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Morgan County Today

Psalm 100:3

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Tuesday, October 28, 2025

More Than A Newspaper.

75¢



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**Ms. Avery Pearl
Pet Columnist**

Pet Perspective with Ms. Avery Pearl

Mimis Cookies

A couple of weeks ago, Mimi made her Peanut Butter with Reeces Cup cookies for the Yellow Jacket football team. They were a big hit.

One of our friends wuffs them so much he says GOT MILK, WILL TRAVEL to get some.

Any-woof, those football boys gobbled them up! So, Mimi made them again this week.

The boys went crazy!

One of the moms said is that the famous cookies that I have heard about for the last 2 weeks? She had to try one and said that's all she heard, was how good those cookies were.

I will just have to take their word for it because Mimi refuses to even let Ms Ivory and me have a nibble of one! Can you believe that woman?

I want to try one so bad because they smell sooo good. Mimi says, Nope. No cookies for dogs because chocolate is very bad for us. How could something that smells so good be that bad? Well, I guess we will just have to settle for smelling them as their yummy smelling aroma floats through the air...

Gotta say, those boys are lucky.

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



WEEKLY WEATHER

CITIZENS GAS
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MORGAN of Scott and Morgan Counties

Tue 28	56°/48°	
Wed 29	52°/43°	
Thu 30	50°/41°	
Fri 31	55°/37°	
Sat 01	59°/42°	
Sun 02	62°/41°	
Mon 03	60°/38°	

Tennessee 811
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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

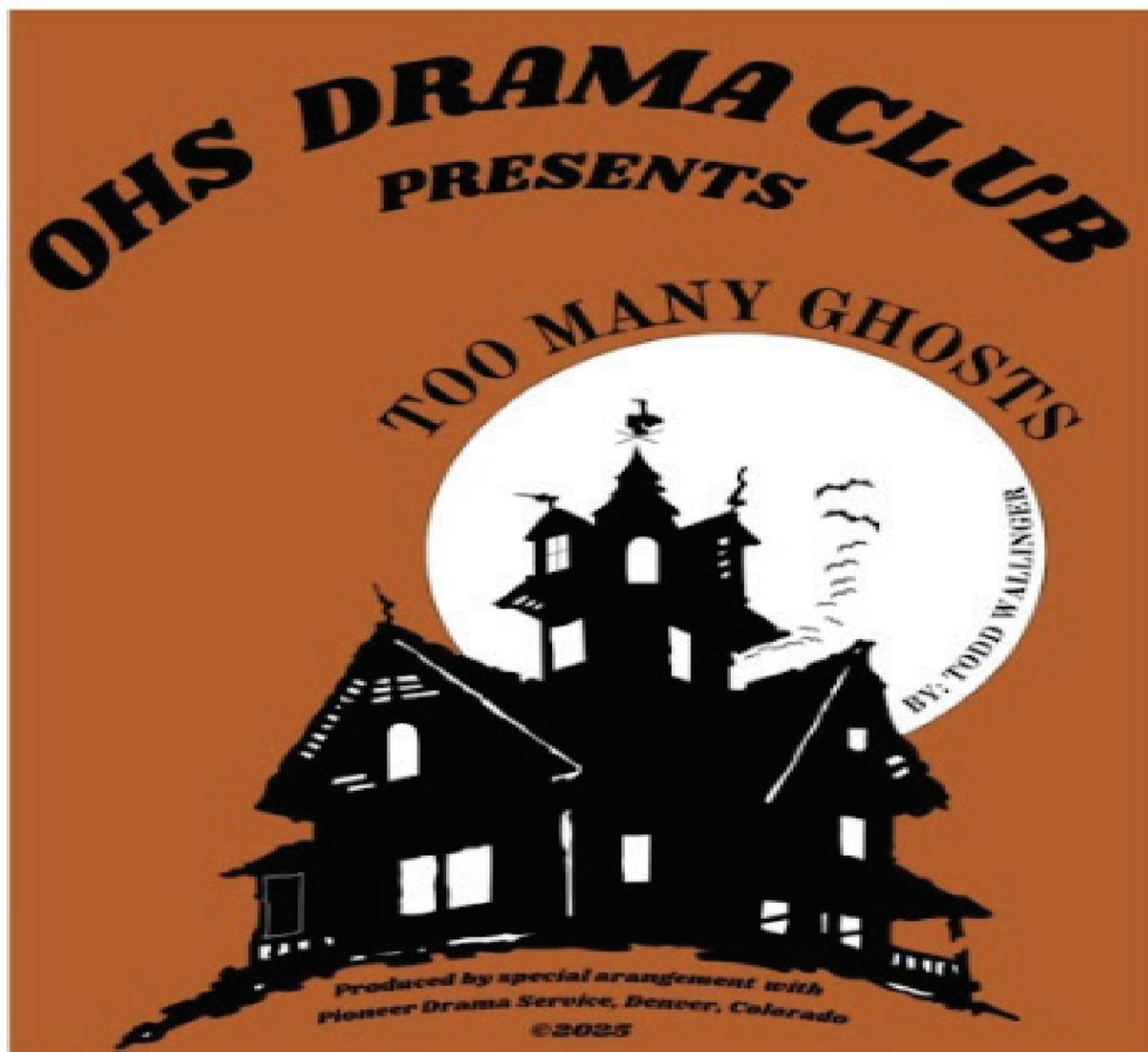
Coalfield Genealogical and Historical Society meets the second Tuesday of every month at the Senior Citizens Building at 6:00 PM.

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

Wartburg Public Library is hosting it's annual online auction. We are asking for and accepting donations until the end of the month for an auction date the first week of November 2025. We can accept any item able to be used including gift cards, coupons, tickets, and physical items. Please email, call, or text if an item is needing picked up at 423-701-0025 or wartburglibrary78@gmail.com. Thank you so much for your consideration and we appreciate you so much if you're able to donate.

Thank You,
Katherine Bobinski
Director

OAKDALE HIGH SCHOOL



SCHOOL MATINEES - \$2.00

Tuesday, November 4, 2025	Grades K-4	1:00 p.m.
Wednesday, November 5, 2025	Grades 5-8	1:00 p.m.
Thursday, November 6, 2025	Grades 9-12	1:00 p.m.

GENERAL ADMISSION - \$6.00

Thursday, November 6, 2025	7:00 p.m.
Friday, November 7, 2025	7:00 p.m.
Saturday, November 8, 2025	7:00 p.m.
Concessions - 6:30 p.m. and Show - 7:00 p.m.	



2025 Fall Play Synopsis "Too Many Ghosts" by Todd Wallinger

Jo Crenshaw dreams of turning the abandoned house she inherited in Salem, Massachusetts, into a successful bed and breakfast, but that could be a problem when she and her teenage daughter discover the place is home to five rambunctious ghosts. And none of the spirits are particularly keen on sharing it with an endless parade of guests.

The level-headed Jo quickly lays down the law. There will be absolutely no haunting of the guests. But Roland, a cobbler from the 1790s, can't help himself. He ends up scaring off the very first guest they have: a popular travel blogger who dubs the place "the most haunted B&B in New England." Within days, the place is mobbed by thrill-loving tourists seeking their own ghostly encounters.

Unfortunately, this draws the attention of Julia, the greedy owner of the largest hotel in town. After her plans to sabotage the property fail, she decides there's only one way to put the B&B out of business: hire a trio of "ghostbusters" to get rid of the ghosts for good.

— In Loving Memory —

Verlin Sweat, 99 - United States Naval Reserve, World War II Veteran



A Glorious Reunion in Heaven.

Verlin Sweat, born May 3, 1926 in Mossy Springs area of Sharps Chapel in Union County, Tennessee to parents George T. (Pop) and Easter Tennessee (Mom, or Tennie) Longmire Sweat passed into the presence of our Heavenly Father on October 20, 2025.

Born the ninth of fourteen children, Verlin experienced a long and loving life filled with family, friends, and experiences. Hardships tempered his tenacity, work ethic, and perseverance, while his Faith tempered his kindness, wit, friendship, and positive outlook.

As a child, TVA relocation project brought the Sweat family to the Joyner Community of Morgan County, TN. Settling on a farm on Cassell Road, Verlin grew up in the Joyner Community, attending and becoming

a life member of Union Baptist Church.

Verlin joined the US Naval Reserve July 22, 1944 and served the United States in World War II as Grade S 2/C, positioned as an anti-aircraft gunner on the USS AMSTERDAM (CL 101) cruiser type vessel. Wartime duty in the Pacific, June 1945 the Amsterdam joined Cruiser Division 18. During 10 July – 15 August, the USS Amsterdam took part in the 3d Fleet strikes against Japan and on 5 September steamed into Tokyo Bay. Verlin received an Honorable discharge March 11, 1946.

Verlin was elected in 1954 to serve Morgan County as a Justice of the Peace (County Commissioner).

Verlin attained third degree Mason with degree of Scottish Rite and was a 68 year member of East Fork Masonic Lodge # 460 F&AM beginning November 30, 1957.

Verlin married the late Reta Maxine Wilson Sweat, also of the Joyner Community, and their marriage brought 4 children, Lois, Verlin Jr., Varnell, and Anita, all preceding him in Heaven.

Verlin later married Alma Justice and they resided in the Joyner

Community before moving to the Dyllis Community of Roane County, prior to her passing.

He is remembered with love by grandchildren Wendy (Aaron), Ashley (Aldo), Spencer (Ashley), Tara, and Chandler (Jessica), along with several great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren, nephews, and nieces.

Verlin is also remembered by two siblings, Lucy and Houston.

Verlin late of Crossville, TN was well cared for with competence and love by "his 7 daughters" as he affectionately referred, Lyncy Byrge, Adrian Wilson, Candice Burton, Debe Houston, Karen Wyatt, Kristi Tollett, and Vetta Scott, and their families, with special affection of "Pewee".

Family will receive friends at Schubert Funeral Home, Wartburg, TN on Saturday, October 25, 2025 at 11 o'clock a.m., with funeral service at 12 o'clock noon officiated by beloved Pastor Dr. Johnny Nix. Interment will be at Union Baptist Church Cemetery. At the time of his passing, Verlin was the oldest veteran and member of American Legion Post 149, Wartburg, TN. He will receive full military honors graveside to be performed by his fellow American Legion members.

In lieu of flowers, he may be remembered with a donation to:

Shriner's Children

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American Legion Post 149

202 S. Kingston St.

Wartburg, TN 37887

First Baptist Church

PO Box 846

Wartburg, TN 37887

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Verlin Sweat.

Elizabeth Gail Beasley, 70



Elizabeth Gail Beasley, age 70 of Wartburg went to be with the Lord on October 19, 2025.

Gail is preceded in death by her parents Billy Joe and Sylvia (Hamby) Beasley; sisters Mary Helen Human and Billy Faye Davis.

She leaves behind daughter Sylvia Beasley Morton; grandchildren Elijah Morton Elizabeth Morton and honorary grandson Eli Carroll; sisters Artie Beasley and Kimberly McDaniel; brother Andrew (Beverly) Beasley; nephews Kevin (Ginger) Human, Toby Beasley and Cody Davis,

Amos Beasley; niece Daren-da Beasley and a host of great nieces, nephews and friends.

Gail loved to cook, clean and be at home with her family. She was a wonderful and devoted mother who devoted her life to taking care of her family.

The family would like to thank everyone for all the thoughts, prayers, text, and calls. Special thanks to niece Daren-da for helping care for Gail and beloved cousins Linda Gibson, Donna Newberry, Bob Hamby, cousins really are your first friends.

The family will have a graveside service Tuesday, October 21, 2025 in the Armes Chapel Cemetery in Wartburg at 11:30 a.m. with Bro. Perry Spurling officiating.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Elizabeth Gail Beasley.

Psalm 123:1

**Unto thee lift I up mine eyes,
O thou that dwellest in the heavens.**



— In Loving Memory —

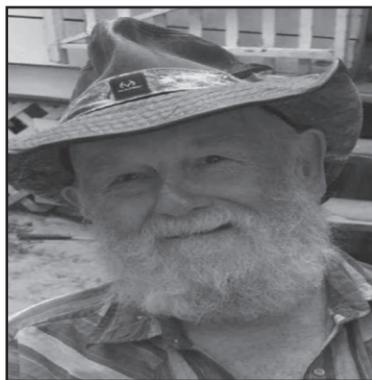
Psalm 86:4-5

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.



**Charles R. "Charlie" Davis, 81
United States Air Force Veteran
USAF National Guard Veteran**



Charles R. "Charlie" Davis
May 19, 1944 – October 11, 2025

Charles R. Davis, 81, of Sunbright, Tennessee, passed away peacefully on October 11, 2025, in Rossville, Georgia, surrounded by the family who loved him deeply.

He was preceded in death by his father, John R. Davis; mother, Madeline Summers Davis; brother, J. Thomas Davis; a special uncle, William Summers; and the mother of his children, Deloris Galloway.

Charlie is survived by his ten children — Regina, Kim, Ronda, Patty, Johnny, Charlis, Daria, Ricky, Candice, and Tendre — along with 24 grandchildren and 44 great-grandchildren and 6 great great grandchildren who will carry his memory forward with love. He is also survived by his brother, Benny Davis; sisters, Betty Presley and Brenda Shannon; and a host of nieces and nephews.

The family would like to extend heartfelt thanks to Charlie's dear friends Freddy Scott, Robert Patrick, and Bill Soldner for their enduring friendship and support. Deep appreciation is also given to the compassionate caregivers at Hearth Hospice in Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia.

Charlie proudly served his country in the U.S. Air Force and The Air National Guard. A man of many talents, he was a skilled pilot who loved the skies, a master welder, and a dedicated truck driver who spent many years on the road. His life was a testament to hard work, courage, and determination.

Above all, Charlie loved being "Papaw." He found his greatest joy surrounded by his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, always finding ways to make them laugh and creating memories they will cherish forever.

He will be remembered for his strength, humor, and unwavering love for his family. Charlie's legacy lives on in the stories, laughter, and love he leaves behind.

The family is honoring Charles' wishes to be cremated. No services scheduled at this time.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Charles R. Davis.

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

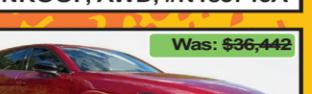
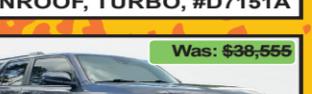


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 <p>Was: \$20,488 BEST PRICE: \$15,488 18 SUBARU CROSTREK PREMIUM EDT, #R7367A</p>	 <p>Was: \$20,774 BEST PRICE: \$15,774 20 NISSAN ALTIMA 2.5S BACKUP CAMERA #R6921C</p>	 <p>Was: \$24,377 BEST PRICE: \$16,377 20 KIA SORENTO S 3RD ROW, V6, #R7455A</p>	 <p>Was: \$24,388 BEST PRICE: \$16,388 23 NISSAN VERSA SV BLINDSPOT MON. #N833525A</p>	 <p>Was: \$24,884 BEST PRICE: \$16,884 22 JEEP RENEGADE LATITUDE 65K MILES #L172539B</p>
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 <p>Was: \$24,555 BEST PRICE: \$19,555 23 VOLKSWAGEN TAOS S TURBO NICE! #N354189A</p>	 <p>Was: \$24,555 BEST PRICE: \$19,555 21 NISSAN MURANO SV AWD, LANE ASSIST #R7326A</p>	 <p>Was: \$24,555 BEST PRICE: \$19,555 23 NISSAN ALTIMA 2.5 SV 75K MILES #N344555A</p>	 <p>Was: \$25,377 BEST PRICE: \$20,377 24 KIA FORTE LXS 21K MILES #N742159A</p>	 <p>Was: \$25,377 BEST PRICE: \$20,377 23 KIA SOUL S REAR V. CAMERA #N891838A</p>
 <p>Was: \$25,377 BEST PRICE: \$20,377 20 NISSAN ALTIMA SL NAVIGATION, #R7539M</p>	 <p>Was: \$25,557 BEST PRICE: \$20,557 24 NISSAN SENTRA S 16,583M #N382162A</p>	 <p>Was: \$25,663 BEST PRICE: \$20,663 24 NISSAN ALTIMA SV TECH PACKAGE #N312532A</p>	 <p>Was: \$25,663 BEST PRICE: \$20,663 25 NISSAN SENTRA S ONLY 9,915M #N252529A</p>	 <p>Was: \$26,555 BEST PRICE: \$21,555 18 JEEP WRANGLER SAHARA 4X4, #R6794B</p>
 <p>Was: \$26,663 BEST PRICE: \$21,663 23 NISSAN KICKS SV BACKUP CAMERA, #R7499A</p>	 <p>Was: \$26,884 BEST PRICE: \$21,884 23 NISSAN KICKS SR 14,060 MILES, #R7339A</p>	 <p>Was: \$26,996 BEST PRICE: \$21,996 23 NISSAN ROGUE SV AWD, TURBO, #R7539A</p>	 <p>Was: \$28,388 BEST PRICE: \$23,388 23 NISSAN ROGUE SV BACKUP CAMERA #N681206A</p>	 <p>Was: \$28,477 BEST PRICE: \$23,477 24 FORD ESCAPE ACTIVE REAR V. CAM. #NA53908A</p>
 <p>Was: \$28,488 BEST PRICE: \$23,488 20 NISSAN MURANO PLATINUM 4WD, NAVIGAT. #D7183A</p>	 <p>Was: \$28,555 BEST PRICE: \$23,555 21 KIA SORENTO HYBRID S 3RD ROW, #L655962C</p>	 <p>Was: \$28,776 BEST PRICE: \$23,776 21 FORD BRONCO SPORT BIG BEND, 4WD #R7185A</p>	 <p>Was: \$30,552 BEST PRICE: \$25,552 24 NISSAN SENTRA SR SUNROOF #R6955B</p>	 <p>Was: \$30,669 BEST PRICE: \$25,669 18 JEEP WRANGLER RUBICON 4X4, NAVIGATION, #R7109A</p>
 <p>Was: \$30,772 BEST PRICE: \$25,772 19 FORD F-150 LARIAT 4WD, NAVIG. #R6514A</p>	 <p>Was: \$34,277 BEST PRICE: \$26,277 23 NISSAN ROGUE SL AWD, NAV., #R6982A</p>	 <p>Was: \$34,774 BEST PRICE: \$26,774 22 NISSAN ROGUE PLATINUM LOADED, #D7407A</p>	 <p>Was: \$34,777 BEST PRICE: \$26,777 23 HONDA CR-V HYBRID SPORT SUNROOF, #R6983A</p>	 <p>Was: \$34,994 BEST PRICE: \$26,994 23 NISSAN ROGUE SV SUNROOF, AWD, #N183746A</p>
 <p>Was: \$32,774 BEST PRICE: \$27,774 25 HYUNDAI SANTA CRUZ SEL SUNROOF, #N065741A</p>	 <p>Was: \$33,399 BEST PRICE: \$28,399 25 HYUNDAI KONA N LINE S ONLY 3,938 MILES #R7392A</p>	 <p>Was: \$33,774 BEST PRICE: \$28,774 23 TOYOTA RAV4 XLE BACKUP CAMERA #N362590</p>	 <p>Was: \$35,996 BEST PRICE: \$30,996 25 HONDA CIVIC HYBRID SPORT TOURING EDT, 8K, #R7205B</p>	 <p>Was: \$36,442 BEST PRICE: \$31,442 23 MAZDA CX-5 AWD SUNROOF, TURBO, #D7151A</p>
 <p>Was: \$36,996 BEST PRICE: \$31,996 23 TOYOTA HIGHLANDER LE 3RD ROW, #N048257A</p>	 <p>Was: \$37,255 BEST PRICE: \$32,255 22 GMC ACADIA AT4 AWD SUNROOF, #D7312A</p>	 <p>Was: \$37,553 BEST PRICE: \$32,553 21 CHEVY SILVERADO CUSTOM 4X4, 24K MILES, #R6998A</p>	 <p>Was: \$37,994 BEST PRICE: \$32,994 23 TOYOTA HIGHLANDER L 3RD ROW, #N047949A</p>	 <p>Was: \$38,555 BEST PRICE: \$33,555 23 TOYOTA 4RUNNER SR5 4.0L V6, NICE!! #N285631A</p>
 <p>Was: \$40,772 BEST PRICE: \$35,772 21 RAM 1500 BIG HORN 4X4 5.7L 8CYL, #R7193A</p>	 <p>Was: \$43,772 BEST PRICE: \$38,772 20 RAM 2500 TRADESMAN 4X4 6.4L V8, #N212626A</p>	 <p>Was: \$44,966 BEST PRICE: \$39,966 24 NISSAN Z PERFORMANCE ONLY 1,105 MILES #N366358A</p>	 <p>Was: \$48,774 BEST PRICE: \$43,774 23 LEXUS NX-350 F SPORT 12K, AWD, #R7188A</p>	 <p>Was: \$53,773 BEST PRICE: \$48,773 24 RAM 2500 BIG HORN 4X4 CUMMINS DIESEL, #N233202A</p>

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Historically Speaking

Meet Kenneth D. Nichols, the Father of Oak Ridge, Job Well Done, Part 2

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 subsequently 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 for the production of plutonium 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 activities. He was also responsible for internal security operations in the production facilities that helped keep the development of the atomic bomb secret.

In this twenty-second installment of several articles covering the life and accomplishments of Maj General Kenneth D. Nichols, we learn of his close working relationship, high regard, and friendship with Lt General Leslie R. Groves during and after the war.

When working with individual people, Nichols was at his best. He learned early in his career each person requires "special handling" (see 2nd article). Nichols perfected special handling with Groves beginning in Nicaragua (see 2nd article) and had an extremely close working relationship during and after the war.

During the Manhattan Project, they saw each other at least once a week, but operated in different orbits, each having separate roles, Groves as Commander of the Manhattan Project and Nichols as District Engineer of the Manhattan Engineer District. Groves was never part of the MED (see 8th article).

Nichols, as the MED's District Engineer, was never an "aide" or "personal aide" to General Groves before, during or after the war. (That would be on par with calling Dr. Oppenheimer a "lab assistant" to General Groves!) They shared a common mission, cut red tape to avoid delays and verbally communicated with each other whenever possible; they trusted each other.

Nichols recalled, "Working with Groves was not always easy. At times, I became extremely irritated with him. However, this never lasted very long because I came to realize that his leadership and distinctive characteristics would achieve our goal in the shortest possible time." Nichols described Groves as "difficult and demanding," "extremely capable," "abrasive and often very critical," and "a strong project leader." He also said Groves, "was at his best or worst, depending on one's point of view, in pinning down the cause of the trouble." And he "never used profanity or foul language, nor did he ever raise his voice in anger. And his personal ethics were beyond reproach." Nichols said his contacts with Groves "were generally pleasant."

Nichols and Groves differed on leadership style and on one occasion, Nichols responded to Groves' criticism by sharing, "After I had succeeded [Colonel James C.] Marshall, one particular incident irritated me, and as soon as we were alone, I told Groves that I felt he had been unnecessarily harsh in his comments to the indi-

vidual. I then told him that if he ever criticized me in public in that manner, I would immediately respond in such terms that he would have no recourse except to fire me. I added that I didn't mind his being critical when we were alone because I could take it. I also told him that at any time he didn't like my performance, he could have me reassigned overseas. Thereafter, both Groves and I endeavored to avoid any public confrontations,



Maj Gen Leslie R. Groves looks on as Col Kenneth D. Nichols gives his acceptance speech after receiving the Distinguished Service Medal from Sec. of War Patterson at the "E" Award Banquet, Knoxville, TN, September 29, 1945.

Photo by Ed Westcott.

(Courtesy of Emily and Don Hunnicutt)

and I must admit that he treated me with more tact and consideration than I ever expected."

A good example of deftly dealing with Groves is shared by Nichols, "I could predict what Groves' reaction would be under most circumstances. In cases when I knew he would disagree on a course of action I felt necessary; I would wait until just a few minutes before I had to catch a train or plane; then I would bring up the matter. I would tell him what I was doing or going to do and explain why. As he started to respond, I would say the if he wanted me to do it differently, or wanted to discuss it further, he would have to phone me because I had to leave. The procedure usually worked, since Groves seldom would phone me."

It should be noted that Nichols respected and admired Groves in many ways. He always provided a balanced description of him during interviews and when writing. Others redact, partially quote, and/or fabricate Nichols' comments about Groves, including a post-war lecture given by Major General (not Colonel) Nichols at The National War College on September 9, 1948. Nichols' lecture followed Groves' lecture to the same group. General Nichols avoided giving a personal opinion about General Groves on many occasions but agreed to do so following the lecture during the Q&A session. His full, unredacted remarks are included in his book (The Road to Trinity, A Personal Account of How America's Nuclear Policies Were Made, 1987, at page 108) and in numerous interviews follows:

"First, General Groves is the biggest S.O.B. I have ever worked for. He is most demanding. He is the most critical. He is always a driver, never a praiser. He is abrasive and sarcastic. He disregards all normal organizational channels. He is extremely intelligent. He has the guts to make timely, difficult decisions. He is the most egotistical man I know. He knows he is right and so sticks by his decision.

"He abounds with energy and expects everyone to work as hard or even harder than he does. Although he gave me great responsibility and adequate authority to carry out his mission-type orders, he constantly meddled with my

subordinates. However, to compensate for that, he had an extremely small staff, which meant that we were not subject to the usual staff-type interferences and heckling. He ruthlessly protected the overall project from other government agency interference, which made my task easier. He seldom accepted other agency cooperation and then only on his terms. During the war and since, I have had the opportunity to meet many of our most outstanding military leaders in the Army, Navy, and Air Force as well as many of our outstanding scientific, engineering, and industrial leaders. And in summary, if I had to do my part of the atomic bomb project over again and had the privilege of picking my boss I would pick General Groves."

General Nichols' answer to the young naval officer was not part of Nichols' prepared remarks. In other words, his answer was not drawn from written notes; it was off the cuff, articulate and balanced. If ever there was a time to give an unguarded, blunt remark about Groves, this was the opportune moment. But, as always, Nichols' remarks were measured and respectful. Had he not candidly shared them in his book and in interviews, the quote would be lost to history.

Groves was told of Nichols' remarks by his neighbor Gene Vidal of the Army Air Corps. Nichols directly told Gene Vidal (classmate of Groves), who in turn told Groves. Groves repeatedly asked, "Did Nichols say that?" with shock and astonishment as the story proceeded. But after hearing the punch line, Groves, "broke out into a big grin and beamed with pleasure."

Groves and Nichols communicated frequently after the war until Groves' death, with no evidence of Nichols changing his professional, courteous approach or manner with Groves. Nichols reviewed certain parts of Lt General Groves' book, Now It Can Be Told: The Story of the Manhattan Project. Nichols was interviewed multiple times after the war, many times after Groves died in 1970, through the 1980s and never deviated from transparent, balanced remarks concerning Groves.

When he retired from the Army on February 29, 1948, Groves wrote a heartfelt letter to Nichols stating, in part, "You brought to what was considered by many an impossible task a sound management, engineering and scientific background. Your vigilant and efficient direction of the Nationwide work under your charge helped to save tens of thousands of American lives and hundreds of millions of dollars. Of all the people who were engaged on the Manhattan Project you were by far the one who was the most important to me in achieving our goal. ... I experienced the deepest feeling of satisfaction when I learned that you were to succeed me as Chief of the Armed Forces Special Weapons Project and as a member of the Military Liaison Committee. This was not so much because of your magnificent performance in the Manhattan Project, but because you are far and away the best qualified officer in fact the only officer qualified to bear the responsibility of these offices."

Nichols said, "I most likely got along with Groves as well as I did because we shared the single, overriding goal of producing atomic weapons in time to help end the war."

Next up: Job Well Done, Part 3

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Acts 17



Melvin Howard

(Acts 17:1-9) Paul and Silas at Thessalonica: traveling about a hundred miles to the southwest, Paul and Silas came to Thessalonica, a significant city of some two hundred thousand people, with a Jewish synagogue. For three Saturdays, Paul went to the synagogue---not to observe the Sabbath as a holy day, but to preach the gospel of Christ to these Jewish audiences. Colossians 2:8-17 “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not

after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.”

He argued that the crucified, resurrected Jesus is the Messiah (v. 3). Some of Paul’s auditors “were persuaded.” The Greek word means to become convinced, to believe, even to obey (Jn. 3:36). Among the new Christians was a large crowd of “devout Greeks,” God-fearing folks, like Cornelius (10:2). There was also a considerable body of “chief women.” No one can estimate the value that godly women have had in the advancement of Christianity.

Characteristically, however, the Jews began to make trouble. They “were moved with jealousy” (13:45) because Paul and Silas were bankrupting the synagogue! Knowing they could not orchestrate sufficient opposition alone, the Jewish leaders rounded up a group of “vile fellows of the rabble,” a worthless class of persons who, for lack of any productive enterprise, hung around the marketplace waiting for something to happen. The rabble is contrasted with the well-born and educated, and was associated with the ill-bred, coarse class.

A mob formed and the city was worked into a boisterous frenzy. Under the impression that Paul and Silas were staying with a brother named Jason, the mob rushed the house (the verb hints of several waves of assault), searching for the brothers. They intended to bring them out to a citizens’ committee for trial. When they came up empty-handed, they grabbed Jason and certain brethren and dragged them to the town “rulers.” Paul and Silas were accused of turning the whole empire upside down (v.6). This shows how extensive the influence of the church had become. Jason and certain brethren were accused of being complicit with Paul and with being in opposition to Caesar. Jason was able to “post bond” and was released. The apostle later would write two letters to the saints in Thessalonica. The church there flourished and was itself an effective instrument for evangelism. “For from you has sounded forth the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith to God-ward is gone forth; so that we need not to speak anything” (1 Thes. 1:8).

(Acts 17:10-15) the noble Bereans: for their protection, the Thessalonian brothers sent Paul and Silas toward Berea in the dark of night, a journey of some thirty miles. As soon as possible, they visited the local synagogue to teach the gospel. Remarkable, in contrast to their previous reception, the people of Berea were “more noble” than those in Thessalonica in that they “received the word with readiness of mind” and examined the teaching to see whether it was true (v.11). (a) They had honest hearts. (b) They were diligent students. (c) They were reverent, respecting the Old Testament Scriptures. (d) They were persistent---daily students. (e) They were logical; they could examine facts and draw reasonable conclusions. Thus, many of them believed (16:34), both Jews and Greeks.

When the evil Jews of Thessalonica heard of the evangelism in Berea, they

came running to disturb the work. Some are never happy unless in a fight! (1 Thes. 2:15). The new converts wanted to protect Paul, so they sent him over to the sea, some twenty miles to the southeast. He was headed to Athens. Whether he caught a ship (three-day journey) or took the highway, he eventually reached Athens, three hundred miles to the south. At some point, Timothy had rejoined the mission expedition, and he, along with Silas, remained for a while at Berea. Some of the Berean Christians accompanied Paul all the way to Athens. What dedication! The apostle sent a message back with them, urging Silas and Timothy to come “with all speed” (v. 15).

(Acts 17:16-22) Paul in Athens: as the apostle surveyed the landscape of Athens, profusely punctuated with the images of false gods, his spirit (soul) was angered. The true God had been traded for dumb idols. The streets were cluttered with some thirty thousand sculptures of Greek “gods,” through the population was only about ten thousand, Paul taught Jews in the synagogue, and “devout” Gentiles elsewhere on a daily basis (v. 17). During his teaching, he was confronted by certain philosophers---Stoics (materialistic pantheists) and Epicureans (pagan deists who believe the gods were indifferent to the human plight; intellectual and physical pleasures were their highest goals). They all ridiculed Paul as a “babbling,” and when he spoke of Jesus and the resurrection, they interpreted these as “foreign gods.”

Paul was escorted to the Areopagus (the word could be used of a place or a body of legislators). Being intellectually curious, they wanted to know more of Paul’s “strange” ideas. Hence, the apostle “stood in the midst” of the legislative body and used this marvelous opportunity to address the elite of the pagan world.

(Acts 17:22-31) Paul’s speech: Paul’s speech on this occasion (surely abbreviated) has been classified as one of the most famous orations in human history (apart from those of Christ himself). It may be studied as follows: (a) There was a courteous introduction in the style of Athenian speakers---a brilliant opening maneuver. (b) He mentioned the religious scene he had observed in the city and commended them to the extent he could---“very religious” (a somewhat ambiguous term). The word preserved his integrity but allowed them to view it as a compliment. (c) He cited as example of their theology, the worship of “an unknown god,” mentioning an altar seen in the city. Their worship was sincere, but void of knowledge. (d) Paul introduced the true God who made the world (kosmos---the designed universe) and all things therein. These were neither eternal nor self-existing. (e) Paul explained that the Creator does not live in a humanly made temple, nor is he dependent upon humanity for his welfare. (f) He is the giver of all things, not the one who is needy. (g) The whole of humanity is derived from “one” (masculine)---contrary to the common theory that the Greeks were superior. (h) The true God is sovereign, determining the duration and expansion of nation (Psa. 22:28; Dan. 2:21). (i) He is readily available to those willing to search him out by examining the evidence. Our very existence depends upon him.

Paul then switched to a more negative approach. (a) The true deity must not be viewed in terms of gold, silver, or stone carvings. Idolatry is wrong (be it the adoration of a stone image or that of the “virgin Mary”). (b) God had not demanded full retribution for this great error. He had exercised much patience (14:16). He is not anxious that men perish (2 Peter 3:9). (c) He has, however, appointed a day of judgment. (d) At that time, the entire world will be judged. (e) The Judge will be the Jesus of whom the apostle had spoken in his earlier exchanges (v. 18; 2 Cor. 5:10). (f) The standard of judgment will be the righteousness of the true God (Rom. 2:5). (g) The pledge of the coming judgment is to be found in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead---the most documentable fact of ancient human history.

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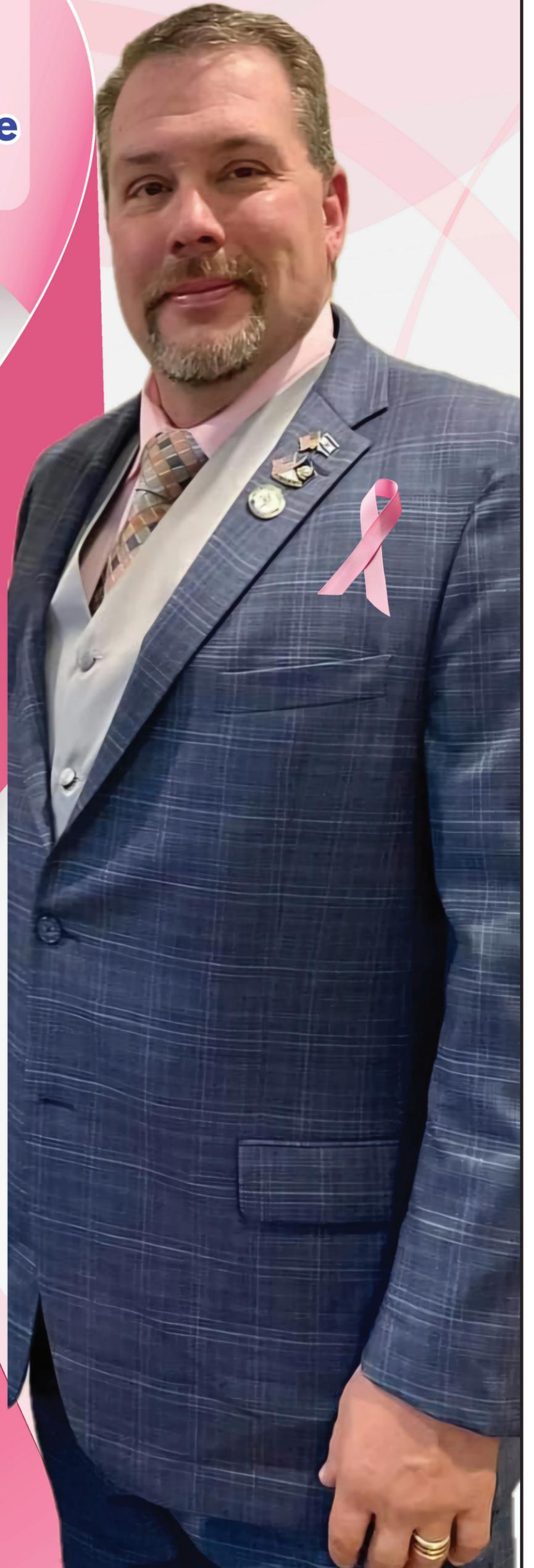
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