or, if you're struggling to be positive, how do you change your attitude?

As a Christian, I find my hope in Christ, and I look to the teachings of Jesus, the Bible and to certain Christian authors or teachers for inspiration, guidance and direction.

Here are SIX IMPORTANT KEYS I've discovered over the years that help me keep and maintain a positive attitude and/or change my attitude:

1) Take Heart in Christ

"I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."

- **Jesus, John 16:33**

"Guard your heart above all else for it determines the course of your life." - **Proverbs 4:23**

By God's grace, I strive to be defined by how Jesus views me and my heart not by how others may view me. This is the condition of my heart - Through Christ I am saved by God's grace not by anything that I have done or need to do. (**Ephesians 2:8-9**) Therefore, I take heart in the fact that I am a new creature in Christ designed to live an abundant life and to fulfill His purpose for my life. He came to set all of us free to live life as an adventure. We can experience His peace in our hearts in the midst of the many trials and sorrows. Take heart, we are overcomers through Christ! Remember, the Word of God is your sword (**Ephesians 6:17**), and your greatest defensive and offensive weapon when it comes to protecting your heart and your attitudes.

2) Seek to have the attitude of Christ

"You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had."

- **Paul, Philippians 2:5**

Jesus was humble. Jesus looked for the best in others. Jesus didn't ever seek revenge. Jesus forgave. Jesus fully trusted in the Father as his source. Jesus sought to serve rather than to be served. I seek to remind myself each day to have the attitude of Jesus in my feelings towards others and my dealings with all people and circumstances.

3) Think on positive things

"Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable- if anything is excellent or praiseworthy-- think on these things."

- **Paul, Philippians 4:8**

Thoughts precede actions. Therefore, your thoughts will determine your ultimate direction. What you think about impacts what you talk about which impacts the actions you take and the decisions you make. That's one reason the Bible tells us to take every thought captive to make it obedient to Christ. (2 Cor. 10:5) If we will "think on these things", as described in Philippians, we will see a shift in our attitude!

4) Choose to be with positive people

"So encourage each other and build each other up... Paul, **1 Thessalonians 5:11**

"A friend loves at all times." - **Proverbs 17:17**

"He who walks with wise people will be wise. But the companion of fools will suffer harm." - **Proverbs 13:20**

"Do not be deceived: Bad company corrupts good character." - **1 Corinthians 15:33**

It is vital, I have learned, to choose my close friends very carefully. My closest friends are very strong Christ followers who have very positive attitudes. They build me up and encourage me, but they are also people who are not afraid to speak truth into my life.

I'm very blessed to have my wife as my best friend. I also have several very close friends that I see and talk to regularly. It's hard for me to imagine having a positive attitude in my life without my wife, my kids, my close friends and my church family.

5) Speak positively

The Bible teaches that your words have the power to impact you and others!

"The words of the godly are a life giving fountain." - **Proverbs 10:11**

"How sweet your words taste to me; they are sweeter than honey."

- **Psalms 119:103**

"Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them." - **Paul, Ephesians 4:29**

Author John Maxwell states that if you want to change your attitude then you must do the following two things:

First,

Say the right words
Read the right books
Listen to the right teachings
Be with the right people
Do the right things
Pray the right prayers

Second,

Do number one every day, not just once or only when you feel like it, and watch your life change for the better.

(6) Pray Positive Prayers

I pray everyday. I try to pray specifically about particular situations, and, often, I pray out loud when I'm by myself. I'm honest with the Lord in my prayers and sometimes I will vent to the Lord if I'm discouraged or upset. But I also claim His promises and pray positively and boldly claiming His grace and power over my life, my marriage, my family, my church and my friends!

I close with this. One of my favorite prayers that helps me stay positive and at peace in the ups and downs of life is the Serenity Prayer written by Reinhold Niebuhr. I encourage you to look it up and read it in it's entirety. But here is the first part of this powerful prayer which I pray regularly:

The Serenity Prayer

"God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change.

The courage to change the things I can.

And the wisdom to know the difference...."

Practice these six keys to keeping a positive attitude, and I believe you will see a major difference in your outlook on life! You will also experience the joy of having a positive impact on everyone around you!

Blessings



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Reflections.....

By : Pastor Michael J. Brooks

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On Being In Step

Somehow the Kyoto Tachibana SHS Band found me on Facebook, and it's been a good thing. This Japanese group plays beautiful music while making dance moves, and they're fun to watch. However, this is not what I remember from my years with the Minor High School Tigers Marching Band.

I do remember a "two-step" we did while playing Herb Alpert's "The Lonely Bull." Our bass drummer had trouble with these steps, so we joked maybe he could be the bull and remain stationary!

Our greatest challenge was when our director had the idea we'd march to the "Mission Impossible" theme. Unlike most of what we did—1, 2, 3, 4, left, right, left, right—this number was 5/4 time, or 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. So "left, right, left, right, right" didn't quite work out. As I recall, our leader finally gave up in

frustration when the whole band was out-of-step.

We certainly can find ourselves out-of-step in life. I suppose we've all been there.

I knew a lady who decided to paint her front door red, and then got a letter from the Homeowners Association reminding her this wasn't an acceptable color scheme. She was out-of-step.

Employers may say to an employee, "It's not a good fit" if the employee isn't productive or doesn't have people skills. I can remember being in an organization or two that made decisions I didn't think wise, but since I didn't have major leadership, I had to try to remain cooperative until another opportunity arose. I felt out of step, and I was, though I continued to be supportive and to work hard.

I've known some church members who were out-of-step. They disagreed over minor things and spent a lot of time sharing their discontent with others.

This is one problem of the congregational church's traditional business meeting. We give negative people public opportunity to share their negativity by voting on inconsequential things, thus we're left with winners and losers instead of a unified family.

Especially since the pandemic days many churches have determined to trust leaders with greater responsibility and to bring only the most major items to the church members for affirmation. No one that I know of is trying to hide anything, but rather to keep the church focused on our mission.

The writer of Hebrews exhorted, "**Pursue peace with everyone. Make sure that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no root of bitterness springs up, causing trouble and defiling many,**" (**Hebrews 12: 14-15**).

One of the responsibilities of church leaders is working to ensure the church be united in mission and united in love for one another.

In short, that we be in step.