

MORGAN COUNTY WEATHER THIS WEEK

Tue 22	75°/51°	
Wed 23	80°/60°	
Thu 24	83°/63°	
Fri 25	83°/67°	
Sat 26	83°/67°	
Sun 27	80°/66°	
Mon 28	78°/65°	

UT Transfers Deed to Stephen's Baptist Church



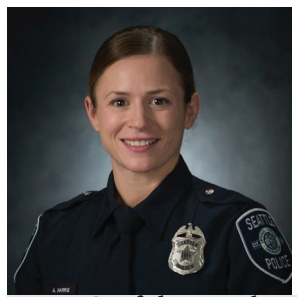
The University of Tennessee transferred the deed to a small piece of property to Stephen's Baptist Church in a ceremony held on Friday. Many from the community were in attendance to show their gratitude for the transfer. It took approximately 18 months from the beginning of the process.

The property was a small plot of land that was attached to the church's property and allows them to add on to the church if necessary.

UT President Randy Boyd presented Pastor Keith Kilby with the deed. Senator Ken Yager, Representative John Mark Windle, County Executive Brian Langley, Commissioner Steve Walls, Community member C.A. Kelly, and as well as many others were instrumental in making this possible.



Veteran of the Week
David G. Bellavia



LEO of the Week
Alexandra "Lexi" Brenneman Harris



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Langley Addresses Potential Tax Increase

Morgan County Property Appraisal and Tax Rate

I wanted to address the budget process for fiscal year 2021-2022 and the underlying situations that are affecting the budget. As most of you are well aware, 2021 was the year that the state of Tennessee did their reappraisal of property values. This happens every five years by law in Tennessee. Some of you have seen your appraisal go down on your property, some have had your property value remain close to the same, and many of you have had your property values increase, in some cases, significantly. This reappraisal of property has absolutely nothing to do with Morgan County Government, rather, it is done by the state government as a part of the legal process.

On the heels of the reappraisal process, by law, the State of Tennessee gives their suggested property tax rate for Morgan County. This suggested tax rate takes into consideration the fact that many people's appraisals have increased. Currently, the tax rate is \$3.27. This year, the state recommended a tax rate of \$2.72, a drop of approximately 17% over the current tax rate. This tax rate has caused our revenues to drop nearly \$8,000, which isn't an insurmountable amount but still has to be accounted for. Despite the state recommended rate of \$2.72 being what would be the lowest in the history of Morgan County, there will still be many property owners that will pay more taxes with a lower tax rate because of their higher property assessment. This is just to help explain to our citizens that their property assessment is just as important, or even more so than the tax rate. These are revenues that operate our landfill, EMS, Sheriff's Department, the county jail, our libraries, contribute to our local school system and fund all the functions of local government. It really put our Budget Committee in a difficult place in managing the resources to keep our county government operating efficiently and effectively.

I have been working closely with Finance Director Crystal Garrett, Budget Chairman Randy Roberts and all the members of the Budget Committee to ensure the tax rate stays at the state recommended level of \$2.72, and do their best to not raise it from that. At the start of the budget process, we were nearly \$500,000 in the red if we kept the \$2.72 rate with all the budget increase requests from the various departments in the county. We have been working together to reduce the deficit, and as of now, the budget committee has the deficit under \$90,000, and we are encouraged that they will be able to eliminate most of the deficit when the process is complete. I have personally cut my office's budget significantly. I have been utilizing workers through ETHRA and

Workforce Development programs in order to keep costs as low as possible for the Morgan County taxpayers.

I believe all offices have examined their budgets to make sure they keep them as low as possible. In addition to trying to regulate spending, we are looking at using some of the American Rescue Plan money creatively and legally to supplement our budget to keep taxes at the state recommended level. This funding is federal money and has a lot of strings and guidelines attached to it, but we believe that we will be able to utilize some of that funding to help us and keep from putting a greater burden on the taxpayers.

The budget is still in process, no final decisions have been made, but I wanted to keep Morgan County abreast of what is going on with the budget process in these unusual times. I believe the people of Morgan County need to know where their tax dollars are going, and that the people they have elected are working for them within a reasonable, sensible budget.

We are making necessary cuts and finding ways to creatively maintain fiscal responsibility in our budget, while operating the Morgan County Government efficiently and effectively – my vision for operating our government effectively in the future hinges on economic development. Economic development in Morgan County will keep our taxes as low as possible, it will create jobs, it will keep more of our young people in Morgan County, which will result in more homes being built here, and it will bring increased revenues which can be invested in continuing to enhance this great county we call home. That's why we are investing grant money in an RV Park, we are working to get more and more businesses in Morgan County, and we are pursuing grants to build parks and water accesses to our major waterways. We are doing what we can to assist organizations like the Morgan County Economic Development Board, the Morgan County Tourism Alliance, the Morgan County Chamber of Commerce, and other valuable non-profits, and seeking to invest in ways to increase tourism in our wonderful county. I want to see our county, businesses, and all our citizens flourish and enjoying prosperity.

As I look ahead, I am excited to see growth in our county and I believe the future is bright for Morgan County. Our best days are ahead, as we work together to make our great county even greater.

Brian Langley
Morgan County Executive



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Jesse James Picca, 29

Jesse James Picca August 26, 1991- June 9, 2021 Our loved one Jesse James Picca left us to go laugh and argue with Jesus until we get to join them. He was preceded in death by his beloved grandfather, Robert James Picca, and cousin Shay Whalen. He is survived by his mother Lisa Picca, of Chattanooga, and father and stepmother Jerry and Spring Picca, of Wartburg and His siblings, (Little) Heather Picca, Sheena Myrick and Jerry (Pooh Bear) Myrick, the love of his life Summer Patterson and their daughter Brylee MaKenna Picca. Jesse had a huge heart and

wanted to make everyone he met laugh and feel wanted and loved. Although he was never a church goer, he loved his bible and believed in God as his higher power and those who loved him choose to believe he is now in the arms of the Lord. He will truly be missed and never forgotten. The family will receive friends Wednesday, June 16, 2021, at Schubert Funeral Home in Wartburg from 3:00-5:00 p.m. with the funeral to follow at 5:00 p.m. Interment will follow in the Oliver Springs Cemetery in Oliver Springs. Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Jesse James Picca.

Betty Ann Hall Freels, 72

Betty Ann Hall Freels, 72, went to be with the Lord on June 18, 2021. She is preceded in death by her parents, Pleas and Maxine Hall; grandparents, Lee and Betty Gunter and Garrett and Etta Hall; and Gary Freels. She is survived by her daughter, Lisa Freels of Wartburg; son Kevin (Tina) Freels of Sunbright; grandchildren: Lindsay (Jacob) Richardson of Mossy Grove, Bailey Carter (Marquel) of Hartsville, and Eric (Jerrica) Jones of Wartburg; great-grandchildren: Jaxon and Jentri Jones of Wartburg, and Asher Claiborne of Hartsville; sisters: Rita Fay (Roy) Swint of Wartburg, and Janice (Dennis) Freels of Wartburg; along with a host of aunts, uncles, nieces, and nephews.

Her children and grandchildren were the focus of her life. She was a kindhearted soul that loved the lord and was a light to the world. She touched the lives of many, both known and unknown. The family will receive friends Tuesday June 22nd from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. at Schubert Funeral Home in Wartburg. The funeral will follow with Bro. Jim Disney officiating. A graveside service will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers, the family has requested donations be made to St. Jude Research Hospital in memory of Betty Freels. Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Betty Freels.

Elbert "Bud" Cochran, 92

Elbert "Bud" Cochran, born January 10, 1929, entered into his eternal home with Jesus on June 13, 2021, at 4:50 a.m. He was a loving husband, devoted father, brother, and friend. He was a devout Christian and faithful member of Boswell Chapel Baptist Church for over 60 years where he served as Deacon and Sunday school teacher. He was preceded in death by his parents, Frank and Sarah Jane Cochran of Oakdale; son, Brian Cochran of Oakdale; grandson, Clay Cochran of Knoxville and several brothers and sisters. He is survived by his wife of 73 years, Oma Cochran of Oakdale; daughter, Rhonda Cochran of Oakdale; son, Bruce Cochran (Vickie) of Crossville; daughter-in-law, Becky Cochran of Rockwood; brother, Daniel

Cochran of Florida; sister, Wilma Jane Negele of Indiana; sister, Marcella Gilmore of Elizabethton, TN.; granddaughters, Jessica Bird (Kyle) of Oakdale, Laura Wolfe (Tim) of LaFollette, Halle Cochran of Chattanooga; grandson, Chet Cochran (Keri) of Oakdale; great grandchildren, Callen and Sara Bird of Oakdale and Owen and Ellie Cochran of Oakdale. The family will receive friends Wednesday, June 16, 2021 from 12:00-2:00 p.m. at Boswell Chapel Baptist Church with the funeral to follow at 2:00 p.m. with Bro. Kerry Ruppe officiating. Interment will follow in the Crab Orchard Cemetery in Oakdale. The family is honored to serve the family of Elbert "Bud" Cochran.

Shasta "Shay" Gayle Abshire, 46

Shasta "Shay" Gayle Abshire of Petros, TN passed away peacefully with family on June 13, 2021. She was born on November 27, 1974, and was raised in Petros, TN. She is preceded in death by her parents, Bobby and Betty Abshire and husband, Darriell Davis. She is survived by her siblings, Bobby "Bub" Abshire and wife, Phyllis, Jesse "Sanny" Abshire, Ann Broadus and husband, Cecil, Rita Turpin and husband, Randy; nephews, Robby Broadus and wife, Amy, Jon Broadus, Ethan Broadus, Rhyne

Turpin and fiancée Samantha, Cody Abshire, and Matthew Langley; nieces, Leslie Williamson and husband, Chris and 4 children, Hannah Daugherty and husband, Joshua and Summer Husky and a host of family members in Kentucky and special friends, Sam Townsend and Heather Bunch. The family will have a graveside service Thursday, June 17, 2021, at 3:00 p.m. at the Old Petros Cemetery in Petros with Bro. Tony Cathy officiating. Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Shasta "Shay" Gayle Abshire.

Obituaries must come from a funeral home to be in the newspaper.

ORDINANCE #398-21

ORDINANCE FOR THE CITY OF WARTBURG, TENNESSEE
AMENDED BUDGET FUNDS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR
JULY 1, 2020 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2021

Be it ordained by the Mayor and Board of Alderman for the City of Wartburg, Morgan County, Tennessee as follows:

Section 1. This Section of the ordinance shall accept the amended budget for the City of Wartburg for fiscal year ending June 30, 2021

Revenues:

General Fund:	\$ 1,051,822.86
State Street Aid Fund	\$ 30,399.90
Sewer Fund	\$ 2,081,614.43
Drug Fund	\$ 34,909.55
	\$ 3,198,746.74

Expenditures:

General Fund:	\$ 939,996.60
State Street Aid Fund:	\$ 18,360.84
Sanitary Sewer Fund:	\$ 875,598.97
Drug Fund	\$ 30,261.40
	\$ 1,864,217.81

This ordinance shall take effect immediately upon final passage, the public welfare requiring it.

PUBLIC HEARING DATES

June 24, 2020	10:00 am	First Reading
June 25, 2020	10:00 am	Final Reading

Public Hearings will be held at City Hall

ORDINANCE #399-21

ORDINANCE FOR THE CITY OF WARTBURG, TENNESSEE
PROPOSED BUDGET FUNDS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR
JULY 1, 2021 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2022

Be it ordained by the Mayor and Board of Alderman for the City of Wartburg, Morgan County, Tennessee as follows:

Section 1. This Section of the ordinance shall accept the proposed budget for the City of Wartburg for fiscal year ending June 30, 2022

Revenues:

General Fund:	\$ 944,902.69
State Street Aid Fund	\$ 32,037.00
Sewer Fund	\$ 4,640,288.19
Drug Fund	\$ 10,505.00
	\$ 5,627,732.88

Expenditures:

General Fund:	\$ 944,902.69
State Street Aid Fund:	\$ 32,037.00
Sanitary Sewer Fund:	\$ 4,640,288.19
Drug Fund	\$ 10,505.00
	\$ 5,627,732.88

This ordinance shall take effect immediately upon final passage, the public welfare requiring it.

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Rates in Morgan County
\$40; \$35 for senior citizens & Veterans
Out of County Rates
\$55; \$50 for senior citizens & Veterans

Disappeared: Chapter 2: Part 2



Carol Hall
Author

Nick, Maggie, Chris & Evie-Day 2

The sun peeked its head up over the treetops throwing prisms of light across the dew covered ground. The air was filled with the scent of pine needles and damp earth as Nick emerged from the tent.

Since he was the first one up, he headed out to the fire pit to put the coffee on and get breakfast ready. It wasn't long before Maggie joined him.

He knew she was feeling bad about the heated exchange with their friends the night before and just hoped that with the light of day upon them, tempers had cooled enough that they could talk it out. He reached over and squeezed her hand as she sat down on the log next to him.

"Morning, Beautiful," he said to her. "Did you get any sleep last night?"

She leaned her head against his shoulder. "No, not really. You?"

"No, not much. I hope today is a better day than yesterday was," he said.

Just then, Chris and Evie came out of their tent. Chris looked a little sheepish as he sat down across the fire pit from them. "I'm really sorry about losing my temper last night guys. I think with all the weird stuff that happened yesterday, Evie and I were just on edge. That's no excuse for me losing my cool, but I hope you accept my apology."

Evie walked over to Maggie and leaned down to hug her. "Me too. I know you didn't mean to leave your guns at home on purpose. You had a lot to plan and pack, so it would be easy to forget an item here or there. We do have the bear spray though, so we aren't totally defenseless." "No worries, guys," Nick said. "Yesterday was a bit strange, so we understand why you were a little concerned. Let's just put it behind us and have a great day today."

Nick handed out breakfast bars and a bottle of water to everyone. As they ate, Maggie felt it was a good time to talk about the plans for the day. She adjusted herself on the log so she could face everyone.

"I was wondering," she said. "With all the weird stuff that went on yesterday, do you want to call it quits and head home, or stay and finish our trip?"

"I think I would rather call it quits myself," Evie said. "It was fun and all, but I'm over this. Sorry guys." She looked apologetically at Maggie.

"It's ok, Evie, I understand."

Maggie couldn't be mad at her. She was impressed that Evie had agreed to come in the first place. Evie was a city girl, born and bred. Outdoor activities were fine up to a point, but Maggie knew Evie was freaked out by yesterday's events and was ready to head back to civilization.

"I'm with Evie," Chris said. "There's something weird going on out here and without guns to protect ourselves, it's probably best we head back. We have no idea who, or what, is doing all these things, and frankly, it's starting to give me the creeps." He gave a full body shiver and looked down at his feet. "Sorry, Maggie." Everyone sat in silence for a couple of minutes until Nick spoke up. "Ok, I think it's agreed that we'll head back today, but since it's still early, how about taking a hike up that old service road before we leave. It shouldn't take more than an hour or two, and then we can head back."

Chris and Evie agreed, if somewhat reluctantly. They spent the next hour packing up their camping gear and cle-

aning up the camp. Since they would be passing right by the campsite again on their way back down the mountain, they decided to leave their packs there and hike on without them.

Nick grabbed the bear spray and several bottles of water and put them into a small backpack they had for just such an occasion.

Maggie grabbed her camera and hung the strap around her neck. She was hoping to get some pictures of their hike today.

They headed up the trail that led from the campsite a short distance when they came to the overgrown dirt road that wound its way into the trees. Old tracks were visible among the tall weeds and grasses that now covered it.

As they headed up the road following the tracks, it became more and more narrow forcing them to walk single file. Nick took the lead with Chris behind him, then Evie. Maggie brought up the rear. They walked for about a mile winding up hill, then downhill, through twists and turns in the trail until it leveled out again. The weeds were getting thicker the farther they walked, some as high as their waists in places. It was getting more difficult to traverse through them. Many times, they had to stop and rest from the exertion it took to push and shove their way through.

As they came around a bend in the trail, a horrible smell filled the air.

Chris made a gagging sound. "What in the world is that smell?" he asked as he gagged again. "That's the worst thing I've ever smelled." He fanned his hand in front of his face.

"Yeah, it smells like wet animal, urine and body odor all mixed together," Nick said. He grabbed the front of his shirt and pulled it up over his nose.

"Don't forget rotting compost. That's quite a nasty smelling cocktail," Evie added.

She, too, had pulled her shirt up over her nose. She turned to say something to Maggie, but Maggie wasn't behind her. She looked all around her, but Maggie was nowhere to be seen.

"Hey, where did Maggie go?" she asked.

Nick swung around. "Maggie?" he called out. "Maggie, where are you?" He looked at

Evie. "Where did she go? Did she say anything to you?"

Evie shook her head. "No, I turned around to say something to her, and she was gone."

"Come on, Maggie," Nick called out. "This isn't funny!"

He felt fear slowly grip his heart. It wasn't like Maggie to pull pranks on people, and it certainly wasn't like her to wander off by herself. So where was she?

The events of the previous day and evening shot through his mind. Could someone have actually been following them and kidnapped her? No, they would have heard her scream or heard a struggle. No one had heard anything.

The three of them stood there silently for a moment calling out Maggie's name several more times. They waited for her to step out of the woods or to call back to them. But she didn't do either. Maggie had simply disappeared.



Carol Hall was born and raised in Chester, West Virginia, but she currently lives in Lancing, TN with her husband and three cats. Her writing career began with her first book, Disappeared in November 2019. Since then she has written several more books including The Journey North, The Inheritance, Full Moon Rising, The Witch of Broenwyck and Saving Grace. Her love of writing began at an early age when her father would tell her and her sisters fun, adventurous stories he created out of his own imagination. These stories sparked an interest in Carol to tell her own stories.

Carol's love of writing has spread across several different genres including, action/adventure, mysteries, horror, and drama.

City of Wartburg General, State Street Aid & Drug Fund Amended & Proposed Budgets			
General Fund	Amended Budget	Proposed Budget	
Revenues	2020-21	2021-22	
Total Local Taxes	\$717,455.05	\$659,277.69	
Total State Govt. Allocations	\$111,153.03	\$ 93,725.00	
Total Other Revenues	\$197,397.55	\$191,900.00	
Total Revenues	\$1,026,005.63	\$944,902.69	
	Expenditures		
Total Expenditures Gen. Govt.	\$ 70,203.05	\$215,540.00	
Total General Govt. Salaries	\$ 49,000.00	\$ 53,300.00	
Total Public Safety Expenditures	\$ 178,963.17	\$263,820.00	
Total Public Safety Salaries	\$ 211,821.00	\$276,400.00	
Total Public Works Expenditures	\$ 229,111.65	\$336,224.00	
Total Public Works Salaries	\$146,000.00	\$207,000.00	
Total Recreational Expenditures	\$ 52,777.58	\$136,838.69	
Total Expenditures	\$937,876.45	\$944,902.69	
Excess Revenues/Expenditures	\$ 88,129.20	\$ 0.00	
Beginning Fund Balance		\$1,024,986.74	
Ending Fund Balance		\$1,113,115.94	
The General Fund has 14 full time employment positions and 2 part time employees			
State Street Aid	Amended Budget	Proposed Budget	
Revenues	2020-21	2021-22	
State Gas & Fuel Tax	\$ 30,364.90	\$ 32,000.00	
Other Income	\$ 35.00	\$ 37.00	
Total Revenues	\$ 30,399.90	\$ 32,037.00	
	Expenditures		
Asphalt, Paving Materials	\$ 0.00	\$ 1,800.00	
Purchase of Equipment	\$ 0.00	\$ 9,237.00	
Street Lighting	\$ 18,128.85	\$ 20,500.00	
Misc. Expenditures	\$ 231.99	\$ 500.00	
Total Highways & Streets	\$ 18,360.84	\$ 32,037.00	
Excess Revenues/Expenditures	\$ 12,039.06	\$ 0.00	
Beginning Fund Balance		\$ 84,992.31	
Ending Fund Balance		\$ 97,031.37	
Drug Fund Account	Amended Budget	Proposed Budget	
Revenues	2020-21	2021-22	
Sale of Equipment	\$21,501.00	\$ 4,000.00	
Total Drug Investigation Revenues	\$10,905.55	\$ 6,000.00	
Interest Income	\$ 3.00	\$ 5.00	
Other Revenues	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 500.00	
Total Revenues	\$ 34,909.55	\$10,505.00	
	Expenditures		
Drug Investigation Costs	\$ 500.00	\$ 1,000.00	
Purchase of Equipment	\$24,321.40	\$ 5,505.00	
Miscellaneous Expense	\$ 5,440.00	\$ 4,000.00	
Total Expenditures	\$30,261.40	\$10,505.00	
Excess Revenues/Expenditures	\$ 4,648.15	\$ 0.00	
Beginning Fund Balance		\$ 52,541.33	
Ending Fund Balance		\$ 57,189.48	

"TAKE IT TO THE STREETS" Job Fair, Hosted by Express Personnel, Friday June, 25, 2021, 10:00am- 2:00pm, americanjobcenter (old Health Dept) located at 1111 Knoxville Hwy, Wartburg TN 37887. Interviews on the spot! Something for everyone! Food & Prizes

Historically Speaking My day with Meadowlark Lemon

By Ray Smith - Oak Ridge City Historian

December 6, 2007 is a day I will not soon forget. It began quite early, much before sunrise, with me locating the two boxes of Second Harvest envelopes that have resided in my garage from one annual Oak Ridge Labor Management Prayer Breakfast to the other for several years. We use those envelopes to encourage attendees to the prayer breakfast to donate to that worthy organization. We collect several hundred dollars each year.

The night before, as I had been chosen to introduce the keynote speaker, I had prepared my remarks on Meadowlark Lemon, of Harlem Globetrotter fame. That was fun. Meadowlark is a legendary hero in the world of sports. He was the most popular member of the most beloved sports team in history - the Harlem Globetrotters.

Meadowlark began his career with the Harlem Globetrotters more than five decades ago. Yet, Meadowlark Lemon is one of those household names where, even today, only his first name need be used!

A gifted athlete and hilarious comedian, he was as renowned for his famous confetti-in-the-water-bucket routine as he was for hitting hook shots from half court. Meadowlark's "no-look, wrap-around pass" for an easy slam-dunk and his ability to turn a hapless referee into a foil for his wit is unsurpassed. If you have seen Meadowlark perform on the basketball court, you know what I mean.

If you were fortunate enough to attend the 10th Annual Oak Ridge Labor Management Prayer Breakfast, you were treated to Meadowlark of today, still a person with a quick wit, but tempered by a devotion to Jesus and a love for kids. From the opening serenade of "Sweet Georgia Brown," Meadowlark's trademark Globetrotter anthem, to the personal testimony, Meadowlark held the audience of well over 450 attendees spellbound for over 40 minutes. When his talk ended, a standing ovation heralded the appreciation from the crowd, and one could sense the sentiment in the room that wished he could go on longer.

His style of taking questions from the crowd all through his talk, getting down from the stage to the arena floor to be nearer the crowd, passing the basketball in almost unheard of ways (to say he passed it behind his back is to understate the situation significantly) and the manner in which he balanced humor with sincere appeal to teamwork was quite astonishing to say the least. Meadowlark is a skilled orator and a well-seasoned master of comedic timing.

But that was to be just the start of a tremendous day with Meadowlark. After the prayer breakfast, his next stop was The New Hope Center at Y-12. There he was met by a large number of people who were waiting with basketballs, pictures, blank sheets of paper and several other items they wanted him to autograph.

He soon asked to learn something about Y-12. We took him around the Y-12 History Exhibit Hall and explained how the small communities were taken over for the Manhattan Project and how calutrons separated uranium for Little Boy. His questions were good ones. He had not known anything much about Oak Ridge and Y-12 sure was not something of which he was aware. He quickly gained an appreciation for the scope of security at Y-12 and why. He also expressed appreciation for the impact Y12 has had on the world through the medical isotope program and the nuclear nonproliferation activities.

Meadowlark has a worldview that made him ask, "When are we going to no longer need nuclear weapons? When will we all learn, we do not have to agree to get along?" Our response indicated that as long as terrorism existed, and we are in danger from another attack similar to 9/11 a strong nuclear deterrent was necessary.

After spending some time at Y-12, we departed for the Oak Ridge National Laboratory for a tour of the supercomputer there and for lunch in the VIP dining room. There we were treated to a spectacular view of the small lake and a water feature that is quite picturesque.

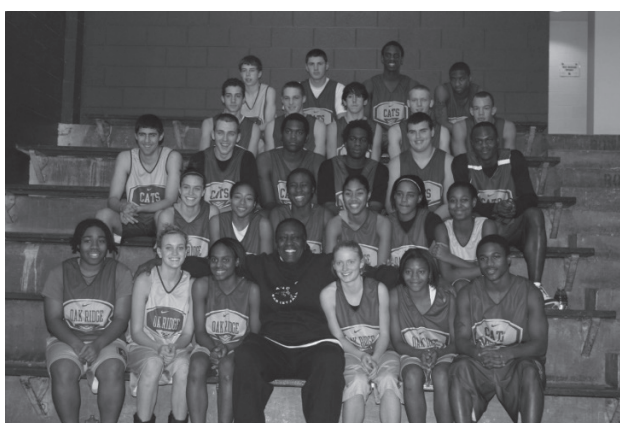
First, we toured the computer facility. The huge screen of some 35 million pixels is quite amazing. But Meadowlark found the autographs on the computer front panel even more appealing. He was asked to place his autograph on the computer panel

with Coaches Pearl and Fulmer. Meadowlark's trademark autograph completely covered the top section of the computer panel!

Lunch was a relaxing time for us as the morning had been packed very full. The view from that dining room is truly superb! Meadowlark continued to ask about the facilities and the scientific achievements highlighted on the wall of the dining room served as conversation starters as we attempted to answer all



Meadowlark Lemon speaks to the 10th Annual Oak Ridge Labor Management Prayer Breakfast (Photo Submitted)



Meadowlark with both the girls and boys Oak Ridge High School teams (Photo Submitted)



Meadowlark signs autographs at Y-12's New Hope Center (Photo Submitted)

his probing questions about the science.

After the late lunch, we started for Oak Ridge High School. I could feel Meadowlark getting excited. He began to ask questions about Oak Ridge from a kid's perspective. As we drove down the turnpike and Oak Ridge High School came into view, he exclaimed, "What a huge facility – that looks like a college campus, not a high school!"

We were met at the gym by school officials and ushered into the playing area. Meadowlark quickly summed up the Oak Ridge boys as they were taking practice shots. One could obviously see his mind working.

When Coach Pruden brought the girls to the gym, both the boys and the girls sat on the bleachers to allow Meadowlark to talk to them. He spoke quietly, but the ball teams listened intently and heard his every word. Soon, he had two volunteers demonstrating a "chest pass" and he made several observations about how that was done. He kept emphasizing the importance of learning and practicing the basic skills of ball handling.

The kids' eyes grew wide when Meadowlark began to move the ball around and pass behind his back or in a misdirection pass. He captured the team's imagination when he talked to them about the all-time best dunkers in basketball. They asked questions much as the adults had done at the prayer breakfast, but with one clear distinction. One young lady asked Meadowlark if he would attend their game on Friday night. His response was, "If I attend your game, will you come to hear me preach on Sunday?" They struck a deal.

As Meadowlark was leaving and the boys returned to shooting practice shots, he was asked if he still was able to make the famous hook shot. A basketball came bouncing to Meadowlark about the time this question was asked. His response was, "Yes, I can still make them when I practice."

And with no warning, Meadowlark just spun around and let fly a hook shot from the sideline. It happened so quickly that I could not get my camera up to my eye. The ball swished the bottom of the net, and the deed was done. Meadowlark had successfully demonstrated his amazing shooting ability. The few coaches who were paying attention dropped their jaws in amazement. It was truly a surreal moment. None of us who saw that shot could deny it happened, but we truly found it difficult to believe it could be done...especially that easily. WOW, Meadowlark is amazing!

From the high school we went to the Oak Ridge Boys' Club where Meadowlark again adjusted his delivery to the audience. He asked for the boy who was the best shot from beyond the three point line and proceeded to give a thorough coaching session on the importance of making the "soft" shot up close and then moving back from the goal in small increments continuing to make the "soft" shot until you are making the long three-point shots with ease.

At both the school and the boys' club, Meadowlark joined the young people for group photos. He immediately gained their respect and attention. The look in their eyes told it all. They admired a great athlete and performer.

Meadowlark Lemon is world renowned:

- He earned the Basketball Hall of Fame Lifetime Achievement Award in 2000.
- He's played almost 10,000 games of basketball in his career.
- He was inducted to the North Carolina Sports Hall of Fame in 1975.
- He played before the all-time largest basketball crowd of 65,000 at Yankee Stadium - 1958
- He was the captain of the first American basketball team to play in Russia - 1959
- He received the Dr. of Divinity Degree 1998
- He has one of the most recognizable names in the history of basketball.
- Broadcasts of his games are still the highest rated episodes of "The Wide World of Sports."
- He is true to his basketball heritage, and he is still a "globetrotter", traveling every week.
- Even after five decades, he's still not slowing down

My day with Meadowlark was truly one I will not soon forget. Thank you, Meadowlark, for showing the kids your true love for them and your dedication to Jesus in all you do in your life here on earth. Meadowlark Lemon - a fine example for kids and someone who truly knows exactly how to relate to them.

Caption: ML.jpg: Meadowlark Lemon speaks to the 10th Annual Oak Ridge Labor Management Prayer Breakfast

Caption: ORNL.jpg: Thomas Zacharia, Director of Oak Ridge National Laboratory's Computing and Computational Sciences Directorate, watches as Meadowlark Autographs the Cray XT3 supercomputer named Jaguar - photo by Robert Whitten of ORNL

Oak Ridge was created as a part of the Manhattan Project in 1942 to help stop World War II. The atomic bomb, Little Boy, fueled by uranium 235 separated at Oak Ridge helped to do just that.

Oak Ridge began in war, has continued to support our nation's efforts through the Cold War, and even now in the age of terrorism. Oak Ridge has also produced nuclear medicine, nuclear power and fuel for the US Navy nuclear submarines and ships.

This "Secret City" nestled in Appalachia near Morgan County and where many from Morgan County go each day to work, continues today to produce scientific discoveries used worldwide and still routinely makes history. These Historically Speaking stories will provide insight into the people of Oak Ridge and the work they do to help humankind. Historically Speaking is written by D. Ray Smith, Oak Ridge City Historian, retired Y-12 National Security Complex Historian and Vietnam Veteran.



Davis Funeral Home's Veteran of the Week

This week we honor United States Army veteran and Medal of Honor recipient, Staff Sergeant (SSG) David G. Bellavia as the veteran of the week.

SSG Bellavia was awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions in battle on November 10, 2004 while serving in Fallujah, Iraq as a member of 3rd Platoon, Alpha Company, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division.

His Medal of Honor citation reads:

Staff Sergeant David G. Bellavia distinguished himself by acts of gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty on November 10, 2004, while serving as a squad leader in support of Operation Phantom Fury in Fallujah, Iraq. While clearing a house, a squad from Staff Sergeant Bellavia's platoon became trapped within a room by intense enemy fire coming from a fortified position under the stairs leading to the second floor. Recognizing the immediate severity of the situation, and with disregard for his own safety, Staff Sergeant Bellavia retrieved an automatic weapon and entered the doorway of the house to engage the insurgents. With enemy rounds impacting around him, Staff Sergeant Bellavia fired at the enemy position at a cyclic rate, providing covering fire that allowed the squad to break contact and exit the house. A Bradley Fighting Vehicle was brought forward to suppress the enemy; however, due to high walls surrounding the house, it could not fire directly at the enemy position. Staff Sergeant Bellavia then re-entered the house and again came under intense enemy fire. He observed an enemy insurgent preparing to launch a rocket-propelled grenade at his platoon. Recognizing the grave danger



the grenade posed to his fellow soldiers, Staff Sergeant Bellavia assaulted the enemy position, killing one insurgent and wounding another who ran to a different part of the house. Staff Sergeant Bellavia, realizing he had an un-cleared, darkened room to his back, moved to clear it. As he entered, an insurgent came down the stairs firing at him. Simultaneously, the previously wounded insurgent reemerged and engaged Staff Sergeant Bellavia. Staff Sergeant Bellavia, entering further into the darkened room, returned fire and eliminated both insurgents. Staff Sergeant Bellavia then received enemy fire from another insurgent emerging from a closet in the darkened room. Exchanging gunfire, Staff Sergeant Bellavia pursued the enemy up the stairs and eliminated him. Now on the second floor, Staff Sergeant Bellavia moved to a door that opened onto the roof. At this point, a fifth insurgent leapt from the third-floor roof onto the second-floor roof. Staff Sergeant Bellavia engaged the insurgent through a window, wounding him in the back and legs, and caused him to fall off the roof. Acting on instinct to save the members of his platoon from an imminent threat, Staff Sergeant Bellavia ultimately cleared an entire enemy-filled house, destroyed four insurgents, and badly wounded a fifth. Staff Sergeant Bellavia's bravery, complete disregard for his own safety, and unselfish and courageous actions are in keeping with the finest traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon himself and the United States.

Law Enforcement Officer of the Week

Presented by Jerry Duncan Ford

This week we honor the memory of fallen Seattle Police Department Officer Alexandra "Lexi" Brenneman Harris.

On Sunday, June 13, 2021, Officer Harris was struck and killed by a vehicle while checking on the welfare of several drivers who had just been involved in a multi-vehicle collision. Officer Harris had just completed her shift and was enroute home when she encountered the terrible accident at about 1:15 am. She had exited her vehicle to check on the drivers when she was struck by another passing vehicle.

After being struck, one of the drivers from the original crash stole her vehicle and fled the scene. "It really speaks to where we are as a society, where we have such callousness when it comes to loss of life," Washington State Police Captain

Ron Mead told reporters during a press conference in Bellevue later in the day. The driver who struck her remained at the scene and cooperated with investigating officers.

Her father, Laird Harris, said he was not at all surprised to learn that his daughter died while trying to help others.

"It was typical Lexi," he told The Seattle Times. "It was in her nature. I'm sure her major thought was getting people out of



danger." Laird said Officer Harris always went out of her way to treat other people with compassion. "She would stop in the streets and talk to the homeless people," he told the paper.

SPD Assistant Chief Tom

Mahaffey said Officer Harris' death has been a "devastating" blow for the SPD, The Seattle Times reported.

"It's very difficult for all of us," the chief told MyNorthwest. "To lose anyone in this manner would be devastating. But when it's somebody committed to public safety, trying to do the right thing when they could have just kept going..."

Officer Harris had served with the Seattle Police Department for five years and she was only thirty-eight-years-old. Her death is yet another example of the heart and dedication that is carried by countless men and women in blue.

We can all honor her memory by thanking an officer for their service.

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit offers a substantial tax savings for businesses.



David Zubler

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) offers employers a credit for hiring eligible employees. The most common targeted groups include the following:
Qualified veterans
Qualified long-term unemployment recipients
Long-term family assistance recipients
Vocational rehabilitation referrals
Qualified SSI recipients

Eligible employees must be certified as a member of a targeted group by the applicable State Workforce Agency (SWA). You can obtain the certification by the day the employee begins work or complete a pre-screening notice using IRS Form 8850, and then submit Form 8850 to the SWA within 28 days after the employee begins working.

The credit is generally equal to 40 percent of qualified first-year wages paid to an eligible employee, up to a maximum credit of \$2,400. The credit is based on a maximum wage amount of \$6,000. However, there are exceptions to the general rule which can provide a larger wage limit and credit.

The wage limit is \$12,000 for first-year wages paid to a qualified veteran who is entitled to compensation for a service-connected disability and was discharged from the military within the past year.

The limit is even higher for wages paid to a qualified veteran who was unemployed for at least six months in the prior year. The wage limit is \$14,000 with a maximum credit of \$5,600.

A qualified veteran with a service-connected disability and who was unemployed for at least six months in the prior year has a wage limit of

\$24,000 and a maximum credit of \$9,600.

A long-term family assistance recipient qualifies for a maximum wage limit of \$10,000 and \$4,000 credit. The WOTC can be claimed for 50 percent of qualified second-year wages. The credit would be for \$5,000 (50 percent of \$10,000). The maximum combined credit for the two years would be \$9,000 (\$4,000 + \$5,000).

Claiming the WOTC reduces your business income tax for the related wages. The credit is calculated and claimed on IRS Form 5884 (Work Opportunity Credit).

You can carry any unused WOTC amount back one year. The credit can also be carried forward for 20 years. If there is still an unused credit after 20 years, you can usually deduct the unused credit in the 21st year. You can't claim wages that were used for the COVID-19-related employee retention tax credit for the WOTC. The IRS does not allow two different types of credits for the same wages. The credit is not allowed for an employee who is related to you.

The WOTC is currently available through 2025 and can provide a substantial tax savings for businesses that hire individuals that qualify for the credit.

David Zubler is a tax accountant and Enrolled Agent in East Tennessee representing clients before the IRS and has over 25 years of tax experience. He is the author of four tax books and is the founder and president of Your Tax Care. The company provides business and tax education to the public at its website, YourTaxCare.com. David can be reached at (865) 363-3019 or contacted by email at zublerdavid@gmail.com.

Invitation to Bid

Replacing HVAC Units at the Morgan County Pre-Arrest Diversion Building

Morgan County Government is accepting bids from businesses interested in replacing HVAC Units at the Morgan County Pre-Arrest Diversion Building located across the road from the Morgan County Courthouse in Wartburg, TN. Please contact 423-346-6288 winning bidder must be a licensed and insured HVAC Company. There are 2 HVAC Units to be replaced with new, comparable units. One split unit is to be relocated. These units can be seen at the Morgan County Pre-Arrest Building. Morgan County Government reserves the right to reject any bid. Sealed bids can be mailed to:

Morgan County Executive's Office
P.O. Box 387
Wartburg, TN 37887.

Bid opening will be Tuesday June 21, 2021 at 10 A.M. in the third floor conference room of the Morgan County Courthouse. For any more information, please call 423-346-6288

The Speed of Light



John Burns
Opinion Columnist

Since men began to ponder the creation, light has always been a constant. In mathematics it is expressed as c in formulas affecting every aspect of our lives. It has been accepted by the scientific community as “Gospel.” What if the speed of light is not a constant? Have pre-suppositions kept the brightest minds on Earth in bondage to their own understanding? Has their worship of the creation enslaved them to minimalist understanding of light energy and where it originated?

The easy road in life is to accept what has come before. The hard road is to question every aspect of our existence as an individual from a creation perspective. If this world we exist in is in fact a result of deliberate design, then the design must have a definitive purpose. In architecture, every drawing begins with a center line on a single piece of paper. That center line becomes

the foundation for every other line the architect conceives and then commits to paper. Is there a center line in our creation that has been completely overlooked, and actually denied by science as coming from a creator? Does that center line in our creation hold the answer to unraveling all the pertinent hurdles science currently encounters when looking to study our physical world? I believe the speed of light is not a constant. I also believe the origin of light is from outside our dimension of time itself. It cannot be measured by natural means. It must come from a supernatural source. Profound statement. It does not come from fear it comes from the spirit of courage God places in each person born of a woman, for the express purpose of getting his creation to challenge pre-suppositions with extreme vigor. Science has harnessed their amazing minds by denying the possibility that our physical world was conceived by, then brought to fruition, by a loving creator named God.

What is the purpose for which God would go to such extreme measures in creating the world in which we live? Does evidence currently support the idea that our world is an accident and random process is our lot? The answer is an emphatic no. The Reason they cling to their theories about our physical world is because they are the “gods” of our world. They believe that they alone hold the epistemological expertise to unravel the hard questions asked by science. It is an epidemic in American culture and permeates every aspect of our lives. The socio-political elitists have written curriculum in schools from elementary school through college and on into their careers as professional doubters. They have hi-jacked our political system. They are indoctrinating our children to Darwinian evolution. It denies God deliberately brought your child into existence for his purpose. It is singular, and it is the reason why God spoke light into existence. Light is the energy source that causes everything in our world to grow. Science has stagnated and caused growth in their own discoveries to be harnessed and controlled by lobbyist bent on staying in power by controlling thought and their slave master is Lucifer himself.

If the speed of light is measured by time, who’s time are we using? When did men begin to measure light? Was how they experienced light different then how we experience light? The Bible is the only book that explains light and light phenomena. When properly discerned, children will replace modern scientific theory with God given fact. God is light. He is not susceptible to mass, acceleration, or gravity. His existence is the center line of creation! In the heart of every person born of a woman, is the propensity to question the existence of a creator. Modern science has worked tirelessly to deceive our children. They deny what can be proven in a laboratory and they actually de-value the discoveries that have come before. DNA does not evolve. Light is instantaneous and cannot be measured by any other means than faith. Hostile jamming is behind every avenue your child questions about their existence. The enemy has jammed the brains of humans to stop questioning and just accept what they tell us about our existence. At the heart of their scientific religion, is the continued control of every aspect of human existence, with the express goal of euthanizing thought unless you are one of them and question nothing, they tell you. I have never been one of them. I answer scientific questions every day that harness brilliant men. I am a gardener, a carpenter, an engine mechanic, a husband, father, grandfather and friend. I am an Airborne Ranger. I understand the big bang from the approach of explosives engineering. Nothing orderly ever came from any of the 1,000 explosions I experienced in training and war. Creation is a result of deliberate design not a big bang. The big bang came in the form of God speaking the heavens and the Earth into existence. Deliberate design gave humans perfect order from which to experience creation. And all for the purpose of showing the love of God! Hallelujah.

Light is the building block of every aspect of the world we experience. From the science mind, light is measured by calculating the speed at which sunlight bends around objects. Olaf Roemer measured the speed of light by calculating the speed of sunlight bending around Jupiter’s moons. As telescopes got better, scientists got better at measuring the speed of light. The sun was always the center of their calculation. What if God as creator was their center line for determining the speed of light? If God is light, what is God’s speed and can it actually be measured? How would God as creator measure his own speed? Is how we experience time different from how God experiences time? In our world, the Bible is God’s plan for how we indeed experience time. It is up to us to accept it as the Creator’s word or not. To not accept it is to not accept that God is light. To not accept that God is light, is exactly why men do not fulfill their God given destinies in this life. God’s light is the light that sustains all human life. It can be measured by how we experience God from Genesis to Revelation. In the Bible is included all the mathematics equations that men say they have discovered. From Pi to c to Napierian algorithm, metric tensors. Yes, they are all in there. You have to lose all pre-suppositions and trust in thus says the Lord. Within thus says the Lord is the equation at which we can determine the speed of light. First, you have to accept light’s purpose from the inner self experience. God’s light created man. It sustains man. It is the light of God that gives us the courage to experience him as creator. His word is true. It is the Bible, no matter which translation or which language. If you have a problem with who wrote the Bible, light speed is the least of your problems. Accept that God is the author and you will be on the path to immortality.

A closer look at the creation narrative in Genesis reveals a conundrum to the modern scientific community. How we experience creation and the lengths we go to understand it, will eventually lead us to understanding the creator. To deny evidence of design, actually leads to perpetual ignorance. With all the technology at their disposal, they use it to deny the existence of a designer. Their pre-suppositions have contributed to their ignorant stances and theories. With all of their knowledge, they deny wisdom comes from a belief in God. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, knowledge of the Holy One leads to understanding. At the heart of their ignorance is fear! Fear is the opposite of faith. To purvey in fear is to have no faith in God. Our country has allowed men who purvey in fear to control every aspect of our existence. They fear the creation more then they fear the intelligent designer who created our world. This is what has led to their paralysis. To understand light, one must make an effort to understand why we need the light of the world: His name is Jesus Christ. He is the third member of the trinity who created our world and universe. We are a digital simulation in an incredibly larger reality. It is an amazing treat to serve God and have God serve us! To understand the entire creation was

given to have us worship God as creator. The greatest insult to God as creator is to mock him through belief in evolution and randomness! To deny your creator leads to lack of understanding in dealing with the purposes of creation. To worship the creation, is the mocking of God. To lie to people and hide evidence that he indeed exists, has led to America falling under the abandonment wrath of God. To teach our children Darwin and his origin of the species, is murder in the eyes of the creator. Darwin hijacked our political system, our education system, and our active religious system in America. Evolution is the foundation of racism, classism, sexism and socialism. They all have their roots in ancient Babylon. When Nimrod created a socio-political elite class of people to control the minds and thoughts of men, the foundation taught at Babel exists today and elitists educated at American universities continue to lie to Americans and deny the existence of God as creator. Seminary is no different.

Western American seminary churns out people who have been touched by the New Testament and not transformed by the entire word of God. Grace is being prostituted in churches all across our land. Church tradition is more important then thus says the “Lord”. Have you made Jesus Christ Lord over your entire life? Have you surrendered to the prospect that you need mercy every day in your life? If you have not looked to the book of Leviticus to understand just what you need mercy from, then grace has never appeared in your life. Mercy is the foundation upon which God builds the house of grace. All sin exists to make us totally dependent upon God for our salvation. God alone is our judge and jury not men educated in seminary or present in church every Sunday. It is the righteousness of God that is imputed to a sinner, not the outward piety of a seminary educated pastor. Jesus Christ alone is the light of the world. His speed can only be measured by who receives righteousness daily. The means by which his light overcomes sin and can be measured, is the speed at which a saved sinner shares his testimony! The mechanism for delivering the message is not Church. God is not a socialist or capitalist he is a monarchist. He has been building a kingdom while men continue to build churches following the world’s business model. God saves sinners who understand they are in darkness. When those sinners are presented with truth, the light of God permeates their existence and they become courageous enough to never miss an opportunity to share the reason for all the joy that is within them. No need for Church. God can get a message to sinners without three dimensional spaces on every corner of our world. He is using men and women who understand that where there is the light of Christ there can be no darkness! The morning replaces the evening in their lives. No one lights a candle then places it in a drawer. Church has become the drawer that has kidnapped the light of the world!

When will the church break tradition, and return to the two-edged sword of the entire word of God? When will Christians return to willingness to endure persecution for the testimony that the blood of the Lamb cleanses us from all unrighteousness? A Christian testimony must bear witness of the desire to die to church tradition and return to thus says the Lord in every heart! The Pharisees and Sadducees were the first denominations in Mono-Theism. The building of Herod’s temple led to a priest class in Israel that had splintered into two sects over the question of resurrection from the dead. They both became pawns of the state. Rome levied a temple tax and the marriage of church and state was sealed. Today’s denominational church is totally in bed with America’s church business model. Jesus Christ separated church and state when he washed his disciples’ feet! In those times animals shared the thoroughfare with humans. To wash the feet of those who wore sandals was considered a complete death to one self. And that is Christ’s example. He told the rich young ruler to sell all his possessions and follow me. We never hear from him again in the Bible! The church of Laodicea has manifest in America. No need for the blood of the Lamb, government as God is fine with us! The status quo has led to apathy! No one cares what the biggest problem facing America is? Pride comes before a fall! America failed to repent and return to the Bible after 9/11. God has fired warning shots across our bow, blood moons, a solar eclipse, two financial freefalls in the month and year of God’s Shemitah! Now in the year leading up to the beginning of the next Shemitah cycle; a global pandemic in the year America’s crown will probably begin to crumble. Trump and Biden are not our problem! Unbelief in God as creator, and the outright mocking of Yeshua Ha Messiah in the two-party system governing America is our problem. America’s window to repent and return to Biblical sanity is fast closing. Mercy is America’s problem, for she thinks she has not offended our God and creator. The outright legislating and then adjudicating everything the word of God remands, has led America to fall ever closer to the abandonment wrath of Elohim!

It is time we realize that light has been slowing down at least since the sixth day of creation! If Light has been slowing down, it is because God has left a witness of the fact that the time for salvation is closing. The world will soon be gripped in global unrest. America is not escaping. China awaits the collapse of the American economy which will trigger Israel’s invasion of the territories now occupied by Arab usurpers! Edomites have occupied the seven principal cities of the book of Judges since Joshua failed to do what God told him to do. The Psalm 83 War is upon us! The sons of Issachar are speaking! Jehu will fail to remove the two golden calves from America and her economy will collapse. Our over-reliance on our own wealth and power, coupled with our denial of the overuse of our military might for political purposes, has led the world to see our PRIDE on full display. People are living shorter lives because the speed of light has been slowing down at a greater ratio since the resurrection of Messiah in 32 AD. The Light entered the creation and the darkness does not want it! Hallelujah for the crucifixion of Yeshua!

I am a sinner. I need God’s mercy daily. Whenever I ask for mercy, grace appears. When I have the humility to not judge, but ask the question: What part did I play in what is wrong with our world? When that occurs, the denominational church will experience true Biblical revival. It can only come on the heels of repentance within the entire body of Christ! The bride of Christ is eagerly awaiting the trumpet in the clouds. He has been preparing her a mansion for 2,000 plus years now! Soon God will echo “Go retrieve the bride I have prepared for your reward.” Consummate the marriage. Celebrate the wedding supper and then return to the home of your Father’s and receive your kingdom as an inheritance! Hallelujah... He was crucified upon a cross of wood, yet he created the hill upon which it stood! RLTW John Burns 10-28-2020

Staff Sergeant John Burns enlisted into the United States Army on September 23, 1987 as an 11C Infantry Mortarman. He graduated from the 7th Infantry Division, Ranger Class 11/89 and served in the invasion of Panama, Desert Storm and the Battle of Mogadishu while assigned to the 75th Rangers.

Some of his many decorations, awards and badges include; Bronze Star Medal for Valor, Purple Heart, Meritorious Service Medal, Sniper Badge, Pathfinder Badge, Master Parachutist Badge, Combat Infantry Badge and Expert Infantry Badge. Throughout his prestigious military career, he traveled to forty-five countries on five continents and all but two states while serving in the military.

He currently serves as the Chaplain for the Special Operations Warrior Foundation. His devout faith demonstrates to all he comes into contact with that he believes nothing but the blood of Jesus Christ can cleanse us from all unrighteousness. He enjoys writing and teaching God’s Word while sharing his faith with a dying world.

Opinions expressed by readers and columnists do not necessarily reflect those of Morgan County Today

Around The World and Back Again

with Zack Ballinger

Alaska: Part 2

I wanted to share with my readers my recent Alaska trip. I have recorded a journal writing for every day of my trip. This is part 2 from last week’s article.

Alaskan Vacation Day 4: Welcome to Denali National Park. Why the name Denali? It’s translated to mean, “The Tall One”. Denali has the highest peak in North America. The park consists of over 6 million acres of land and water. It’s impossible to view all the scenery in a couple days. I captured some of the rivers wedged in between Denali’s vast mountains.

After the 1.5-mile hike, I drove 2 hours to Fairbanks, AK. I am officially in the Christmas spirit. I stopped in a city named the North Pole. I got to meet Santa, Mrs. Clause, and feed his reindeer. Kids be good this year! Santa is making his naughty and nice list as we speak! I am going back to Denali tomorrow to see more scenery and partake of a sled dog ride into the wilderness.

Alaskan Vacation Day 5: I drove from Fairbanks, AK back to Denali National Park. I took pictures on different hiking trails near Denali. You can see from these picture no entrance disappoints. Squid Acres Kennel is based near Denali National Park. They provide a place for sled dogs to do what they love most: RUN! These Alaskan huskies compete in the Yukon Quest and Iditarod sled races.

The dogs were born to pull sleds. You can see from the pictures, they are excited about going on a “sled pull” trip. The tour guide’s 4-wheeler drove about 5 mph. The dogs love it so much they are pulling even though the ATV is driving. I got to also meet the puppies! I headed back to Anchorage, AK.



caid Park. Kincaid park is massive; it’s nearly 40



Alaskan Vacation Final Day: My final day in Alaska was on Friday. I enjoyed trail walking in Anchorage’s Kin-

miles of walking trails and nearly 20 miles of biking trails.

Kincaid is also no stranger to seeing animals in their natural habitat. The moose is the most popular. I got to see a moose along the trail and took a video of it. I then enjoyed some Alaskan cuisine of king crab legs and the famous fish (local halibut) and chips. 49th State Brewing - Anchorage was an amazing restaurant in downtown.

Fantastic vacation!!!

How can I find or listen to The Zack Ballinger Show? The show will have 2 to 3 guests per week on various careers in The United States. You can listen live via YouTube by searching for Zack Ballinger and subscribing. The show is also streamed live on Facebook on www.facebook.com/thezackballinger. What if you want to listen to a podcast? The show can be found on iTunes and Spotify: search for The Zack Ballinger Show and you can find all the episodes.

Zack graduated from Wartburg Central High School in 2001 and from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in 2004. Since graduation he has become a TedX Motivational Speaker, Author, and Career Consultant. He travels the world giving back and hosting seminars teaching people on various topics. Zack has established an ongoing annual scholarship at his Alma Mater, Wartburg, which has inspired others to give back as well. Visit www.zackballinger.com for more of Zack’s travels and events.



Zack Ballinger

Sandra Helton's weekly column

Oakdale Area News

email: kvhelton@highland.net



Congratulations to Oakdale 8U All-Star team! They placed 3rd in the district tournament and are headed to the state tournament! Go Eagles!

Congratulations to Sarah Miller and Colton Ritter who were married Saturday, June 19 at River Ridge Barn in Lancing.

Christine and Leslie Chapman enjoyed a mother/daughter trip to the Smoky Mountains last week. A highlight of their trip was visiting Anakeesta. They loved the spectacular views. They are thankful for safe travels.

My granddaughter Maura and I visited with Ruth and Darlene Headrick Saturday night. We enjoyed catching up and reminiscing.

Morgan county was represented well in the TN State 4-H show in Shelbyville, TN on June 16. Ava Rose Smith, Landry Smith and Anna Summers brought home ribbons in every class they were in. Ava Rose brought home a 1st, 3rd, 5th and two 6th place ribbons. Landry brought home a 1st, two 2nd, 4th and 7th place ribbons. Anna brought home 3rd and 6th place ribbons. They did an amazing job. Special thanks to Aunt B and Shaylyn Melhorn for all their help. Special thanks to Bob "Paw" Melhorn for the horses. Last but not least special thanks to Sawyer Smith for being an awesome groomer.

Tennessee Tech University recognized Maverick Smith with the Golden Eagle Award for the 2021 Spring Semester. Congratulations to this deserving young man.

West Side Baptist Church honored Father's with a Father's Day breakfast Saturday, June 19. Everyone enjoyed all the great food and fellowship. They also enjoyed the great testimonies about fathers. Logan Redmon and Doug Miller both won CASE knives. A big thank you to everyone who attended, prepared food, and helped in any way.

Congratulations to Kaylee McMahan who is now a Licensed Cosmetologist. Kaylee also celebrated her 20th birthday on June 14.

Bunt and I always enjoy spending time on the banks of the Emory River. Last week, we got to enjoy spending time with our daughter Kayla and grandchildren Elijah, Maura, Clara and Hattie. It was a relaxing afternoon with Elijah fishing, Maura and Elijah swimming across the river, Clara and Hattie digging in the sand and finding "baby clam shells" and watching the trains go by. I wish we could do it more often.

Oakdale Library hosted fun events last week. On Monday evening, families enjoyed the book "Kindness Rocks" and then painted rocks. On Thursday evening, Library Director Mrs. Kim continued reading from the Epossumondas series and the children made puppets. On Saturday morning, Mrs. Tabitha Hamby did a program that included fun stories, musical instruments and songs. Today, Tuesday, June 22, it will be Taco Tuesday at 5:00 at the library. Families are welcome to stop in for a light supper and the story "Dragons Love Tacos." Be sure to follow Oakdale Public Library on Facebook for the hours and upcoming events. The library hours vary from week to week so the library can be open every other Saturday morning. The schedule is posted on the library door.

Rankin Chapel Baptist Church is having Vacation Bible School this week, Monday thru Friday from 6:30 – 8:30 nightly. The theme is Psalm 56:3. Commencement will be Friday, June 25th.

Living Waters Baptist Church on Montgomery Road is having Vacation Bible School June 21 – 25 from 7:00 – 9:00 nightly. The theme will be Revelation 4:11.

Lighthouse Baptist Church in Wartburg is having VBS this week, June 21-25. There will be a meal beginning each night at 5:30 and served

for an hour. VBS will begin at 6:30. Anyone needing a ride can call 423-346-1611.

White Oak Baptist Church will have Vacation Bible School July 12 – 16 from 7:00 – 9:00 nightly. Proverbs 25:25.

Pine Orchard Baptist Church will have Vacation Bible School July 19 -23 from 6:00 – 8:00 each evening. The theme is Farm Fresh Faith.

West Side Baptist Church will be having vacation Bible school July 21-23 from 6:00- 8:30 p.m. Commencement will be on Sunday night, July 25 at 6:00 p.m.

Kyle and Kayla Ruppe hosted a double birthday party on Friday, June 18 for their children Elijah and Hattie. Hattie turned 3 years old on June 8 and Elijah turned 15 years old on June 15. Hattie requested a Peppa Pig birthday cake and Elijah requested a wet coconut cake. Approximately 35 friends and family members attended the celebration.

Mr. Elbert "Bud" Cochran passed away Sunday, June 13. He is survived by his wife Oma, daughter Rhonda Cochran and son and daughter in law, Bruce and Vickie Cochran and his daughter in law Becky Cochran. He is also survived by one brother, two sisters, four grandchildren and four great grandchildren. Services were held Wednesday, June 16 at Boswell Chapel Baptist Church. Interment was in Crab Orchard Cemetery.

Sympathy is extended to the family of Wanda Abston who passed away Monday, June 14. She is survived by her children, Steve, Randy, Scott and Adam Abston and her daughters, Teresa Croft and Angela Bass. She is also survived by her sister, Linda Kilby and several grandchildren and great grandchildren as well as a host of other family and friends. Services were held Thursday, June 17 at Evan's Mortuary. Interment followed at Crab Orchard Cemetery.

When praying, please remember all of the Bible Schools. VBS is very important and there will be a lot of seeds planted. Please pray for our country and leaders, the many prayer requests in our communities, our churches and the lost. I know of several people dealing with serious illnesses right now and I feel sure there are many more that I am unaware of. God knows so please remember to mention the sick and their caregivers when praying.

I had never heard of Zig Ziglar until last week. After seeing the following quote, I looked him up online. He is known as America's most influential and beloved encourager. I may be sharing more of his quotes over the next few weeks.

"The 3 C's of life: Choices, Chances, Changes. You must make the choice to take a chance, if you want anything in life to change." Zig Ziglar

First Baptist Church of Wartburg invites you to climb aboard the Rocky Railway as we learn how "Jesus' Power Pulls Us Through." VBS will begin July 12th – July 16th nightly from 6:00 pm – 8:30 pm. Ages 3 and up are welcome. To secure your tickets aboard the train pre-register is available at www.fbcwartburg.org or you may contact the church office at 423-346-3550.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Sunil Patel has applied for a permit to sell beer OFF premises at the location known as:
Brushy Mountain Market
10208 Petros Hwy
Oliver Springs, TN 37840

Anyone having reason to believe that this permit should not be issued, must appear before the Morgan County Beer Board on the 24th day of June 2021 at 5:30 pm in the Office of the County Clerk

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Romans 8 part B

(Romans 8:26-30) the assistance of the Spirit: in our longing to be delivered from the "sufferings of this present time" (v. 18), in addition to the "cheering" of the whole creation on our behalf, there is the promise of the assistance of the Holy Spirit. (a) The Spirit somehow helps us bear our load. (b) We have difficulty in identifying our needs, even in prayer. Thus, the Spirit makes intercession for us to compensate for our unutterable groaning. (c) God responds to our genuine needs in harmony with the interceding Spirit.

Those who truly love God and demonstrate such by obedience (Jn. 14:15) can have confidence that "all things will work to his good." This wonderful phrase, however, must be viewed in light of this context: not everything that happens in life is the active will of God. In spite of our sufferings, God is working out things for his people that will result in their ultimate good (heaven and his ultimate glorification). His plan will be wonderfully realized regardless of the dim outlook in many of life's current circumstances.

In the Lord's grand scheme of things, it was his ideal plan that men be conformed to the image of his Son. Thus, he would call them through the gospel (2 Thess. 2:14), justify them by means of Jesus' death (Rom. 5:1), and glorify them eternally. These actions existed in purpose, but are pictured ideally as accomplished already (29-30). There is no support for Calvinism in this context.

(Romans 8:31-39) the assurance of victory: this discussion concludes with a final note of encouragement. God's cause will be victorious and those identified with him will share in that success. Who can defeat us? Reflect on this logic. If the Lord has already demonstrated his concern for us by the gift of his Son, we certainly may be assured that he will provide us with all necessary things to complete our heavenward journey (v. 32). Thus, whatever charges men may hurl, they are insignificant; only the Lord's judgment matters (v. 33). Our confidence in divine help is grounded in the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, who is pleading our case to his Father (v. 34).

The apostle asks: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Calvinists misuse this section in their vain attempt to prove that no child of God can ever apostatize and be lost. No external force can separate us from Christ's love for us. But one can fall away from the faith, thus rejecting that love, and be lost (Gal. 5:4). Paul lists seven things that cannot disrupt Christ's love; none of these has to do with a person's choice to abandon the Savior. Christians may be viciously persecuted by opponents of the truth, but even in such matters God's people remain "more than conquerors" through Christ who loved us. Ten potential obstacles are cataloged. All of them combined cannot separate us from God's redemptive love, which is accessed "in Christ Jesus our Lord".

(Romans 9:1-5) Paul's broken heart: there may not be a more tender passage in Paul's writings than the one that begins this chapter. He bears his soul's deep pain for his kinsmen in the flesh, national Israel. What a rich heritage these people have shared!

They were adopted by God and privy to his glory. They were participants of various covenants throughout the centuries of the nation's existence---especially the Mosaic law. They enjoyed the privileges of a special service to the Lord (the tabernacle and temple) and were recipients of numerous promises. They were the physical channel through whom descended the Messiah (Jn. 4:22), who is "God blessed forever" (v. 5)---an affirmation of Christ's deity. So passionate was he for this body of people that he had been on the precipice of wishing he might be "lost" for them (strong hyperbole), were such possible. In view of this exclamation, no fair-minded person can accuse Paul of anti-Semitism. Nonetheless, there is bitter disappointment over the prevailing attitude the Jews have entertained regarding Jesus.

(Romans 9:6-13) God's sovereignty: however, the history of the nation has not been in vain. A true "Israel" had come out of physical Israel, and so the word of God had not been for naught. Just as not all who came from the loins of Abraham were a part of the promised line (the Ishmaelites), not all the promised line became genuine "children of the promise" in faith. Paul will argue for the sovereignty of God, who, because of his omniscience, always makes appropriate choices (Gen. 18:25), though such may not agree with man's limited perceptions. For example, he chose Isaac over Ishmael, Jacob over Esau, etc. From the very beginning, God had in mind a "seed" that was spiritual in nature, not merely that of flesh. The term "election" (v. 11) does not pertain to salvation, but to Jehovah's determination regarding the use of a people in his great plan of redemption. The terms "loved" and "hated" (v. 13) are not to be pressed literally; these are Hebrew idioms indicating greater versus lesser, expressing the divine choice of one people over another in terms of redemptive genealogy.

(Romans 9:14-18) God's justice: when Jehovah makes choices, consistent with his own foreknowledge and will, is he unfair? Absolutely not! He judges spiritually, not superficially. God once said to Moses, "I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy" (Ex. 33:19). The Lord's decisions derive from his own wisdom, and they need not conform to the attitudes and actions of men (v. 16). Pharaoh is mentioned as an example of divine sovereignty. Jehovah used Pharaoh to illustrate divine power. The Egyptian ruler was not "raised up" to be bad, he was raised to power because of what he already was---a self-centered, evil person. God would use him as a tool in the sacred scheme of things to exhibit his own control. And today, thirty-five hundred years removed from those events, we are still talking about Pharaoh and the Israelites! When it is suggested that God "hardened" Pharaoh, Paul utilizes a common Hebrew idiom by which the Lord is said to actively do what he merely permits to happen in that capacity (2 Thess. 2:11-12). A number of times in Exodus Pharaoh is said to have hardened his own heart (7:14; 8:15; 9:34).

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MELVIN HOWARD

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102 Paxton Road, Lancing

King Crossword

ACROSS

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22 Martini liquor stone 6 Big fusses 35 French
23 Skilled 50 Words to a 7 Cleaning 36 — Lancelot
26 Flood protec- back-stabber 8 Past 37 Bigwigs
30 Gun the 52 Alpha follower 9 Jessica of 39 Roman robes
31 Witty one 53 Couturier "Dark Angel" 40 Wasted no
32 "As I see it," Christian 10 Flair 41 time
33 Sleazy hotel 54 "Of course" 11 Turns sharply 42 "Suffice —
36 Be nosy 55 Appear 17 Beam 43 Shopper's
38 Train lines 19 Favorite 44 Fencing
(Abbr.) 22 Joke 45 London gal-
39 Aunt, in 23 Canine cry 46 Bridge coup
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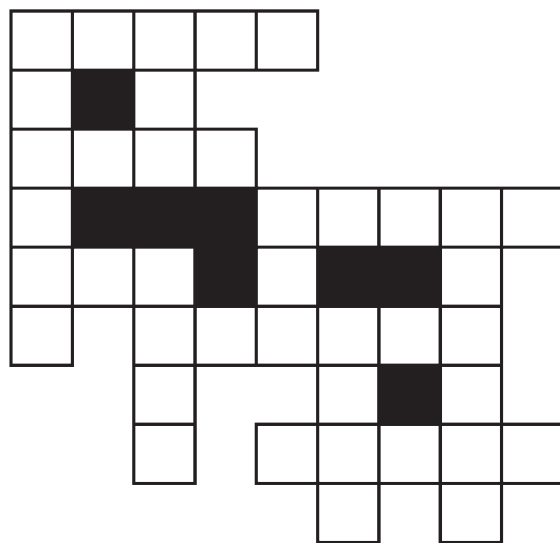
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5 Shoebox 31 Existed

FEAR & KNIGHT

By: rj johnson

DOUBT? ...OR DARE!

- AWM
- CAPMOE
- MASIW
- ♥HWTA
- MOHREC
- SLO
- ♥DEWL
- HUMCL
- ♥TCA
- ROLHEW
- ♥EPSAT
- ♥EMLA



Unscramble these twelve letter strings to form each into an ordinary word (ex. HAGNEC becomes CHANGE). Prepare to use only ONE word from any marked (♥) letter string as each unscrambles into more than one word (ex. ♥RATHE becomes HATER or EARTH or HEART). Fit each string's word either across or down to knot all twelve strings together.

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Stories of Salvation and Faith
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Volume I

Fred C. Mize III



Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

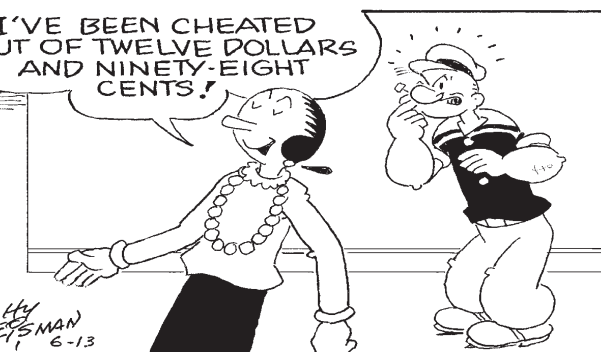
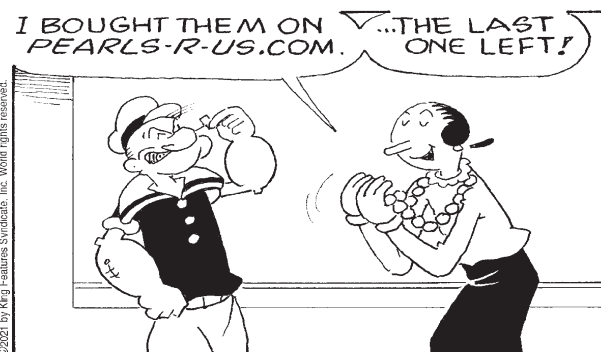
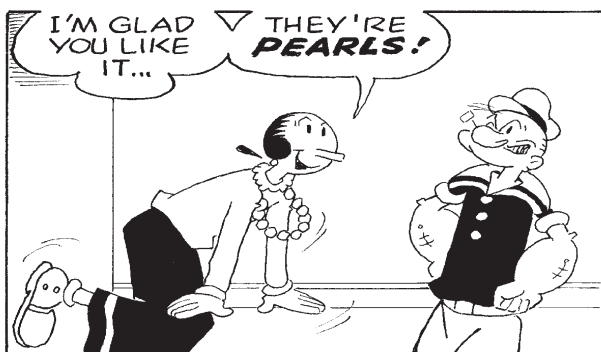
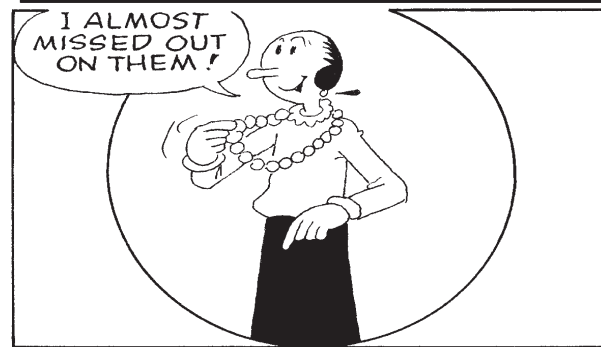
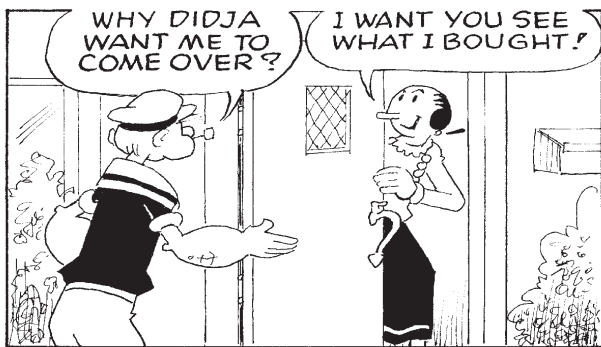
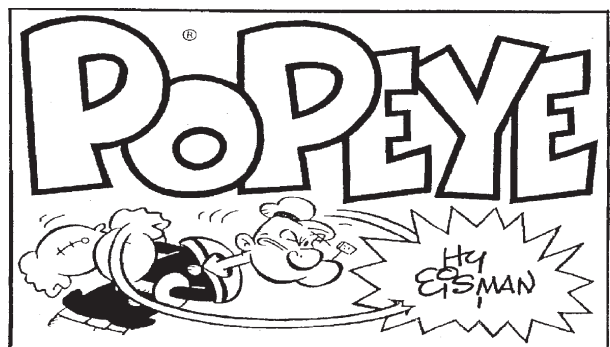
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8				9				3

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦

- ♦ Moderate
- ♦♦ Challenging
- ♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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FEAR & KNIGHT

answer

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Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

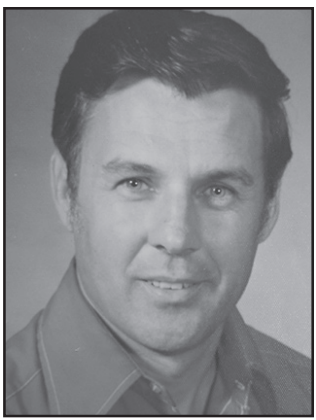
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9	2	3	8	7	1	4	5	6
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8	6	1	4	9	5	7	3	2

King Crossword

Answers

Solution time: 23 mins.

A	L	A	S		W	A	R		B	A	E	Z
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Tom Redmon
Columnist

In the Good Ole Days When Things Were Tough

We lived on Grandpa James Redmon's farm during the depression

and World War II. We raised about everything we would eat. Our house by today's standards was poorly constructed and today it would be called a shack with no insulation at all. We had no electricity or running water. There was a warm morning stove in the living room and a wood burning cook stove in the kitchen. The bedrooms were unheated and on some winter days the temperature would drop below freezing. But Dad would always remind us that we always had food to eat and a roof over our heads. The families around us were usually no better off.

My first memory of our poverty was when I was around four and a half years old in 1940 and I guess we needed some help. We didn't have enough to eat for six children and two adults. Maybe our crops had failed and Mom didn't get to can enough food to get us through the winter. Whatever the reason I remember Dad and I were going through the flatwoods on our way to pick up commodities at Wartburg. I didn't understand why my Daddy was crying, but later on as I got to understand more about life I knew why. Daddy didn't believe in welfare or handouts from the government. This was the first and probably the only time he accepted welfare. He was a staunch republican and a strong critic of Franklin D. Roosevelt and his give-away programs. He believed strongly that if you were able to work you should be able to make it on your own.

We had to work on the farm, but we still had a lot of time to play. My favorite show was the Lone Ranger and every Tuesday I would hurry home from school, get my chores done quickly, and then lis-

ten to the famous masked man go after the bad guys. This was the days before T.V. when you had to use your imagination, and yet still today I'd rather listen to the Lone Ranger on the radio instead of watching him on T.V.

One day Dad asked Glenn and I to go down to Bill Wilson's radio repair shop (located where Quality Oil is located today on HWY 27), to get our radio fixed. Of course, this was



in the days before we got a vehicle so we had to walk in the hot sun. Dad promised to get us a coke if he had enough money left over after paying the repair bill. We stood around the stacked-up shop as Bill worked on the radio. Over in the corner we saw a box shaped thing with a round glass in front. We asked one of the Wilson boys what it was, and he said that's the thing of the future. They call it television. To me it looked like a bunch of sheep walking around in a snow storm. That was in 1946 or 1947 and the nearest station was in Atlanta. Later on, at least two of the Wilson boys were engaged in the T.V. business, and hundreds of Morgan County residents had antennas on top of their houses. Some preachers called them devil's ears. Oh, if they could only see television today.

When Bill got our radio fixed Dad asked him how much he owed. Bill said, "Oh that will be about \$2.50." Every penny that Dad had. So, we walked back home in the hot sun without tasting a coke. How disappointed can you get? All through life we have had many disappointing moments.

I have already told you how I loved to go fishing, and when I was nine-years-old my Dad and some of my siblings planned a trip to go down on Emory River. They wanted to leave me at home because I had been sickly for several days. I told them that I was going whether they wanted me to go or not. Dad said if you go you will have to walk, because I'm not going to carry you. Well, I went and

wooden table and a bench that seated six or seven kids. I sat on that bench for many good meals. After we ate by lamplight we would sit and talk. Dad would tell some funny stories and keep us laughing. One night I got sleepy so as they talked, I laid down on the bench. They all forgot about me and went off to bed. Sometime after midnight I woke up looking at the bottom of that table thinking I was in a big wooden coffin I let out a yell waking everybody in the house up. Several of them came running into the kitchen. All they said was, "well I guess we forgot ole Tommy."

I am almost ten years older than Dolly Parton. Dolly as you know was raised in the mountains of Sevier County, and she was ever bit as poor as most of us were at that time. She wrote a song about her early years entitled, "In the Good Ole Days When Things Were Bad." I'm sure Dolly like me had some good times mixed in there with the bad. Like me she came from a large family and like me she felt like you didn't have to stay poor. With her talent and persistence Dolly proved that in this great country you could be what you wanted to be if you were willing to work for it. All of her dreams came true. I don't claim to be as successful as Dolly Parton, but I have escaped from poverty. I'm not hurting from wanting anything and God has blessed me with a wonderful life. If I went back to live my life over, the major things I would not change.

As Dolly stated in "Coat of Many Colors" you're only poor if you chose to be.

I ended up crawling much of the way from Catoosa Road down to the river. I was in so much pain that I couldn't stand. My sister Rose stayed back with me to help anyway she could. Two weeks later I was in the Harriman Hospital. Dr. Bowman would have to operate. I would have an emergency appendectomy. A lot that I remember about my preteen years are about the struggles that we had to survive. We lived near a town that had no doctor, and the nearest hospital was seventeen miles away. Today parents take their children to the doctor for the least little thing. We would go for months or even years without seeing a doctor. We could afford very little from the store. An ice cream cone or a soda was a real treat that we got maybe three or four times a year. Catching a bus to Harriman to go see a movie before 1945 was rare. The Princess Theater opened in 1939 and until recently was still being used.

Uncle Raney Potter (Grandma's half-brother) built most of our house and several pieces of furniture in it. He had a shop about 200 yards from our house. He made us a big

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Coal Dust: Friends Forever

By Terry Futrell

Then Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace, because we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord, saying, The Lord shall be between me and you, and between my offspring and your offspring, forever." 1 Sam 20:42 ESV

The Biblical story of the friendship that existed between David and Jonathan has long been portrayed as the supreme example of a true friendship. How many of us ever achieve such a friendship in our lives, especially a life-long friendship? Looking back over my life, I can say that I was truly blessed to experience such a friendship – one that lasted for decades and that ended only by the death of my friend Ronnie Herbert Beck.

I first met Ronnie when I was about four years old. His family lived with his grandparents, Harry and Lillie Ashley, who moved into a house owned by Marion Justice that bordered our property on the northeast. Ronnie was only a year older than me, so we became friends almost immediately. That friendship was interrupted shortly thereafter when Ronnie's mother and stepfather moved up North for about a year. Fortunately, they soon returned and our friendship resumed. Ronnie's grandparents built a new house even closer to us about a year later, just 100 yards away at the intersection of Lower Jackson Road and Cumberland Road.

Some kids are fortunate to have a backyard to play in – we had the entire neighborhood as our playground. Most every family owned a few acres, but we weren't limited to our own property boundaries. We roamed the entire neighborhood, spending much time playing on the wooded ridge behind Horace "Harce" Justice's house. Our western boundary was typically Davis Branch that meandered along our western property line. There we spent many hours wading in the creek, catching crawdads, and living a Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer kind of existence.

Ronnie and I had our own "secret" method of communication. When one of us approached the home of the other, we would whistle like a quail – "Bob White", "Bob, Bob White." When we heard that call, we would immediately respond with the companion call and head for the door and the adventure that awaited us.

I can recall Ronnie and I only having one disagreement, or spat, in the fifty years that we knew each other. We were about nine and ten years old and playing in our yard. I don't even recall what we got mad about, but my mother quickly dealt with the situation by sitting us down together and giving us chocolate milk to drink. In a few moments, we were back playing together as if nothing ever happened. Never again did we have even a minor disagreement.

During our early years, Flash Gordon was a popular science fiction show on television and provided our first introduction to outer space. At that time, our family didn't have a television and I would watch the show with Ronnie at his grandparents' house. We were fascinated by the futuristic technology used in the show, such as miniature walkie-talkies and ray guns. When we had the opportunity, we would tear apart old radios and pretend the components were our very own Flash Gordon gadgets. Little did we know that this was the beginning of our mutual lifelong passion for new technology.

Our childhood play was filled with slingshots, or "flippers" as we called them, BB guns, and bicycles. Western shows dominated television and the serial movies that we sometimes attended on Saturdays, and our play often focused on "cowboys and Indians". We grew up with guns, knives, and other weapons. Despite the shootings that took place in the Western movies and television shows, we developed a healthy respect for weapons and would never have considered using them against another person. We depended heavily on bicycles for transportation in our rural community. Ronnie and I, together with other kids in the neighborhood, thought nothing of traveling several miles on our bicycles around the Coalfield community. During the years that one of us had a paper route, our bicycle was necessary to cover the territory of the route. This was a source of one of our greatest misadventures described in the chapter "The Hill – A Coalfield Boy's Mount Everest".

Ronnie was larger than most of the boys in his class at school, which earned him the nickname "Tiny". When we were in ninth and tenth grades, we were traveling on our bicycles on an abandoned roadway that ran from near Ronnie's house to the Davis Cemetery in Coalfield. We passed through the Harce Justice property and were just entering a field owned by someone else when the owner's son, who was in Ronnie's class at school, confronted us.

The owner's son was a strong football player and was clearly looking for a fight. In stark contrast, Ronnie could best be described as a gentle giant who had no desire to fight anyone. In addition to telling us that we couldn't pass through the field, the other boy held onto Ronnie's bicy-

cle and continued to try to goad Ronnie into a fight. Eventually, Ronnie broke down into tears, clearly not wanting the confrontation. I was just a 120-pound weakling at the time, and I suppose there would have been no pride in whipping me, so I was left to helplessly stand by and watch. Eventually, the other boy backed off, and we turned around and left the field.



Terry(right) and his friend Ronnie(left) are shown with cap pistols drawn as they faced the "bad guys" in this photo taken in the early 1950s. [Photo Submitted by Terry Futrell]

It was a few days later at school that the real problem began. The other boy told all his classmates about the episode and they quickly turned Ronnie's nickname into "Tiny Tears". I can't imagine anything more hurtful for a 15-year-old boy to experience. By the time Ronnie reached his senior year in high school, he transferred to Wartburg to escape the bullying and harassment. How ironic that when Ronnie became the best heating and air conditioning mechanic in our area a few years later, many of those same hurtful classmates had to call on him to repair their systems – calls that he never turned down.

In one respect, Ronnie and I were an odd couple – I was always into books and he was more into doing things with his hands and tools. My approach to tasks was more academic and Ronnie's was more experiential and practical - we complemented each other well.

When Ronnie got his first car after graduating from high school, he spent countless hours working underneath the car. I was content to stay beside the car, fetching the tools that he requested and talking to Ronnie as he worked. These

work sessions would end with my hands being very clean and his very dirty and greasy, which suited me just fine.

Just as David entrusted his life to his friend Jonathan, I also willingly placed my life in Ronnie's hands several times, typically with no fear. I recall going to the races at Bristol with Ronnie in 1967. Ronnie was driving my brother's 1966 Mustang and I was sleeping as we approached Rogersville on Highway 11W, commonly known as "bloody highway" because of its large number of wrecks with fatalities. I was suddenly awakened by screeching tires as we slid around a curve. I'm not sure how fast we were going, but it was obviously too fast. Unfazed, I simply closed my eyes and went back to sleep.

On another occasion, Rafford Mullins and I were with Ronnie in his new Plymouth Fury III. It was a high-performance car with a 383-cubic inch engine, four-barrel carburetor, four-speed transmission with Hurst shifters, and other bells and whistles that Ronnie had added to boost performance even more. We were visiting one of Ronnie's coworkers in Lenoir City when the decision was suddenly made to go to the races just outside Rockwood. We made it from Lenoir City to the racetrack at Rockwood in 17 minutes, traveling through Kingston on I-40 at 140 miles per hour. I felt no fear throughout the ride – that was the blind trust I had in my closest friend.

I will never forget the phone call that I received from my brother the evening of August 25, 1999 informing me that Ronnie had died suddenly at the age of 54, almost half a century since our friendship began. After the initial shock, I was soon struck by the realization that never again would I answer the phone and hear his voice simply say "Hey! How 'ya doing?", after which we would spend perhaps an hour catching up on all that had transpired in the months since we last talked. If either of us had

a need, we knew all we had to do was to call the other without excuse or apology. It was that kind of friendship – we could go for months with no contact and then talk to each other as if it had been only a day or two.

There is no great secret to the kind of friendship that Ronnie and I shared – just two people having much in common and a level of trust in each other that enabled each to become vulnerable without fear. Ronnie and I trusted each other implicitly and fear was never a factor in our relationship. Such trust and vulnerability can only come about when a friend is viewed as equal to or better than oneself, perhaps even an extension of oneself. In many respects, Ronnie and I were never two individuals, but instead were a pair acting as one.

I have known many people during my lifetime who never experienced the kind of friendship that I had with Ronnie, perhaps through no fault of their own - it takes two to form such a bond. For those who have never experienced this level of friendship, I can only express my sorrow for what you have missed.

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Always together, Ronnie stood at Terry's side as the best man at Terry's wedding. [Photo Submitted by Terry Futrell]

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