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Morgan County Today

Psalm 100:3
www.mocotoday.com
Volume 10 Number 1
Tuesday, January 2, 2024

Your Community. Your News.

75¢

Inside:

Happy New Year from Morgan County Today!
Weather History

And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

- Colossians 3:17



Morgan County Today

Your Community. Your News.

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USPS PUBLICATION NUMBER
(15400)**



**Ms. Avery Pearl
Pet Columnist**

Pet Perspective with Ms. Avery Pearl

Christmas Pet Picture Contest

Thanks everyone for making the 4th Annual, Ms Avery Pearl Christmas Pet Picture Contest a huge success! There were so many sweet and precious pets that entered this year!

Congratulations to Christy Connor and Didlee Doo! He is the winner of the Ms Avery Pearl Christmas Pet Picture Contest!

Didlee Doo is known by "Grandpa" by all the little Golden Nuggets raised at Coon Creek Goldens in Sunbright, TN. Christy says that Didlee is such a sweet and loyal boy and he is wuffed very much.

Some of Didlee Doo's favorite things are swimming in the pond, dove hunting, playing with all the other dogs, and of course fishing.

Coon Creek Goldens plans to donate the \$25 that Didlee Doo won, to the MoCo Mutts Rescue Center. That is just so kind of them.



Didlee Doo

You can also see Didlee Doo's winning picture featured on my Facebook Page, Ms Avery Pearl.

Congratulations again from Ms Avery Pearl and Morgan County Today!

WEEKLY WEATHER

**CITIZENS
GAS
UTILITY DISTRICT**
MORGAN and Scott Counties

Tue 02	45°/26°	
Wed 03	45°/29°	
Thu 04	47°/25°	
Fri 05	47°/31°	
Sat 06	45°/28°	
Sun 07	42°/26°	
Mon 08	47°/34°	

Tennessee 811
Know what's below.
Call before you dig.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

DLARMC CHANGE IN MEETING TIME.

The Deer Lodge Abner Ross Center has changed its meeting date. The Center will now meet on the third Monday of the month at 6PM. Please make a note of this change.

Coalfield Genealogical and Historical Society Meets the second Tuesday of every month Senior Citizens Building at 6:00pm

Morgan County Republican Party meets the last Thursday of every month at 7pm at the American Legion in Wartburg

The City of Sunbright is now accepting applications for a clerical position. Make arrangements to pick up/fill out an application at City hall. For more information call 423-628-5250

Together Morgan County

Will meet Friday, January 12, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. EST at Morgan County Schools Central Office located at 136 Flat Fork Road in Wartburg. Everyone is welcome to join the collaborative as plans are made to support students and families in Morgan County.

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Biden Vetoes Joint Legislation



Michael Nance
Columnist

On December 19th President Biden had a rare opportunity to pass legislation that had the support of democrats and republicans, albeit with only five democrat senators in the minority.

The legislation would have disapproved or repealed a Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) small-business lending rule that is controversial. The rule, which was added to the Federal Register on May 31, 2023, became effective as of August 2023.

Conservative pundits have labeled the rule as “woke legislation.” Whereas the Biden Administration states its important legislation to identify predatory lenders. So, what is the truth, that’s always hard to tell when reading these purposely complicated Bills, but I will take a stab at it.

Upon vetoing the Bill, an official press release from the Whitehouse, in part, stated the following:

If enacted, this resolution would harm all those that stand to benefit from expanded transparency and accountability. By hampering efforts to promote transparency and accountability in small business lending, Republicans are siding with big banks and corporations over the needs of small business owners. Small businesses are the engines of our economy, and my Administration will not support policies that hurt their ability to thrive and grow.

Therefore, I am vetoing this resolution.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN JR.

Biden’s response left no room for debate or reconciliation, but he also has challenges from the court relating to this rule. A Federal Court in July has already barred the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) from enforcing this rule until a related case is resolved.

A reading of the rule also gave me pause concerning some of the requirements. Section 1071 specifies a number of data points that financial institutions are required to collect and report, and also “provides authority for the CFPB to require any additional data that it determines would aid in fulfilling section 1071’s statutory purposes.”

This is scary; the CFBC rule basically states that notwithstanding, the CFPB can request any data it determines would aid them. I can see both democrats and republican realizing this interpretation is ripe for government overreach.

The CFPB rule also allows heavy preference to minority groups. The following is directly from the rules:

Women-owned, minority-owned, and LGBTQI+-owned small businesses have smaller cash reserves on average, leaving them less able to weather credit crunches. For example, in February 2021, 39 percent of



Image Courtesy of the White House

women-owned businesses had one month or less in cash reserves, compared with 29 percent of men-owned firms.

And in around 90 percent of majority Black and Hispanic communities, most businesses have fewer than 14 days of cash buffer, while this is true of only 35 percent of majority white communities.

As a result, many small businesses, especially those owned by women, minorities, and LGBTQI+- individuals, may have a greater need for financing in general and particularly during economic downturns.

My concern with the reading of the rule is not that minority groups are being given a business advantage. The Federal Government already gives minority groups robust advantages through Federal laws and grants. My concern is that now the Federal Government is attempting to regulate private financing to such a point that businesspeople (regardless their ethnicity and social status) will be eliminated from financing opportunities because they are not considered the correct social status as decided by the ever so wise Federal government.

Anyone who has ever owned a small business will tell you that getting money for your business, hinges on the business profitability, not your social status.

In closing, my opinion is that the rule is out of touch with business and should be repealed, further it is written in a way that actually prevents the kind of oversight that President Biden mentions in his veto response. Although President Biden ran as a moderate and uniter, he missed a real chance to live up to his original campaign rhetoric by vetoing the joint resolution to repeal the rule.

2024 Tax Changes



David Zubler
Columnist

There were significant tax changes to the standard deduction, tax brackets and several other tax items.

The IRS makes adjustments annually to the standard deduction and tax brackets. The increase is intended to prevent bracket creep, which happens when people are pushed into higher-income tax brackets even though their purchasing power remains essentially unchanged. The IRS makes these changes annually, using a formula based around the consumer price index.

2024 will have a 5.4% bump in income thresholds. This bump is lower than last year’s historically high 7% increase, but it is still more than in the past when inflation was lower than in past years. The standard deduction for married couples filing jointly for tax year 2024 rises to \$29,200, an increase of \$1,500 from tax year 2023. For single taxpayers and married individuals filing separately, the standard deduction rises to \$14,600 for 2024, an increase of \$750 from 2023; and for heads of households, the standard deduction will be \$21,900 for tax year 2024, an increase of \$1,100 from the amount for tax year 2023.

The maximum Earned Income Tax Credit amount is \$7,830 for married taxpayers filing jointly who have three or more qualifying children. The maximum was \$7,430 in 2023.

The contribution limit to a 401(k) plan in 2024 will be \$23,000, a \$500 increase from 2023.

The contribution limit for an IRA was raised to \$7,000 from \$6,500 in 2023. The IRA catch-up contribution limits to retirement plans for people aged 50 and over were not changed.

Beneficiaries will be able to exclude \$13,610,000 of the decedent’s estate, up from \$12,920,000 in 2023.

The maximum allowable adoption credit for 2024 increased to \$16,800. In 2024, the annual exclusion for gifts is increased to \$18,000, an increase of \$1,000 from 2023.

The annual exclusion for gifts refers to the amount of money one person

can gift someone without having to file a gift tax return.

In 2023, the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) exemption amount was \$81,300 and began to phase out at \$578,150. For 2024, the AMT exemption amount is \$85,700 and begins to phase out at \$609,350. For married couples filing jointly, the AMT exemption amount will be \$133,300, beginning to phase out at \$1,218,700.

The foreign earned income exclusion is \$126,500, increased from \$120,000 for tax year 2023.

Changes for businesses:

The monthly limitation for the qualified transportation fringe benefit and the monthly limitation for qualified parking increases from \$300 to \$315 for 2024. IRS code allows employers to offer these nontaxable fringe benefits to employees, or employees can pay for the benefits tax free on their own by working out a salary reduction agreement with their employer. In either case, it gives employees a lower-cost way to get to work.

The Section 179 expense option increases to \$1.2 million for 2024 that buy under \$3,050,000 in total equipment. The 179 deduction gets reduced for every dollar spent over that \$3.05 million cap.

Section 179 applies to business assets with a depreciation schedule that is less than 20 years.

Bonus depreciation decreased from 80% in 2023 to 60% in 2024. It will fall to 40% in 2025.

David Zubler is a nationally known tax accountant and Enrolled Agent that resides in East Tennessee. He is the author of six tax books and a syndicated columnist who has shared tax advice on podcasts and national TV and has been referred to as America’s Tax Guru.

He is the founder and president of Your Tax Care. He represents clients nationwide before the IRS and provides tax strategies, and tax education, including David’s one-minute tax tip radio recordings at YourTaxCare.com. David can be reached at (865) 363-3019 or by email at david@yourtaxcare.com

— In Loving Memory —

Basil Warren Strunk, 72



Basil Warren Strunk, age 72, of Lenoir City, Tennessee was called home to the Lord on Tuesday, December 26, 2023 after a courageous battle with multiple myeloma. Warren was a member of the Christian Church of Loudon County. Warren graduated from The University of Tennessee with an undergraduate and graduate degree. He retired from SRM Concrete, Knoxville, TN.

He is survived by his wife of 47 years, Sheila Hickman Strunk, and son, Matthew. Also, his mother, Nina Strunk Oury, sister, Karren Tilson Logan, nephews, Justin Tilson (Meredit, children Carleigh and Jack), nephews Hunter, (Re-wa), Halsey Hickman, niece, Heather Hickman, special cousins, Gary (Anita) and Paul Strunk (Teresa).

He is preceded in death by his father, Ora Eugene Strunk Warren loved the outdoors and the lake. Some of his best times were taking a boat from Chattanooga to Knoxville as part of the Vol navy to ballgames. He

loved spending time outdoors camping and being around a fire with his friends and family. His yearly trip to Florida for fishing with family and friends was a highlight each year. Later in life he enjoyed yearly trips to the bourbon trail.

Warren loved the Lord and was a faithful friend and follower. As the illness progressed, he became a champion prayer warrior for his friends and family. What a blessing he was to all of us. As it became clear his time was short his last words were, "What a glorious day it is to go to see Jesus."

The family would like to recognize the many angels at Tennessee Cancer Center and Ft. Loudon emergency room and CCU. Special thanks to David May for his help.

Pallbearers are Gary and Paul Strunk, Clifton Strunk, Justin Tilson, Matt Strunk, and Rex Ingraham.

Warren will have a graveside service on Saturday, December 30 at 11 AM at Sunbright Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Loudon County Christian Church.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Basil Warren Strunk.

Cecilia Neal, 83



Mrs. Cecilia Neal, age 83, of Harriman passed away December 25, 2023, at Roane Medical Center. She was a member of Crab Orchard Baptist Church. Cecilia worked at RedKap for 20 years and AGA Insurance in Kingston. She loved working outside in her gardens and flowers.

She was preceded in death by two husbands: Charles Potter and Robert Wayne Neal.

Parents: Roscoe & Mary Murphy. Two sisters: Sue Helton and Patty Langley.

Two sons: Chuck Potter and Chris Potter. Daughter: Cathy and her husband Randy Helms. Six grandchildren, five great grandchildren and many nieces, nephews, and friends.

The family will meet Friday December 29, 2023, at 1:00 PM in Crab Orchard Cemetery in Oakdale for graveside service.

Davis Funeral Home, Harriman, is honored to serve the family of Mrs. Cecilia Neal, during this time.

Condolences may be sent to the family at www.davisfuneralhomes.com.

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

Psalm 86:4-5

4 Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.
5 For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.



FROM OUR FAMILY TO YOURS
Many wishes for
a wonderful holiday season
and Happy New Year!

Regular Hours M-F 9am-5pm
 Holiday Hours
 Wednesday, November 22nd-Closing at 2pm
 Thursday, November 23rd-Thanksgiving Day CLOSED
 Friday, November 24th-CLOSED
 Monday, December 25th-Christmas Day CLOSED
 Tuesday, December 26th-CLOSED
 Monday, January 1st-New Year's Day CLOSED




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JANUARY 2024

Morgan County Schools

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
HAPPY NEW YEAR 1	NO SCHOOL 2	Breakfast Hot Cocoa/Donut 3 Juice Lunch Chicken Macaroni & Cheese Green Beans Roll Pudding Side Kick	Breakfast Pancake on a Stick 4 Fruit Lunch Hamburger on a Bun & Trimmings Baked Potato Wedges Baked Beans Fruit	Breakfast Chicken Biscuit 5 Fruit Lunch Variety of Soup Cheese Bites Fresh Veggie Sticks & Dip Garden Salad Fruit Brownie
Breakfast Waffle 8 Juice Lunch Pizza or Garlic French Bread Steamed Corn Caesar Salad Veggies & Dip Fruit Cup	Breakfast Sausage Biscuit 9 Fruit Lunch Popcorn Chicken or Chicken Wings Mashed Potatoes Steamed Broccoli Tossed Salad, Roll Strawberries	Breakfast Cinnamon Rolls 10 Yogurt Breakfast Branch Eggs, Burrito Gravy & Biscuit Sausage, Chicken Potato Patty, Grits Fruit Parfait	Breakfast Lunch 11 MANAGER'S CHOICE	Breakfast Egg Biscuit w/ Sausage 12 Juice Lunch Hotdog Chili Tater Tots Garden Fresh Salad Jell-O w/ Fruit
MARTIN LUTHER KING JR HOLIDAY 15	Breakfast Chicken Biscuit 16 Juice Lunch Chili or Variety of Soup Grilled Cheese Sandwich Fresh Veggie Sticks & Dip Garden Salad Side Kick	Breakfast French Toast 17 Fruit Lunch Chicken Alfredo Steamed Broccoli Garden Salad Garlic Bread Fruit, Baked Cookie	Breakfast Biscuit & Gravy 18 Fruit Lunch Corn Dog or Fish Sticks Tater Tots Baked Beans Fresh Tossed Salad Fresh Veggies & Dip Apple Slices	Breakfast Breakfast Funnel Cake 19 Yogurt Fresh Fruit Lunch Chicken Patty on a Bun Potato Wedges Garden Salad Fresh Veggies w/ Dip Fruit
Breakfast Cinnamon Roll or Pastries 22 Hot Cocoa Lunch Chicken Nuggets Macaroni & Cheese Ranchero Beans Steamed Broccoli Tossed Salad Cutie	Breakfast Breakfast Pizza 23 Fruit Lunch Taco Salad Lettuce, Tomatoes, Cheese Steamed Corn Refried Beans Fruit Cup	Breakfast Lunch 24 MANAGER'S CHOICE	Breakfast Breakfast Burrito 25 Fruit Lunch Variety of Pizza Corn on the Cob Caesar Salad Veggies & Dip Fruit, Cookie	Breakfast Sausage & Biscuit 26 Fruit Lunch Salisbury Steak Mashed Potatoes Green Beans Garden Salad Hot Roll Fruit
Breakfast Pancake on a Stick 29 Juice Lunch Chicken Tenders Macaroni & Cheese Peas Fresh Salad Roll Fruit, Side Kick	Breakfast Steak Biscuit 30 Juice Lunch Hamburger on Wheat Bun Lettuce, Tomato, Cheese Pickle, Onion Crisp Baked Fries, Baked Beans Veggies w/ Dip Orange Slices	Breakfast French Toast 31 Fruit Parfait Lunch Chicken Dumplings Mashed Potatoes Green Beans Leafy Salad Hot Roll Fresh Fruit		

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FLASHBACK

By Mick Harper

1. Who wrote and released "While My Guitar Gently Weeps"?
2. Which group originally released "Don't Bring Me Down" in 1966?
3. Who wrote and released the 1962 parody "The Monster Mash"?
4. Elvin Bishop is consider a one-hit wonder for which song?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "Moons and Junes and Ferris wheels, the dizzy dancing way you feel, When every fairy tale comes real."

Answers

1. George Harrison of the Beatles, appearing on their 1968 White Album. Harrison and Eric Clapton often played it together, including for

the 1971 "Concert for Bangladesh" album.

2. Eric Burdon and the Animals. The song charted in the Top Ten and was then covered by several others, including The Guess Who and Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers.

3. Bobby "Boris" Pickett & The Crypt-Kickers. The song was released just before Halloween and tells of a scientist who created a monster that danced. A movie musical was released based on the song in 1995.

4. "Fooled Around and Fell in Love," from 1976.

5. "Both Sides Now," by Judy Collins in 1967. Songwriter Joni Mitchell included the song on her own "Clouds" album and the song earned a Grammy for Best Folk Recording in 1969.

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STRANGE BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

* The first 72 hours in jail pose the highest risk of death for an inmate, for any reason.

* The cat in "The Godfather" was a stray that director Francis Ford Coppola found in the studio and handed to Marlon Brando before the shot. The animal took a shine to Brando and settled in his lap, purring so loudly that the crew was afraid the noise would drown out the dialogue!

* And speaking of cats ... cheetahs communicate with house cat-like meows rather than roars like most big cats.

* Benjamin Franklin sold chocolate in his print shop in Philadelphia.

* Forget about whether pineapple belongs on a pizza -- how about snake? For a limited time snake will be on Pizza Hut's menu in Hong Kong, as the restaurant partners with another eatery known for its snake stew.

* A tool bag lost during a spacewalk orbits Earth and is visible to people on the ground.

* Researchers at George Washington University found that the skin behind our ears and between our toes has a different set of microbes than those found on more frequently washed areas, so heed Mama's advice and don't forget to scrub them.

* In 1873, billiards became the first sport to have a world championship.

* Prior to the 17th century, common folk seated themselves on stools and benches, while chairs were designed for royalty and the rich.

* Pogonophobia is the fear or dislike of beards.

* For Scrabble's 50th anniversary in 1988, a giant game utilizing six-foot tiles that required two large men to lift was played in Britain's Wembley Stadium.

Thought for the Day: "If you can't fly, then run. If you can't run, then walk. If you can't walk, then crawl. But whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward." -- Martin Luther King Jr.

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Melville captain
- 5 Male swans
- 9 Luau dish
- 12 Humorist Barry
- 13 Med. plan options
- 14 PC program
- 15 Barrel bottom bit
- 16 Concerning
- 17 Old Olds
- 18 Voice in an iPhone
- 19 Half of XIV
- 20 Rooters
- 21 Formerly called
- 23 "Morning Edition" ainer

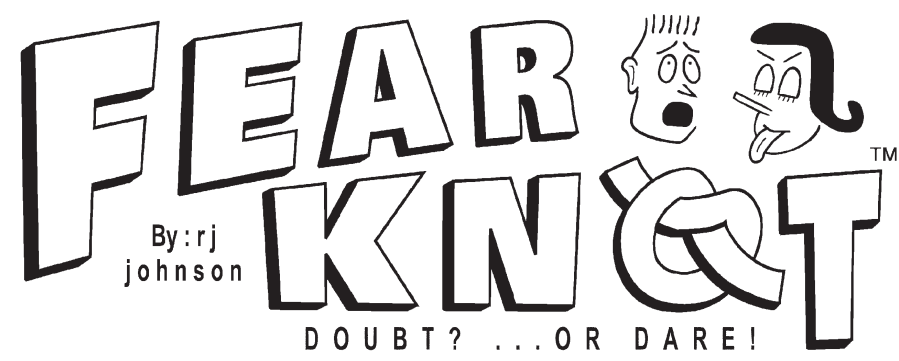
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- | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 25 Humidor contents | 50 Branches | 6 Hotel chain | 30 Goose egg |
| 28 Salad base | 51 Wish otherwise | 7 Ho-hum | 31 --cone |
| 32 Maxim | 52 Intend | 8 Away from NNW | 35 Cried in pain |
| 33 Sean of "Rudy" | 53 Harvest | 9 Brazilian rubber | 36 Tertiary Period epoch |
| 34 Bequest | 54 Curvy letter | 10 Frank | 39 Give a darn |
| 36 Surround with light | 55 "Garfield" dog | 11 Wall St. debuts | 40 Burden |
| 37 Judge Lance | 56 Catches some rays | 20 Clean slate | 41 Deli loaves |
| 38 Approves | | 22 Upright | 43 Jai -- |
| 39 Iowa crop | | 24 Bit of mischief | 45 Bailiwick |
| 42 WWII service member | | 25 Baseball's Ripken | 46 Eliot Ness, e.g. |
| 44 "See ya!" | | 26 Chemical suffix | 47 Nile vipers |
| 48 Some | | 27 Joke | 49 Punk rock offshoot |
| 49 "Legally Blonde" role | | 29 JFK info | |

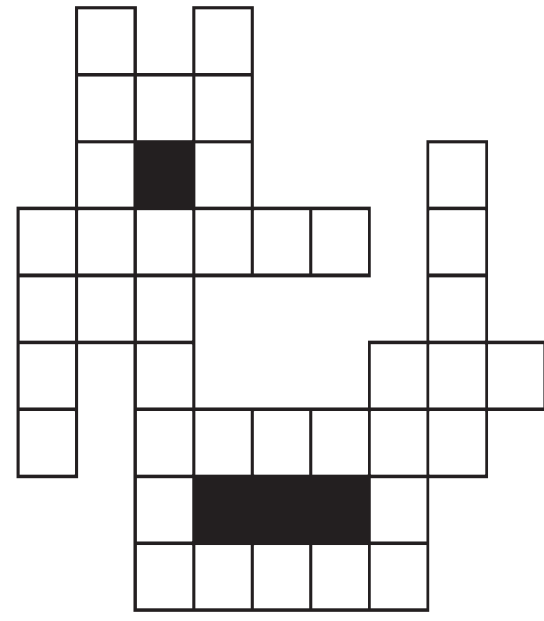
DOWN

- 1 Totals
- 2 Mata --
- 3 Say it's so
- 4 2013 Keira Knightley film
- 5 Sour cream tidbits

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- OET
- LAGOID
- LYDIA
- AFYR
- SYMIER
- ♥TCA
- LACLE
- COTSI
- LFY
- MACOIT
- ECGYA
- ADTE



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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Dr. John Martin
Medical Director



Dr. Tina Jackson
Psychiatrist



Tara McCarley, FNP



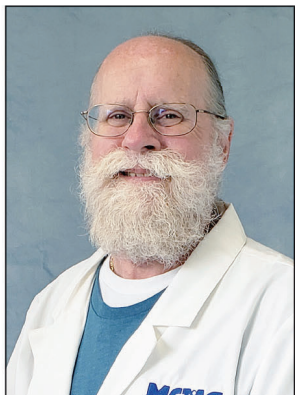
Christina Long, FNP



Wendy Henderson, FNP



Megan Whaley, FNP



Greg Casalenuovo, FNP



Angela Brown, FNP



LeeAnna Woods, LPC



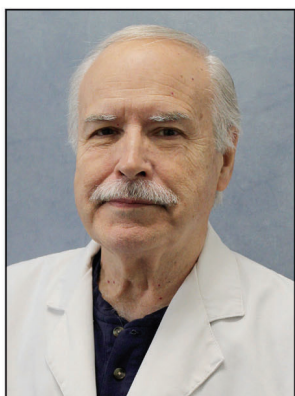
Regina Jackson, LADAC



Jocelyn Hamby,
Counselor



Terry Palmer,
LPC-Temp



Dr. Benjamin Howard,
DDS



Dr. James Chapman,
DDS



Gina Dyer, RDH



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- * Friday:
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DENTAL

- * Mon - Thurs:
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- * Friday:
CLOSED



Tom Redmon
Columnist

I Recall My Mama's Hungry Eyes

I hope all of you Merle Haggard fans will forgive me for using one of his great songs to illustrate a story about my mother. If you have heard the song, "Mama's Hungry Eyes" you will understand that a lot of

mothers back in the old days known as the depression years had those hungry eyes. My Mama sure did.

A lot of families had large numbers of children to take care of back then and my mom and dad had nine. Until 1948 we didn't even have running water so before mom could dream about getting a washing machine, she had to get running water.

I can tell you for certain that Mama's eyes showed that desire for running water and a washing machine and dryer most when the weather outdoors was down around 30 degrees and the cloths line was covered with ice. When Mama and my sisters came in from outside you could tell that their hands were really frozen. Mama said, "I can't wait until we get electricity and all those modern conveniences we really need.

My memory went back to the memories of the movie, "Cole Miner's Daughter" where Loretta's mother was outside in terrible weather hanging those clothes on that clothes line. I always think of Merle Haggard lines, that tells us what Mama is dreaming about.

I think Merle Haggard was the most relatable writer in any style of song writing. He was born in 1937 and like me he grew up in some hard

times. No doubt Merle saw his mother struggle by doing without all the modern conveniences that were coming along in the 1940's. It really hurt to see others have all those things and for you to be left behind.

Many of us who are in our 70's and 80's today know what doing without is like. We know that refrigerators, washing machines, and electric stoves were available in stores but we were barely able to feed our families.

A lot of mothers no doubt had those hungry eyes. In the

song Merle related that "he remembered Daddy praying for a better way of life, but he didn't recall a better way of life of any kind or something like that.

Another Merle Haggard song that I love is "Sing Me Back Home." It's a real tear jerker but one that has a real meaning because a prisoner is on his way to the gas chamber but before he goes to his death, he went to his buddy and asked him to play a song he used to play for them. I'm sure the warden would grant his last wish.

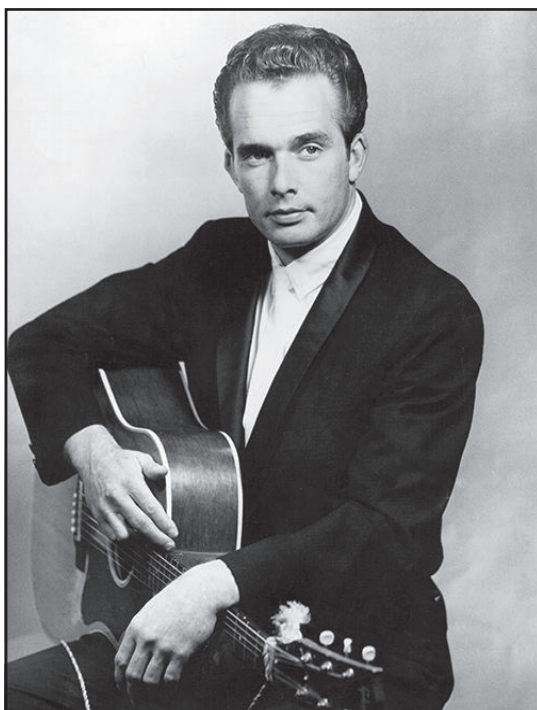
The prisoner also asked for the choir from off the street to sing a song his mother used to sing.

I used to think that a few country singers came close to matching Merle Haggard in all of his talents. But after hearing many of the songs Merle had written and hearing him sing those songs and play them on his guitar and fiddle, I said no there's no way anyone could be close to Merle Haggard. He wrote perfect words for his songs and he put real life into those songs and the lyrics he put into his music are Merle classics. When he picks up his fiddle and brings that bow across those strings, the music is so pretty and I wonder where did this man get all that talent.

Marty Robbins, George Jones, and Randy Travis were great but none of them could compare to Merle Haggard.



A Woman Hanging Laundry on a Clothes Line - 1940s



Merle Haggard in 1964

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Historically Speaking Chris Keller Part One

By Ray Smith - Oak Ridge City Historian

Benita Albert brings us another two-part series on an Oak Ridge Schools graduate. She tells first of the early years in Oak Ridge Schools and their impact on Chris Keller. Chris recalls “stacks of punch cards,” do you remember those?

Enjoy this story by Benita...it will bring back memories and introduce you to another successful person who grew up in Oak Ridge and is proud of that.

“Growing up in Oak Ridge, you are exposed to a lot of scientific activity and scientists, so it is easy to become interested in science as a career.” This comment from 1972 Oak Ridge High School alumnus, Chris Keller, was followed by his personal recollections of various science explorations in his formative and adolescent years. Many of his early Oak Ridge memories follow in this Part One installment of his story.

Chris is now the Chief Technology Officer for Centricity Vision in Carlsbad, California, a medical technology research and development company. He has developed a handheld surgical device which is used in the delicate and challenging phase of cataract surgery known as the capsulotomy. Chris’ professional path and accomplishments as well as more details on his latest work in support of ocular health will be discussed in the second installment of this two-part story.

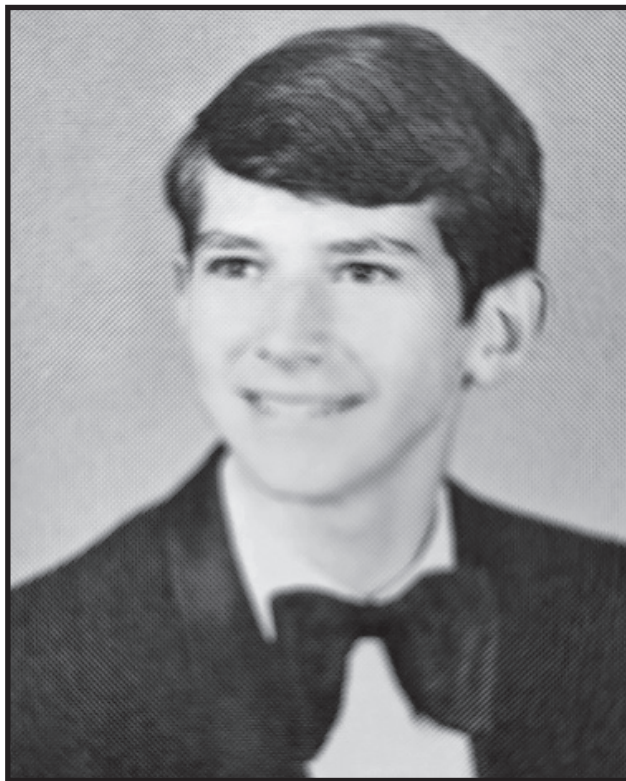
Chris’ father, Lew Keller, earned a PhD from MIT in 1960, and immediately accepted a position in the Chemistry Division of the Oak Ridge National Laboratory. He researched transuranium elements, became Director of the Transuranium Research Laboratory, and ultimately served as Director of the Chemistry Division. The dedication of his father made a deep impression on Chris: “My father set a good example for the pursuit of knowledge, as he worked very hard at his job. After he got home from work, he would continue to work on his papers and calculations late into the night. At times he had so much work that he had to carry two briefcases home.”

Chris’ mother, Dona, was a Radcliffe graduate in biology and a technical writer. She was a busy mother of four children: Chris, Claire (ORHS ’74), Elaine (ORHS ’75), and Elizabeth (ORHS ’78). Dona served as a cub scout den mother and as an adult team leader for Campfire Girls. She was active in the Oak Ridge community through the League of Women Voters and with her family’s activities at United Church Chapel on the Hill. Dona also served as hostess for many dinners with visiting scientists who, as Chris recalled, “Came from all over the world: Russia, Germany, Poland, Yugoslavia, France and more.”

As mentioned above, Chris has fond memories of childhood and the emergence of his passion for science. He loved to run in the greenbelt woods. He collected stagnant water samples to explore the microbial world of protozoa and algae under a microscope. Chris wrote, “I often went to the Museum of Atomic Energy (as it was then called, and in an old building) where you could make a dime radioactive, and make your hair stand up with the Van de Graaff generator. I would collect little booklets, for free, that explained specific scientific subjects.”

Chris loved rock hunting trips with his close friend Mike Benjamin (ORHS ’71) and Mike’s dad, Ben. “It was very informative to talk to Mr. Benjamin about geology, to see how he polished stones, and how he cast gold to make jewelry.”

Chris said, “During eighth grade, I bought a 4.25” Newtonian reflector telescope from Edmund Scientific to look at the moon and planets (also to read the Western Oak Ridge Dairy Queen sign where they put up a new message every day). I showed my father what could be seen with the telescope, and he bought a 3.5” Questar catadioptric telescope which I still have today. We did some interesting astrophotography, for example: lunar eclipses, comets, many Messier (deep sky) objects,



Chris Keller in his class of ’72 senior yearbook

and the transit of Mercury across the sun. My father and I built a photographic darkroom in our basement where we made black and white prints from our negatives.” For Jackie Jacoby’s ORHS physics class, Chris used data from photos he took of the lunar eclipse of Feb. 10, 1971 to calculate the length of the Earth’s shadow.

In July 1971, the Keller family watched the launch of Apollo 15 from Cape Canaveral, Florida. Glenn Seaborg, then Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission who worked with Chris’ father, arranged their special viewing admission passes. In 1988, Chris returned to Cape Kennedy (the renamed Cape Canaveral) where he watched the Space Shuttle launch from a five-mile distant viewing point. He said, “It took the sound 25 seconds to get to my ears, but it was still very loud.”

In the Oak Ridge Schools, Chris maximized his science immersion both in and out of class. He expressed gratitude for Robertsville Junior High teacher Leoard Goforth who organized and sponsored after school activities for the Future Scientists of America Club. He participated in Science Club sponsored by ORHS chemistry teacher Powell Puckett, and he served as the club president in his senior year.

Chris, like many other students, availed themselves of after-school hours in Barry Fernandez’s computer classroom getting extra time on the IBM 1620 computer. It was a “cool place” to be for more than the obvious reason that it was the only air-conditioned classroom in the school at the time. It was also the place where aspiring computer aficionados met and shared novel ideas, and where the aural ambience included a radio usually tuned to the Oak Ridge music station WATO.

Chris recalled, “We (ORHS computer students) were limited to the 20 kilobytes of ferrite core memory, and we carried around thick stacks of punch cards (sequentially numbered in case you dropped them and they got shuffled). The computer room was often crowded late into the night with students waiting for their turn on the single card punch machine, or to run their deck though the computer with the pre-compiler that Peter Johnson (ORHS ’72) wrote to check for syntax errors, and then to run it again with the compiler, and then finally to run the compiled program.” Telling technology students of today about second-generation, batch processing computers (e.g., the IBM 1620 which was considered state-of-the-art at its public debut in 1963) is now “ancient” tech history. Chris along with many other ORHS computer classmates have gone on to advance technological science and applications in profound and diverse ways in their later careers.

Chris remembered Karl Von Halle (ORHS ’73) whose father opened his woodworking shop to his cub scout troop. Chris said they learned to work with tools and made projects such as his wooden, combination footstool/storage chest. An infatuation with making things led Chris to enroll in an ORHS machine shop class his senior year. In that class, led by teacher Charles Carnes, Chris proudly recalled

winning the Tri-County Machine Shop Award for construction of trammel points.

Other special honors came his way as Chris completed his ORHS years, a 1971 National Merit Semifinalist recognition and the Bausch and Lomb Outstanding ORHS Science Student Award. The receipt of a Union Carbide Scholastic Award in 1972 included “a very special slide rule, which I still have,” Chris mused.

The combination effect of all the above moments would set Chris on the way to defining his career. Along the way, Chris would say that there were many twists and turns, but all were valuable learning experiences. His curiosity and drive grew through various stages of work and studies. After receiving an undergraduate degree in chemistry, followed by a secondary science teacher certification, he taught high school physics for two years. As a graduate student at Georgia Tech and later work at IBM, he used computer aided design systems in mechanical design and used computers to interface with sensors and to control mechanical test systems. In his decade with IBM (1983-1992), he earned several patents as an engineer for hard disc drive design.

From 1992-98, while completing his PhD in Materials Science at the University of California Berkeley, Chris delighted in access to a microfabrication lab where he could pursue the design and fabrication of integrated circuits for microelectromechanical systems (MEMS). Chris’ professional journey was focusing in on a unique, state-of-the-art niche with numerous possibilities. The second part of his story will describe his MEMS fabrication partnerships with NASA, academic research institutes, and within his own company (later to align with Centricity Vision) in improving surgical instruments used in cataract surgery.

As his former teacher, I could not be prouder to tell Chris’ story. In discussions with him, I heard the ambivalence he felt for the various trails his professional life has traversed in finding fulfilling and rewarding scientific challenges. However, it seems to me that the technical world was also struggling to catch up to Chris’ vision and passion. Chris spoke of his desire to continue his research and to follow his passion for problem solving for at least another twenty years with no retirement thoughts slowing him down. Perhaps this means that his mind is already on to the next big project?

Finally, I asked Chris to offer advice to current ORHS students who might be interested in a STEM career. His sage words follow.

“My advice to students. Creativity is very important, and to a large extent, it can be developed through practice, constantly trying to think of different ways to solve problems and by examining the subconscious assumptions and biases that may be constraining your thinking. It is necessary to learn as much as you can about science and engineering so that the subconscious idea generator in your brain has facts and principles to work with (even while you are asleep).”

He continued, “In the relatively near future, artificial intelligence will be able to design products from scratch, and even discover new mathematics and laws of science better than humans can. This means that the owners of companies will not hire as many engineers as today, in the same way as assembly line workers are being replaced by robots. It will be a challenge to society to figure out how to create a niche where scientists, mathematicians, and engineers will remain important. It will be wise to have a solid background in science and mathematics regardless of where you end up in the world of the future.”

Well, you can see Chris has moved on from “punch cards.” He is now thinking about artificial intelligence. Next Benita will take you through Chris’ amazing and varied career.

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Cole Burchell
(CatFish Cole)

Charles Burnest Burchell (AKA Sock)

Born: October 11, 1938

By: Cole Burchell

This article is not similar to those I have written in the past. It is the work of a burning passion to preserve my heritage and past. Below here is a man who I am dear to, my great-grandfather who for the past 85 years has experienced the treasures of life. He has labored for, loved, raised, and taken care of the people closest to him. One's life's work of dedication can not be forgotten and deserves at the least recognition which I hope to garner with this interview.

*The text has been altered from its original audio recording to bring the audience greater clarity and understanding.

Childhood & Family

Where did you grow up? Is your childhood home still here today and what was it like? Grainger County, in a place called Joppa. Yeah, it's still there I think, last time I was up there it was still there. We lived in a three-room house and it was nine of us.

How many brothers and sisters did you have? What were their names? I had three brothers and five sisters, but one of my brothers died young. The oldest boy's name was Roy and the one next to him was Coy, then me, and Fred. The oldest girl was Anna May and next to her was MJ next to her was Geraldine and next to her was Edith then Dorothy.

What did you and your siblings do for fun? Well, we played a little ball and we had some old wooden sleds we'd rode during the wintertime. Most of the time we worked, we worked there on the farm and we stayed busy.

Did you ever play any sports growing up? Oh yeah, I used to play baseball and we went around to different schools and played ball when I was in the 7th grade I believe it was.

What were your parent's names? What about your grandparents? What about the rest of your family, aunts, uncles, and cousins? Jesse Leonard Burchell and my mother's name was Trula Ann Burchell. I remember one of my grandpa's, well I remember both of them but I never did see my grandpa Burchell very much but my grandpa Crow, that's my momma's daddy lived on the same place as us and we seen each other all the time. Of course, I was just a kid. I seen my family quite a lot, everybody back then was real close to everybody most of the time.

What can you tell us about your parents and what made them special to you? My mother she had to go to work after my daddy died and she worked in Knoxville and rode a bus there and back from up there where we lived and that's what kept us going. She worked at that C&S laundry and she worked there about a couple of years. Then she got on what they call welfare and that helped out a whole lot and she didn't have to work anymore.

What hardships did you face growing up? Of course, when my daddy died I was just seven year old. Me and my oldest two brothers we worked on farms chopping corn, cutting tobacco, and hauling hay, and stuff like that. A lot of times they'd give you chickens or eggs, we took them we needed them.

Did the Great Depression affect you economically? No, we were just less off than others, but I remember Roosevelt and Truman because my grandpa he didn't like Truman. My grandpa he was a Republican and he had two brothers in laws that were Democrats, they couldn't get along at all.

Do you have any special memories of your father? Yeah, when I was three year old I remember I fell into a screen door and broke my arm and he took me to Knoxville to have my arm fixed, and we rode the old trolley car in Knoxville, the streetcar you know on the rails. First time I ever done it and I ain't seen them since. Though, I don't even remember anything about Knoxville back then you know I just too little back then.

Did your mother ever remarry? Yeah, she remarried one time and that didn't last long cause everybody didn't like him. His first name was Henry, and I didn't like him, well none of us liked him even the girls didn't like him. It was just the way he acted and carried on so we made it a little hard on him and he finally left.

What were some things you did with your family? We went to church every Sunday and we walked a mile there and a mile back. That and going to school was about the only thing we ever did. There was a lot of people around then that used to go to church. Though, they would get together about every two weeks and have a big dinner. It wound up at my grandpa's, my grandma was a good cook and everybody lined up there at his house and they all would have a big time.

What were some things you would eat back then? Back then everybody eat green beans, cornbread, and sweet potatoes, and Irish potatoes, tomatoes, we growd everything. We never had to buy nothing but maybe flour and salt from what they called a rolling store. It was kinda like a school bus and he had everything on it he had carrots, he had sugar, he had salt, and he had some chickens, and candy, and I don't know what all he had on it. We never did have to buy no meal, we ground our own meal or had it ground, we would take corn and have it grounded. All you had to do was put the ingredients into it, back then that was real good cornbread, you don't see that no more. We killed our own hogs and we had sausage, all kinds of ham, and bacon and stuff like that, and made our own lard to cook with. That was good ole days back then now you have to buy everything.

Did you ever have any nicknames growing up? I still got it, they call me sock. I was named that when I was about eight or nine year old I guess. My cousin named me that, she was an older person, but she was the one that named me that, and everybody around knows me by that. I don't know why she called me that.

When you were a child what did you want to be when you grew up? Tell us about your experience with it. I never really even thought about it, but I liked farming though, and I've done a lot of it especially after I'd growed up, married, and lived on a farm. My grandpa he had 63 acres and he had some cattle on it and some mules. Back then the only thing you had for getting around was a horse and wagon, there wasn't many cars then. I lived on two dairy farms after I growed up and married and they was pretty good sized farms. I'd say one of them was 160 something acres and the other was about 35-40 acres.

Education & Career

How much schooling did you receive? I went nine year, I went two years in 2nd grade, so I made it through the 8th grade and I was sixteen or seventeen when I got out of school and I didn't go to highschool.

What was school like back then? Well when you go to a two room school with eight grades in it, four in each room you didn't learn much. I learn more when I got out of schooling than I did while I was in the school. They taught, well they say math now but back then it was arithmetic and you had reading, and you had writing, spelling you didn't have no science or nothing like that they didn't have that. The school was up here in Joppa and the old school was where the new school is now.

Did school ever interest you? How did you do academically? Not really, I had to stay in school after a lot because I had to do my lessons, I didn't go to recess much. I just couldn't get it you know, get the hang of it or something. For grades a lot of the time I was on F, but most of the time it was D's. My mother would get onto me cause I wasn't learning what I ought to, but we doing the best we could back then. I wanted to go outside and play ball, that's what we did at school everyday.

Tell us some more about playing baseball for Joppa. I remember one time our school played a game up there in Rutledge, and Rutledge didn't have enough players, and they was about to forfeit. We decided one off of our side would play on their side so they could play, you know everybody wanted to play, so they put me over on the other side. The side I was on beat my own team and them boys stayed mad at me for a week. I told them it wasn't my fault the coach the one who dunnit, we never did do that no more.

What were some important lessons your parents taught you? Well they wanted me to learn to be honest about anything and not to be telling stories that wasn't true and all that stuff. My mother she brung us all up right to be respectable like most families back then.

Where did you find employment over the years? In 1955, was the first job I had. I was eighteen year old, it was in Knoxville, I worked for a man that was a contractor building for a trucking company down there and that was the first job I had. I worked there about a year I guess until we got it done and he didn't have another job to go to so I just went back to work on the farm. Back then it was hard to find a job like that and most people back then they helped each other on farms, like one man would put up hay and other people come in and help him and then they swap out. That's the way they done it back then. Back then ain't nobody had no money.



Daniel Bunch
(Big Man Dan)



Charles Burnest Burchell (AKA Sock)

What other work did you do? I worked in a factory in Jefferson City, that was after I was married then I moved to Indiana and worked in another factory. I was up there nine months and my wife's daddy got real bad sick and she wanted to come back home so we just went back. We lived in Murry, Indiana right out next to Fort Wayne. When I come back I got a job at a construction site building houses and that's about all I ever did really. Besides working on two dairy farms, and then after that I worked on my own for four or five years. Then I went to public work and my last job I had was a few years back about 20 years ago, maybe longer it was on a construction.

Which job did you enjoy the most? Farming, I love farming. I worked 18 hours a day six days a week, that's a lot of work. Milking cows then doing farm work and on the other dairy farm down there in Halls I worked on it for about a couple of years we milked cows and worked on the farm. I don't know though I liked them all pretty good, I've worked about all my life ever since I was 11-12 year old. Of course I was laid off a time or two and stayed off a couple of months and that was about it.

What did you like to do on a day off? Just hang out and relax.

Did you ever make any life long friends along the way? Yeah, them boys I went to school with, we were you know pretty close, and then after I got out of school and they got out, one of them is all I ever seen. I never seen the rest of them anymore. I don't know what happened to them. There's one who lives up here in Grainger County now and I saw him about four or five years ago up here at the hardware and talked to him a little bit, but he's the only one I ever seen after I got out of school. His name's Wayne Hood he lived up there in Joppa too about a mile from me.

Was any of your family involved in politics? No, only thing my grandpa did one time before I was born, they told me about it. He used to be a deputy sheriff there in Grainger County. That's all I knows about him, his name was Mark Crow.

What would you consider to be your greatest accomplishment in your career? The biggest accomplishment I had was what I learned about carpentry work. See my daddy was a carpenter and he was a real good carpenter, he done a lot of work just for people around there in our neighborhood to help them out. I like carpentry work more than anything, I liked it more than working on the farm, but back then you had to work somewhere.

Marriage & Family What was your wife's name? How did you meet?

Deloris and I met her in a restaurant in Knoxville. She worked there as her family was from Knoxville. It was called Blue Circle, but it ain't around no more. I was 20 when we met. I got married to her at 21.

Tell us about your wife. She could bake some pretty good meals, she could fry chickens good and make cornbread and fried potatoes, she could do pretty good.

What was the first thing the two of you did together? We went out to Chilhowee Park, me and her and another couple, her cousin and his wife. That was the first thing.

What did you think about her family? Can you tell us about them? I liked them all right, her daddy was a little bit hateful, but I got along with him. He used to work up there on the railroad in Knoxville but he retired I think or they laid him off or something, and he went to work at Knoxville Family's and he worked there until he passed away. Her mother never worked none while he was alive but after he died she went to work at some restaurants as a cook. She was a pretty good cook.

What was your wedding like? It wasn't nobody but me and her and the preacher and his wife was there. I got married in Rutledge in the preacher's house standing on his steps in front of his house. He lived in behind the courthouse up there in Rutledge. Right after this, we went to Cherokee, North Carolina, and spent a day.

What was your family's situation economically? We done alright, the house wasn't in too good of shape but we made it out, it was a three-room house with a big old living room, and one bedroom, and a kitchen and that's all it had. We all slept in it piled up mostly with the four children but one died when he was a baby his name was Mark Dustin Burchell he was buried up there in Grainger County in Sunrise Cemetery. He didn't live but a week they said he had brain damage is what happened to him.

What were some special things you did with your family? We had a pretty good Christmas and we was always together for birthdays. My favorite place to be was when I was at home.

Have you ever been on vacation like to the ocean? No, I had a chance going twice but I never did go. I swim just like a rock, straight down. Though I always went down to the creek and we play around in the creek, and my two brothers they could swim but I never could learn how to swim and still ain't learned. I would get into it up to my neck and still, I just couldn't swim.

What was it like raising your kids? It was alright I guess we had fusses and fights every once in a while but that's the way kids are. My proudest moment was when they was first born, I was there when all four of them was born. At St. Mary's in Turkey Creek except the one that died he was born in Jefferson City Hospital.

What were some of your hobbies? The only thing I ever did was I went fishing, we went down there next to our neighbor's house on the creek and we'd stay way up in the night fishing after dark. We'd take us some bacon and stuff down there and fry and oh we had a good time. We always fished with red worms, that was the only thing we had. I didn't like fish, but I could catch 'em. We would give them to our neighbor that lived there cause he let us go down there and fish on the creek. They had a boy who'd go down with us and we had a time.

Charles Burnest Burchell (AKA Sock) --- To be continued in our next edition.


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Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become GREAT!

— Mark Twain

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John Burns
Opinion Columnist

Where Are We in Time

Charles Dickens begins A Tale of Two Cities, with the statement ‘It was the best of times, and it was the worst of times.’

Are we witnessing the same conundrums in our world today? Is the religion of ancient Babylon uniting before our eyes as the whole world seems to be united in stopping God’s plan for Jerusalem?

Politics is the art of deception. Adam and Eve were the first voters in history. Their choice revolved around believing the word of the God who created them for the purpose of fellowship, or allowing a politician dressed as a serpent, to get us to question God’s written word?

The two-party system in America has deceived true believers in God. One party openly advocates for the destruction of all things Christians and Jews believe. One side mixes a little bit of outward piety, with an unwavering devotion to the cult of Mithras, masquerading as the bull of wall street.

Neither side has God’s ideas about civilization in mind. God’s ideas about absolute morality hinges upon the knowledge of His preconceived plan for those created in His image. Humans were placed in the garden as a part of God’s plan to redeem His creation from the original usurper.

Today, elements in both parties openly mock God in their devotion to a cause that is steeped in delusion. We poor believers in a cause greater than ourselves are now under attack for having faith in God’s single plan of redemption as outlined in the greatest piece of literature ever conceived.

After 45 years of reading the Bible consistently, and studying it for 32 years now and counting, I can say without a doubt that according to what science knows about our present reality. I am convinced that the Bible is the only book conceived entirely outside of how humans experience time.

I had to lose every religious pre-supposition and focus on the Bible as literature. I never experienced a piece of literature that seemed to have more than one prose occurring at one time, while all pointing to one event in all human history. I was reading a book that was most misunderstood.

I had learned a few codes while serving our country. I had learned about rules in code writing. The goal is to get a message to someone while hiding it from those who will use it for their own purposes. The way the code writer achieves this, is to spread the true message out within the entire body of the letter.

In this case, God the Creator has spread His entire message out over 66 books, revealed to over 40 men, within a 3,000-year time period, explaining every day of human history in advance. The Creator of the universe had left us an owner’s manual over His entire creation, with a warranty deed of the cross!

From the first sentence in Revelation, till the final chapter of Revelation, the message is consistent. God is the Creator who intended to save humanity by becoming the Son of God in the womb of a virgin Jewish girl. The only baby ever born knowing the exact hour and minute he would die.

His death would lead to His promised inheritance. The resurrection guaranteed that God’s plan to place Jesus Christ on David’s throne in Jerusalem, was now moving toward the climax of human history. Before Christ receives his kingdom, he must first receive his virgin bride.

The bride would be taken from all the nations of the earth, from all the gentile tribes of the earth, while national Israel was temporarily separated from their land. This separation of time was prophesied by Christ as beginning in Ephesus and ending sometime during the Laodicean Church age.

This Church age has lasted 1,983 years and counting. God has begun regathering national Israel in the land He gave Abraham. We are living in the times the prophet Asaph warned us would befall Israel in the last days. The Jews are back in the land and prospering.

Messianic congregations are sprouting in Israel and Jerusalem. The Orthodox priests who yearn for a return to the law of Moses, when they held all the power, and whom right now are calling for the expulsion of ministries from evangelical Christianity.

We have returned to the time of the acts of the Apostles. America is in the final stage of the abandonment wrath of God manifesting. We have been warned for 21 years and counting to return God to the center of our lives again. Yet mankind has doubled down in the mocking of God?

Sexual perversion, and the all-out assault on the marriage covenant, reveal that God must return to judging America or he will have to resurrect and apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah. Look for the return of fallen angels to enter sexual intercourse once again with the daughters of men.

These are all events prophesied in the Bible. Men have become lovers of themselves. No one cares for the Creator who gave us everything. He must bring judgement upon a world that has denied His very existence. Pride always comes before a great fall. Apathy in America had led us here.

No one serves causes greater than themselves anymore. It is all about what is in it for me? I never thought I would live to see America use all its freedom to separate from the God who shed His grace on thee. And it only took two generations!

The Bible identifies where we are right now in history. The only way to know is to return to a personal relationship to Messiah through his entire written revealed word, written by him and the Trinity before they spoke our universe into existence.

The Bible is the guide to understanding the entire mind of God, and His single plan of redemption. It is the most preposterous debt payment plan in history. It revolves around a loving God who gave His willing Son, on a lonely hill, where they nailed him to his divine destiny for my sins!

He was crucified upon a cross of wood, yet he created the hill upon which it stood.

He is alive forevermore, and he is returning for his virgin bride very soon. RLTW JB 5-27-2023

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.

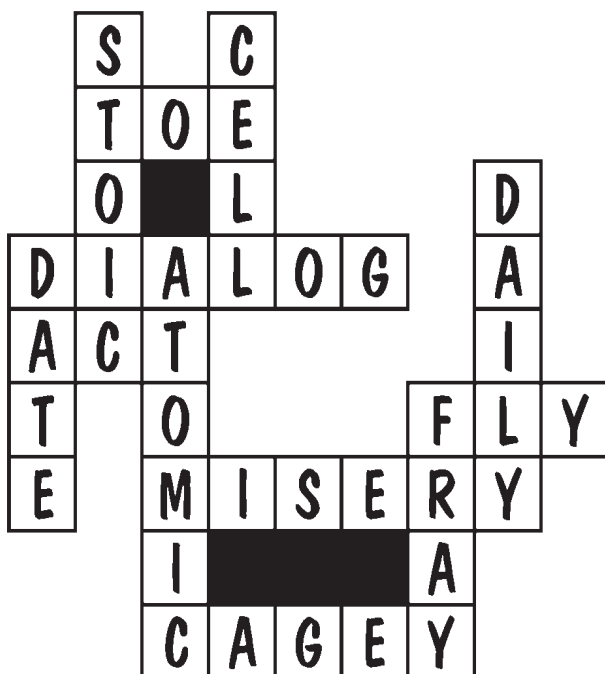
Some of his many decorations, awards and badges include; Bronze Star Medal for Valor, Purple Heart, Meritorious Service Medal, Sniper Badge, Pathfinder Badge, Master Parachutist Badge, Combat Infantry Badge and Expert Infantry Badge. Throughout his prestigious military career, he traveled to forty-five 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



answer



Weekly SUDOKU — Answer

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

King Crossword — Answers

Solution time: 21 mins.

A	H	A	B	C	O	B	S	P	O	I	
D	A	V	E	H	M	O	S	A	P	P	
D	R	E	G	I	N	R	E	R	E	O	
S	I	R	I	V	I	I	F	A	N	S	
			N	E	E	N	P	R			
C	I	G	A	R	S	G	R	E	E	N	S
A	D	A	G	E		A	S	T	I	N	
L	E	G	A	C	Y	E	N	H	A	L	O
			I	T	O	O	K	S			
C	O	R	N	W	A	C	T	A	T	A	
A	N	Y	E	L	L	E	A	R	M	S	
R	U	E	M	E	A	N	R	E	A	P	
E	S	S	O	D	I	E	T	A	N	S	

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Revelation Chapter 17



Melvin Howard

(Rev. 17:1-6) The great harlot: One of the seven angels that had the bowls of wrath beckoned John to come and be shown the judgment to be visited upon the “great harlot.” This sinister character sits upon “many waters,” indicative of her vast influence (v.15). She has committed “fornication” with the kings of the earth, who were intoxicated with the wine of her immorality. She stands in stark contrast to the “woman” mentioned earlier (12:1), the faithful church. The apostle was swept away into a wilderness by the Spirit. He saw this seductive and vile creature sitting upon a scarlet-colored

beast that had seven heads and ten horns (12:3; 13:1). She is arrayed in the apparel of royalty, likely suggesting her claim to rule over various nations. She overflowed with the spirit of blasphemy against God. In her hand was a golden cup filled with abominable things (influence, teaching corruption) characteristic of her spiritual lewdness. “Fornication” was a metaphor frequently employed by the prophets to suggest the unholy alliances between Jehovah’s people and false religion (Ezek. 16).

The woman’s “name” is depicted in the cryptic fashion (“Mytery”) common to this document (1:1). Spiritually speaking, she is a “Babylon” who has led God’s people into “captivity.” This filthy creature is not only a “harlot” herself (she has prostituted herself to error), she has produced other evil entities that are equally corrupt. In addition to spiritually tainting others by her seductive influence, she is “drunk” on the “blood of the saints” whom she has brutally murdered because of their testimony. As John views this scene, he is stunned by the corruption and carnage.

The identity of this sordid woman is a matter of considerable controversy, depending largely upon one’s general philosophy regarding the trust of the book. (a) Dispensationalists (also called futurists) believe that practically all of chapters four through twenty-two is yet future; the “beast” is an empire of the future, the harlot is a false ecclesiasticism just preceding the second coming. This view is false because its entire underlying structure is false. (b) Radical preterism alleges that the entire book was fulfilled before A.D. 70. This view is erroneous because the commanding evidence is that the book was written at least a quarter of a century after Jerusalem’s fall. (c) Moderate preterism, namely the idea that the book is mostly fulfilled by the fall of the Roman Empire (A.D. 476), has become very popular in recent times. It interprets the symbolism of this period as pertaining to imperial Rome and its cultism. This theory disassociates the visions of Revelation from numerous other New Testament texts that speak of the great evolving apostasy and the reign of persecutions connected therewith. Second Thessalonians chapter two reveals the apostasy as developing in the apostolic age, and not being vanquished until the second coming. This eliminates imperial Rome. The late preterist theory is only about four hundred years old (1614), having been developed by Spanish Jesuit priest named Alcasar. This new theory produced by the Roman Church was designed to provide some relief from the indictments of biblical prophecy. The language regarding Babylon, the “harlot,” has a decidedly more prominent theological thrust than those having to do with civil affairs. (d) The historical school, though unbalanced at times, speculating about too much historical minutia, is, in this case, right on target.

It is incredible that so many commentators are blind to both the biblical data and the historical information, seeing no relationship between the symbolism of this book and the rise of one of the most corrupt institutions of “Christendom”---one that has altered and distorted almost every element of Christian doctrine. At the same time, the “harlot” has been one of the most vicious persecutors of the faith indeed, drunk on the blood of multiplied thousands of the saints. (The “daughters,” of which the harlot is the “mother,” are religious entities that have been established with only a superficial relationship to primitive Christianity. These sects have borrowed heavily from the innovations of Catholicism, who in turn imported many pagan practices into its system in an attempt to accommo-

date “Christianity” to the pageantry of heathenism---as Romanism openly concedes).

(Rev. 17:7-15) The Harlot’s accomplices: The angel noted John’s amazement and began to explain the “mystery” of the corrupt woman and the beast upon which she rode. The beast had seven heads and ten horns (12:3; 13:1). Bible scholars mostly agree that the key to the interpretation of this beast is to be found in Daniel’s prophecy of the “little horn” (chapter seven). At this point it is sufficient to say that the “beast” represents the Roman Empire. It would be a matter of some relief to the early disciples that the “beast” (13:1) who “was” and “is not” (referring to imperial Rome’s fall), but was revived by an ecclesiastical influence (v. 8), would nonetheless eventually go into perdition (“hell” 20:10).

The non-redeemed citizens of the earth will be amazed as they contemplate the vacillating movements of the beast. (They also will wonder why they let themselves be so misled by him!) The ones whose names “have not been written in the book of life” are those who have neglected God’s plan of salvation, which was in the divine mind from the “foundation of the world.” (Note the implication that the world was created purposefully.) Verse nine cautions that the following numbers (seven, five, and one) are cryptic and require “wisdom” for the unraveling. The variety of commentary opinions adequately illustrates the difficulty in precision. The basic point seems to be that the beast has a relationship with various malignant forces, some of whom have yielded their power and authority to the beast that is under the harlot’s control (v. 3). These corrupt powers are of “one mind” in opposing God and the Christian cause.

One thing is certain: though these evil forces “war against the Lamb,” they will utterly fail, for he is “Lord of Lords, and King of kings.” Additionally, those who are “with him” will share in the victory, for they are “called” (by the gospel) (2 Thes. 2:14), “chosen” (they partake of the “in him” relationship) (Eph. 1:4), and “faithful” (v. 14). These circumstances are essential to celebration the final victory. The “many waters” (v. 1) are now explained; they represent massive numbers of people who would be under the control of this “harlot,” namely the corrupt church that gradually had digressed from original Christianity (2 Thes. 2:1; 1 Tim. 4:1).

(Rev. 17:16-18) Revolt against the harlot: The time would come, however, when there would be a revolt against the “harlot” and an assault upon her brutalities. The power of the Romanist Church of today is but a faint shadow of what she was in those days when that vile system ruled much of the civilized world, thrusting even kings from their thrones. Verse seventeen is one of the most amazing passages reflecting the mystery of divine providence found anywhere in the New Testament. It is inexplicable from the strictly human vantage point. God “put in their hearts to do his mind” (how we know not), and to come to one mind, and to give their kingdom unto the beast so that “the words of God should be accomplished.” The very powers the harlot had amassed would be her undoing! Again, the “woman” (harlot) is identified as “the great city” that had subjugated the kings of the earth. She is the symbolic “Babylon” (16:19), the captor of spiritual “Israel.” Just as Israel announced the fall of ancient Babylon long before it happened (Isa. 21:9), so John does the same regarding apostate “Babylon.” The readers of this document could read the flashing sign: “Coming....Victory!”

BIBLETALK.TV Mike Mazzalongo
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