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Morgan County Today

www.mocotoday.com Volume 11 Number 17 Tuesday, April 29, 2025

Your Community. Your News.

750



Morgan County Today

Your Community. Your News.

PUBLISHER:

TOMMY LEE FRANCIS PUBLISHER@MOCOTODAY.COM

EDITOR:

HEATHER FRANCIS EDITOR@MOCOTODAY.COM

ADVERTISING:

ADVERTISING@MOCOTODAY.COM

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Wed 30	81° /63°	- 64			
Thu 01	80° /60°	-			
Fri 02	75° /55°	- 100			
Sat 03	70° /53°	**			
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Know what's below.

Call before you dig.



Pet Perspective with Ms. Avery Pearl

Flowers, FLOWERS!

Ms. Avery Pearl Pet Columnist

Mimi just loves flowers. Planting them, not so much!

Well, she and Pap have been busy little bees. Planting and all that stuff.

She says it's not very easy with a back like hers. That Pap though is so tough, he helped plant the flowers. Then, he made a garden. However, much smaller than usual.

Ms Ivory and me just got to sit inside the door and watch. "Cause I will RUNNOFT, again." That part ain't no fun.

The geese just like to taunt us, when we can't get out that door. It's okay though. We will drive them out of our kingdom as soon as Mimi will let us out that door, when planting is finally over!

`Til then, they better enjoy it while they can.

Any-woof, I sure hope you guys are enjoying all this sunshine before it gets to hot.

For more of my Pet Perspective like and follow me on Facebook at Ms Avery Pearl.



COMMUNITY CALENDAR



All members within the Plateau Electric Cooperative service area will see a \$2.00 per month increase to their base customer charge. The customer charge covers the Co-op's basic cost of providing and maintaining the infrastructure (poles, power lines, substations, equipment, etc.) necessary for delivering electricity to our members, regardless of the total kWh consumed. The increase will become effective during the May billing cycle. There will be no change to the kWh rates at this time.

The Co-op has seen a continual increase in our supplies to maintain the infrastructure, stemming from the beginning of the 2019 COVID era and other more recent market challenges. We continue to review our operations, looking for areas to increase efficiency and manage our members' contributions responsibly. Plateau Electric Cooperative's goal is to provide safe, reliable energy at the lowest cost possible to all members within our service area.

The Deer Lodge Abner Ross Center meet on the third Monday of the month at 6:00 PM.

Coalfield Genealogical and Historical Society meets the second Tuesday of every month at the Senior Citizens Building at 6:00 PM.

Morgan County Republican Party meets the last Thursday of every month at 7:00 PM at the merican Legion in Wartburg.

HONOR YOUR HOMETOWN HERO IN SUNBRIGHT

The City of Sunbright is working on a project to honor our hometown heroes. We will be placing an 8x10 photo of your Veteran Hero in a weather-proof frame on Electric Poles throughout the city. You will supply the photo for the City to copy and place in the frame that will be special made.

The cost of each photo is \$155.00 A Form will be need to be completed which may be picked up at the City Hall . When we receive your photo and completed form, we will also need the payment at that time.

Please call City Hall at 423-628-5260 or Charles at 865-216-4593.

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LAST NAME: _			
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ERA:			

ERA:

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Persian Guld War (Aug. 22, 1990-Aug 31,1991)
Cold War (Sept 2, 1945-Dec. 26 1991)
Vietnam Conflict (Feb 28,1962-Nov 7, 1975)
Korean War (June 27,1950-Jan 31,1955)
WWII (Dec7, 1941-Dec 31,1946)
WWI (April 6, 1917-Nov 11, 1918)
Spanish American War (Apr 1898-Aug 1898)
Civil War (1861-1865)

SPONSOR:	
STATUS (KIA/POW/MIA):	
MEDALS (PURPLE HEART/SILVER STAR/BRONZE STAR:	
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— In Loving Memory —

Lou Dean Bradshaw, 76



Lou Dean Bradshaw, 76 of Petros passed away April 20, 2025 at Parkwest Medical Center. She was born April 29, 1948. Lou was a devoted wife, mother, and grandmother.

She is preceded in death by her husband Jackie Bradshaw; parents James Leon Conner and Hallie Conner; siblings David Connor of Knoxville, Robert Conner of Roane County, Bill Conner of Coalfield, Wanda Hunter of Coalfield, Carolyn Basler of Petros; great granddaughter Ava Dean Hall of Petros.

Lou is survived by son Tony (Janet) Bradshaw of Coalfield, Ernie (Misty) Bradshaw of Oak Ridge; granddaughter Jessica (Randy) Hall of Coalfield, Kimberly (Eric) Jones of Oliver Springs, Jamie (Matthew) Hall of Oak Ridge, Taylor Bradshaw - Williams (Isaac) of Chattanooga, Brenna Bradshaw, Emmerson Bradshaw, and Carter Bradshaw; sister Angel Castle and many of great grand children that she loved very much.

The family will receive friends Tuesday, April 22, 2025 at Schubert Funeral Home in Wartburg from 1:00-3:00 p.m. with the funeral to follow at 3:00 p.m. with Bro. David Crowe officiating. Interment will follow in the Petros Cemetery (SHH) in Petros.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Lou Dean Bradshaw.

Betty Jane Chapman, 88



Betty Jane Chapman, 88, of Oakdale, went home to be with the Lord April 21, 2025.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Gordon Russell Chapman; parents, Ellis and Marie Bingham; brothers, Ellis E. Bingham, Jr. and William Bingham; sisters, Gladys Langley and husband Reece, and Georgia Shelton and husband Roy; and great grandson Benjamin Ellis Chapman.

She is survived by her sons, Randy Chapman and wife Christine, and Glen Chapman and wife Shirley; grandchildren, Cody and wife Amy, Rudy and wife Molly, Dylan and wife Desirae, and Leslie; great grandchildren Cady, Ezri, Beau, Jemma, and Madelyn; brother, James (Tom) Bingham and wife Billie; sister, Marlene Goldston and husband Larry; sister-in-law Zelma (Iney) Bingham; and a host of nieces, nephews, and extended family.

Betty was a faithful Christian and member of White Oak Missionary Baptist Church in Oakdale. She was dearly loved by her family.

The family will receive friends Tuesday, April 22, 2025 at Schubert Funeral Home in Wartburg from 6:00-8:00 p.m. Funeral services will be Wednesday at 1:00 p.m. at White Oak Church in Oakdale with Bro. Danny Jenkins and Bro. Chuck Wilborn officiating. Interment will follow in the Camp Austin Cemetery.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Betty Jane Chapman.

Psalm 123:1 Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens.

James Arnold Robbins, 77 United States Army Veteran



James Arnold Robbins, age 77 of Glades Community passed away on April 20, 2025 at 10:00 p.m., pronounced by Amedisys Hospice on April 21, 2025 at 12:15 a.m.

James joined the US Army while still in High School where he played football. He served from 1966-1969 where he was promoted to Sergeant with the rank of E-5. He was an Armor Crewman who loved his tank.

James is survived by the love of his life of 57 years, Carmen Knepp Robbins who was married on June 7, 1968; daughter Lisa (Chris) Jordan of Deer Lodge; grandchildren Jared (Deborah) Northrup of Sunbright, Courtney (Tyler) Cox of Byrdstown, Jessica (Greg) Scarbrough of Knoxville, Cera Jordan of Lancing; great grandchildren Braylon Northrup, Bethany Northrup, Lincoln Cox, Graycen, Eston, Ayla Scarbrough; sister-inlaw Charlene Robbins; nieces Donna Robbins, Kayla Napier; sisters-in-law Lenore Capley of Nashville and Jewel Knepp of Glades and brother-in-law Marcus Knepp and a host of extended family and friends.

The family will receive friends Wednesday, April 23, 2025 at Schubert Funeral Home in Wartburg from 5:00-7:00 p.m. with the funeral to follow at 7:00 p.m. with grandson Jared Northrup speaking. Graveside services will be Thursday at 11:00 a.m. in the Slick Rock Cemetery in Robbins.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of James Arnold Robbins.

Fayrene Ray Hembree, 87



Fayrene Ray Hembree, age 87 of Lancing passed away peacefully on Saturday, April 19, 2025 at Life Care Center of Morgan County. She worked for the Morgan County News, Red Capp, and then for Tennford Weaving where she retired when it closed. She loved to crochet for family, friends, and church and over the years she taught several to crocket as well.

She is preceded in death by her parents Samuel Thomas Briggs, Sr. and Willodean (Collins) Briggs; sibling Samuel Thomas Briggs, Jr. and husband John Harris Hembree, Jr.

Fayrene is survived by her sons Terry and wife Jaquline L. and daughter Kalar Nicole, Joel Timothy and wife Michelle and son Joel Christopher and girlfriend Brittany Johnson, and daughter Sarah Michelle; brothers Larry Briggs and

niece Leah and friend Karen Kirby and brother Roger Allen Briggs and wife Linda Fay, nieces: Angie Mears, Holly Bullock, Carman Smith, and Denise Branstetter Greenwell; and great nephew Jordan and great niece Jaylee, Madison Houston and great nephews Austin Houston and Jaxon Bullock.

The family would like to send special thanks and appreciation to all the nurses, CNA's and Therapists at Life Care and to all those at Adoration Hospice who took special care of Fayrene during her time at Life Care.

The family will receive friends Friday, April 25, 2025 at Schubert Funeral Home in Wartburg from 5:00-7:00 p.m. with the funeral to follow with Bro. Roger Briggs officiating. Graveside services will be Saturday at 11:00 a.m. in the Forrestner Cemetery in Lancing.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Fayrene Ray Hembree.

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

$oldsymbol{--}$ In Loving Memory $oldsymbol{--}$



James T. Brown, 86



James T. Brown went to be with the Lord on April 24, 2025 at his home in Burrville surrounded by family. He was born February 12, 1939.

James is preceded in death by his parents Sim Carson Brown and Artie Brown; three brothers Ernest Brown, Calvin Brown, and Lewis Brown; four sisters Maxine Caldwell, Juanelle Olmstead, Leola Nix, and Bernice Staggs and one great grandchild Cameron Ariks. He is survived by his wife Barbara of 66 years and their 2 daughters Angela Brown of Burrville and Anita Weir of Spring City; six grandchildren; eighteen great grandchildren; four great great grandchildren and a host of family and friends.

The family will receive friends Saturday, April 26, 2025 at Schubert Funeral Home in Wartburg from 1:00-3:00 p.m. with the funeral to follow at 3:00 p.m. with Bro. Bruce Kennedy and Bro. David Bowles officiating. Interment will follow in the Mt. Vernon Cemetery.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of James T. Brown.

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





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Historically Speaking

Meet Kenneth D. Nichols, the Father of Oak Ridge Production Facilities, Part 1 (1942-1945): Y-12

By Ray Smith - Oak Ridge City Historian

Barbara Scollin, grandniece of Major General Kenneth D. Nichols continues her series on his life.

Ample reasons, most notably leadership skills, personality traits and qualifications, led to choosing General (then Colonel) Kenneth D. Nichols as Deputy District Engineer and subse-

quently as District Engineer of the Manhattan Engineer District (MED). In this capacity he had supervision of the research and development connected with, and the design, construction and operation of all plants required to produce plutonium-239 and uranium-235, including the construction of the towns of Oak Ridge, Tennessee, and Richland, Washington.

The responsibility of his position was massive as he oversaw a workforce of both military and civilian personnel of approximately 125,000; his Oak Ridge office became the center of the wartime atomic energy's activities. He also was responsible for internal security operations in the production facilities that helped keep the development of the atomic bomb secret.

In this twelfth installment of several articles covering the life and accomplish-

ments of Kenneth D. Nichols, we learn of the nail-biting effort to build production facility Y-12 at Oak Ridge.

Colonel Kenneth D. Nichols typically spent 3-4 days traveling each week during the Manhattan Project. When in Oak Ridge Nichols recalls, "I deliberately put several layers of organization between me and the residents to cushion myself from involvement in the day-to-day problems of town management. I simply could not spare the time from my primary mission." Early mornings found him in his office at least two hours before 'normal' work hours, his capable staff preparing essential material for him to read followed by various other topics demanding attention.

Earliest facility construction in Oak Ridge began with the Y-12 Electromagnetic Processing Plant. Nichols shared why this plant was first chosen, "I visited Berkeley in August 1942 and was fascinated with Lawrence, his organization, and his process... [With my background in] experimental work... it was relatively easy for Lawrence to convince [me] that his method was nearly ready for engineering design for a pilot plant or even for a full-scale production plant. Once a single unit could be perfected, it need only be reproduced several hundred times to be a useful production plant."

Nichols first met Dr. Ernest O. Lawrence, of the University of California on the S-1 Committee as head of the electromagnetic method of separating U-235, at an S-1 meeting in June 1942.

They would closely work together throughout the war at S-1 meetings, at Lawrence's Berkeley laboratory and at the Clinton

Engineer Works (CEW). Nichols described Lawrence as, "one of the most brilliant American scientists... that has ever lived. ...I would classify him as a type of guy you would want to have as a friend, no matter what business he was in."

As the lead scientist for the Y-12 Plant, Nichols remembered Lawrence, "provided outstanding scientific leadership for the design, construction and operation of the electromagnetics plant (Y-12). In my opinion, Lawrence probably was the most dynamic of all the physicists in-



Colonel Kenneth D. Nichols, District Engineer, presents a Letter of Commendation to Mr. Bearl M. Justise, Stone & Ston

(Courtesy of Emily [Westcott] and Don Hunnicutt)

volved in producing the atomic bomb. A Nobel Prize winner, he had distinguished himself as a great experimenter and leader in the development of the cyclotron. ... He was a doer who attracted scientists and engineers to carry out his projects, including the building of a 184-inch giant cyclotron. Its magnet now provided a facility for developing the electromagnetic process.

"Of course, he could be mean as hell when somebody crossed him. But, generally speaking, he was pleasant. Of all the scientific organizations, his was the most cohesive, the most loyal to him, where they worked as a team. Everywhere else, we had dissension among the scientists. ...Oh, those guys would just swear by him and would work night and day."

Lawrence explained to Nichols the theory of the electromagnetic process at their first S-1 committee meeting. Nichols recalls the explanation as follows, "A calutron [CALifornia University cycloTRON built for CEW] consisted of a U-shaped vacuum tank placed within the magnetic field of the huge magnet. At one end of the U, a power source would ionize uranium chloride. The path of the ion beam would, due to the magnetic field, be an arc and end in box collectors at the other end of the calutron. Both U-235 and U-238 ions would be similarly charged and be bent by the magnetic field. The curvature would depend on their masses. The U-238, being heavier than the U-235, would follow a larger arc than the U-235, and the beam would be collected in

two separate boxes, with the inner box collecting the more enriched U-235."

Construction on the first production building at Y-12 began February 18, 1943. Stone & Description was approximately the electrical engineering design, addressed procurement issues, and coordinated the development of vacuum pumps and magnets of unprecedented size. Westinghouse designed and produced the calutron tanks, liners, sources and collectors. Allis-Chalmers produced the magnets and General Electric the complicated high-voltage electrical control units. Tennessee Eastman developed the chemical process as well as trained thousands of operators. Nichols worked closely with these contractors as well as

the scientists throughout the construction and operations process.

Nichols and Lawrence toured Y-12 in May 1943 and Nichols recalls, "[Lawrence] was amazed at the scope and magnitude of the effort. ...he had difficulty comprehending what was involved in building 552 calutrons and accompanying magnets and controls. However, his amazement at the progress increased his enthusiasm and his dedication to final success. Moreover, his enthusiasm permeated the entire proj-

Early in the planning stages, Nichols alerted Lawrence that at least 2 stages would be needed. Nichols recalls, "For a while I was in his doghouse because I pointed out on several occasions that his experimental results suggested that at least two stages would be necessary. ...I am sure he knew that two stages would be necessary, but he was not about to admit

it at that time. ...

"By the middle of March 1943, the scope of the Y-12 plant was determined. There would be five racetracks (the magnets were arranged in an oval form like a racetrack) of 96 tanks each for the Alpha stage. Lawrence finally had acknowledged that a second or Beta stage would be needed. The Beta tanks were smaller, arranged in the form of a rectangle [and designed with great precision]."

Unexpected bad news arrived mid-1943 when Dr. Oppenheimer tripled the estimate of the amount of U-235 that would be needed for an effective weapon. This necessitated Nichols to oversee an expansion called Alpha II consisting of two buildings, each containing 2 rectangular tracks of 96 units each. Additional Beta units were also required.

At this point, estimated construction costs for Y-12 were \$250M (~\$4.6B in 2025). This did not include the 14,700 tons of silver borrowed from the U.S. Treasury (see 6 th article). Ultimately, total cost of the plant was \$427M (~\$7.8B in 2025) covering 500 acres. Problems were encountered at every stage of construction and production. The huge Allis-Chalmers' magnet coils had to be returned for reconditioning. Most of the cooling system's piping was replaced. Chemical recovery of the enriched uranium was far below estimates. Added to that, there were electrical failures, spare parts problems, cracked insulation and vacuum leaks.

- Continumed on Page 11

Historically Speaking

Meet Kenneth D. Nichols, the Father of Oak Ridge Production Facilities, Part 1 (1942-1945): Y-12

By Ray Smith - Oak Ridge City Historian

At this time, Lawrence had an apartment in Oak Ridge during the critical period of the Y-12 plant and spent many evenings with the Nichols. He persuaded his wife Molly to visit Oak Ridge joining Nick and Jackie for a much-needed break one weekend visiting Gatlinburg and the Great Smoky Mountains. Nick recalls, "It marked the beginning of a cherished friendship."

Lawrence brought a team of skilled operators from Berkeley to Oak Ridge that increased U-235 by March,1944. Nichols recalls a critical question at the time: "Would it take hundreds or even thousands of Ph.Ds. to operate the plant?" Tennessee Eastman worked closely with Stone and Webster to develop the chemical process based on UC Berkeley's work, then trained the operators, "the Calutron girls," straight out of high school.

Nichols described the process: "The Tennessee Eastman employees ... [in the] electromagnetic plant ... [were given a] cover story. ... For example, that we were making a catalyst for gasoline to extend the range of bombers. But we had several such stories. ...

"At one time, [Lawrence] would break in each new unit. ... As we would start up a unit, he would put on [his] operating team until we found out how to operate it. And then he would turn it over to Tennessee Eastman [to] ... train these girls to operate it.

"I commented to [Lawrence] one day after we had several units operating, that the girls were outproducing his PhDs. ...Of course, he thought I was crazy. We checked and sure enough, they were. And he said, 'Oh that is just because they [the PhDs] do not try.' I said, 'Make them try. I do not think they can out-produce these girls.' ...

"The girls won because they were trained like soldiers. ...In contrast, the scientists could not refrain from time-consuming investigation of the cause of even minor fluctuations of the dials. This little contest provided a big boost in morale for the Tennessee Eastman workers and supervisors."

By autumn of 1944 with chemical recovery of the enriched uranium still too low, Nichols recalls a major change was needed, "At a conference in New York with [Monsanto and Tennessee Eastman's heads of research and chemical processing], Conant, Groves and I decided to proceed without the concurrence of [Kodak]." It was agreed Nichols would switch leadership in charge of the Madison Square and Y-12 areas. As a result, a new chemical building was designed and constructed by Tennessee Eastman for a new improved process.

By June 1945 all of Y-12 was completed and producing at full capacity. The team of over 22,000 people

involved with Y-12 achieved a monumental success.

Thank you to these pioneers and their families for their critical work and sacrifices during the war.

Next up: Production Facilities, Part 2 (1942-1945): K-25

Grateful acknowledgements to K. David Nichols, Jr.; Ray Smith; Sandy Fye; Dr. Bianka J. Adams, Alisa Whitley, Douglas J. Wilson and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Office of History; Emily (Westcott) and Don Hunnicutt; Martin McBride; Diane Gulley; Gerald A. Potts; and Bruce W. Scollin for their assistance with this article.



The Y-12 Electromagnetic Processing Plant's 'racetrack'. Clinton Engineer Works, Oak Ridge TN. Photo by Ed Westcott (Public domain Courtesy of Barbara Scollin)

Thanks for these Historically Speaking columns written by Barbara Rogers Scollin, grandniece of General Kenneth D. Nichols.



Y-12 Cubicle Operators (aka "The Calutron Girls") Clinton Engineer Works, Oak Ridge, TN Photo by Ed Westcott (Public domain Courtesy of Barbara Scollin)

David Zubler Columnist

Benefits of an IRS Online Account

An online IRS Online Account enables you to quickly access valuable information.

Tax filing season is the busiest time of the year at the IRS. It can take hours of waiting on hold for an employee to answer your phone call. And it's not uncommon to be on hold with the IRS only to hear the recording, "Due to high caller volumes, please call back some other time." With the significant reduction of IRS employees, it will likely take longer to answer your call in the future. Over the past year, the IRS has added new features

An online account allows you to receive and review over 200 IRS electronic notices. If you have been assigned an Identity Protection IP (PIN) and lost it or you didn't receive a CP01A notice (which provides your new IP PIN), you'll need to retrieve your IP PIN online or you will have to call and have

it reissued to avoid processing delays. An IP PIN changes every year, and

the IRS mails the CP01A notice annually. You can have your IP PIN reis-

sued by calling 800-908-4490 Monday-Friday 7A.M, to 7 P.M. local time. Your IP PIN cannot be reissued by mail if you opted into the IP PIN program after 2019, or if it's after October 14 and you haven't filed your current or prior years Form 1040.

If your IP PIN cannot be reissued and you cannot create or access An online account enables you to access documents that can be an online account, you will need to mail your return. The IRS will review your return to confirm you filed it, but this may delay your refund.

> An IRS Online Account is easy to set up and provides many benefits.

> 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.

and tools.

needed for a tax return. The available documents include:

- W-2, Wage and Tax Statement
- 1095-A, Health Insurance Marketplace Statement
- 1099-NEC, Nonemployee Compensation
- 1099-DIV, Dividends and Distributions
- 1099-SA, Distributions From an HSA, Archer MSA, or Medicare Advantage MSA
- W-2G, Certain Gambling Winnings
- 1099-INT, Interest Income
- 1099-MISC, Miscellaneous Income
- 1099-R, Distributions from Pensions, Annuities, Retirement or Profit-Sharing Plans, IRAs, Insurance Contracts, etc.

The transcript information is available for tax years 2023 and 2024 and is found under the Records and Status tab in the taxpayer's IRS Online Account.

An online account enables you to view, schedule, or cancel future IRS payments. You can also modify payment plans and check your balance.

You can get virtual assistance with an online account, which enables you to ask balance due and payment-related questions.



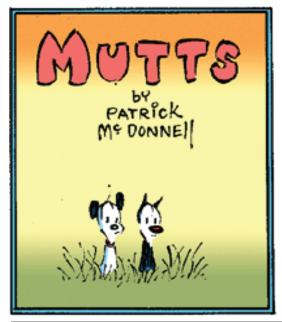






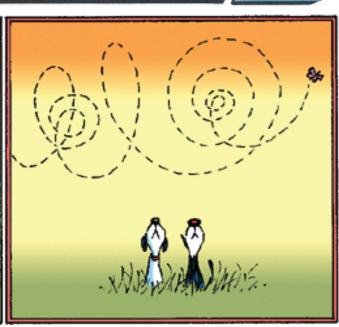






"Walk-ins" Welcome





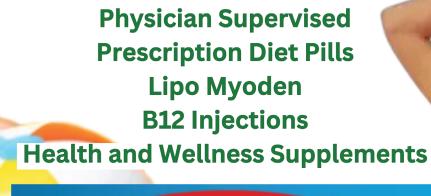


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John Chapter 9



Melvin Howard

(John 9:1-12) Healing a Man Born Blind: As Jesus passed by (precisely when the reader is not informed), he saw a man who had been blind from birth (congenital blindness---nothing psychosomatic here). The disciples, laboring under the illusion that deformity always was caused by sin, wanted to know: "Who caused this man to be born this way; did the man commit some sort of prenatal sin, or were his parents punished with a blind child as a result of their sin?" Whatever the basis of these superstitions, they were

invalid. (This case did not involve inheriting the genetic consequence of abuse, a child being affected by a drug addicted mother; rather, the issue was, does God directly afflict a child on account of someone's personal sin) Jesus answered that neither was the case. Nonetheless, the unfortunate circumstance would be used to display the glory of God.

Christ admonished the disciples that "we" (he and they) must work the works of God while opportunity prevails, for the time would come when such occasions would be no more (v. 4). Thus, it was urgent that he be seen as the "light of the world" while still here. The Lord spat on the ground, made a compound of moist clay, and anointed the man's eyes. He instructed the gentleman to go and wash in the pool of Siloam (v. 7). Since Jesus performed miracles in various ways, frequently with no medium involved, one wonders why clay was used on this occasion. Most likely it was for the man's benefit; it involved a command requiring active faith for the implementation of his sight.

He obeyed and was healed---a perfect analogy for the healing of the soul. ("Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." When neighbors saw the man walking around and seeing perfectly, they were most confused. Some denied it was him, but he refuted that supposition (v. 8-9). When asked how his sight had been received, he said, with some distance in his voice, "The man that is called Jesus" did this. When they asked where this Jesus was, he did not know (v. 11-12).

(John 9:13-34) Controversy with the Pharisees: The newly healed man was brought before the Pharisees because the miracle had been performed on the Sabbath day. They had the poor soul rehearse the details of the event, and even though they conceded that the man's eyes had been "opened" (v. 17), their argument was: "This man [Jesus] is not from God because he does not keep the Sabbath" (v. 16). Others, however, wondered out loud: "How can a sinful person do such signs?" The presumption is that evil people cannot perform miracles. There was contention among them. So again they questioned the recipient of the miracle concerning what he thought about the healer. He replied: "He is a prophet." Note the progression: form "the man called Jesus" to "he is a prophet" (v. 11, 17).

The Jewish leaders now had only one recourse: deny that the man was ever blind (v. 18), though he had been blind since birth and was a public beggar (v. 1, 8). They decided to interrogate the man's parents. So they were grilled: "Is this your son? Was he born blind? How is it he now can see?" They only could identify the man as their son and confirm that he was born blind. They did not know how or by whom he currently was able to see (v. 18). The parents told as much as they could, even though they were afraid of being cast out from the synagogue (v. 22). Religious leaders (then and today) still are most anxious to get rid of those who do not praise and worship them.

The authorities again called the man before them, pressuring him to indict Jesus as a sinner. He refused, testifying again that he could see! That should tell the story. They again asked to hear the details, but he was getting tired of this nonsense. He said that he had told them of the event once already and it was futile to discuss the matter again. This angered them, and they reviled the man, accusing him of being one of the Lord's disciples and disloyal to Moses. "We know Moses," they boasted, "but this 'healer' we do not know." The healed beggar quipped that it was odd that Jesus could

perform miracles, and yet the leaders knew nothing of him! (v. 30). He was a spunky character. He could see their blindness. He further argued that common sense would lead one to the conclusion that: (a) Only God can perform miracles; sinners cannot. (b) This man opened my eyes. (c) Thus, this man was from God (v. 31). He further contended that "since the world began it was never heard that anyone could open the eyes of a person born blind" (v. 32). (He obviously was unaware of the modern theory that the world existed billions of years before the human family came along!) The Pharisees responded with the rationalization that his being born blind proved he was born a sinner. He therefore was not qualified to teach the leaders of Israel. They threw him from their midst (v. 34).

(John 9:35-41) The Healer and the Healed: Jesus heard the report that the formerly sightless man had been "cast out" (v. 22); he, therefore, found him and asked: "Do you believe on the Son of God?" the man inquired: "Who is he, Lord (Sir), that I may believe on him?" Christ declared: "You have both seen him [with your new vision], and he is speaking with you." The man exclaimed: "Lord, I believe!" And he worshipped the Savior (v. 38). Again, we must remind ourselves of the progress of his faith: "the man called Jesus" (v. 11): he "is a prophet" (v. 17); he is "from God" (v. 33); "Lord, I believe" (v. 38). This is a summary of what this Gospel is all about—the growth of faith from seed to flower.

Christ then introduced a general proposition as to the motive of his visit to this planet. He came into this world for judgment. The alleged discrepancy between this text and earlier passages which disavow his coming to judge (3:17; 12:47) does not exist in reality. The term "judge" is employed in varying senses, depending upon the context. Here "judge" basically means to separate; but separate what? Separate the sightless from the sighted, and vice versa. Here is the meaning: The signs and teaching of Jesus revealed the spiritual quality of his audiences. Those who had been spiritually blind were convinced by the evidence; hence, they "saw" the truth and embraced the Redeemer. On the other hand, those who prided themselves in their "sight" (the professional teachers of Judaism), were blinded by their prejudice to the truth of the Savior and his illuminating words; hence, they did not accept him.

The Pharisees were uncomfortable with this enigmatic saying, and asked: "Are we also blind?" Jesus responded, if we may paraphrase: "If you had the integrity to recognize and acknowledge your blindness, you would have listened to me, obeyed my teaching, and would have received pardon for your sin. On the other hand, in your smugness, you profess to have clear vision. Thus, you see no need for my teaching; consequently, your sin remains---and always will as long as you maintain this stubborn attitude."

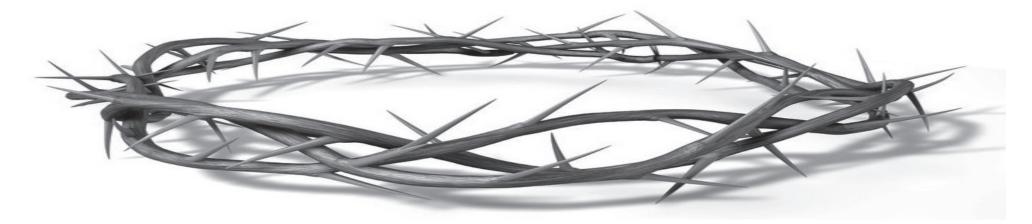
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