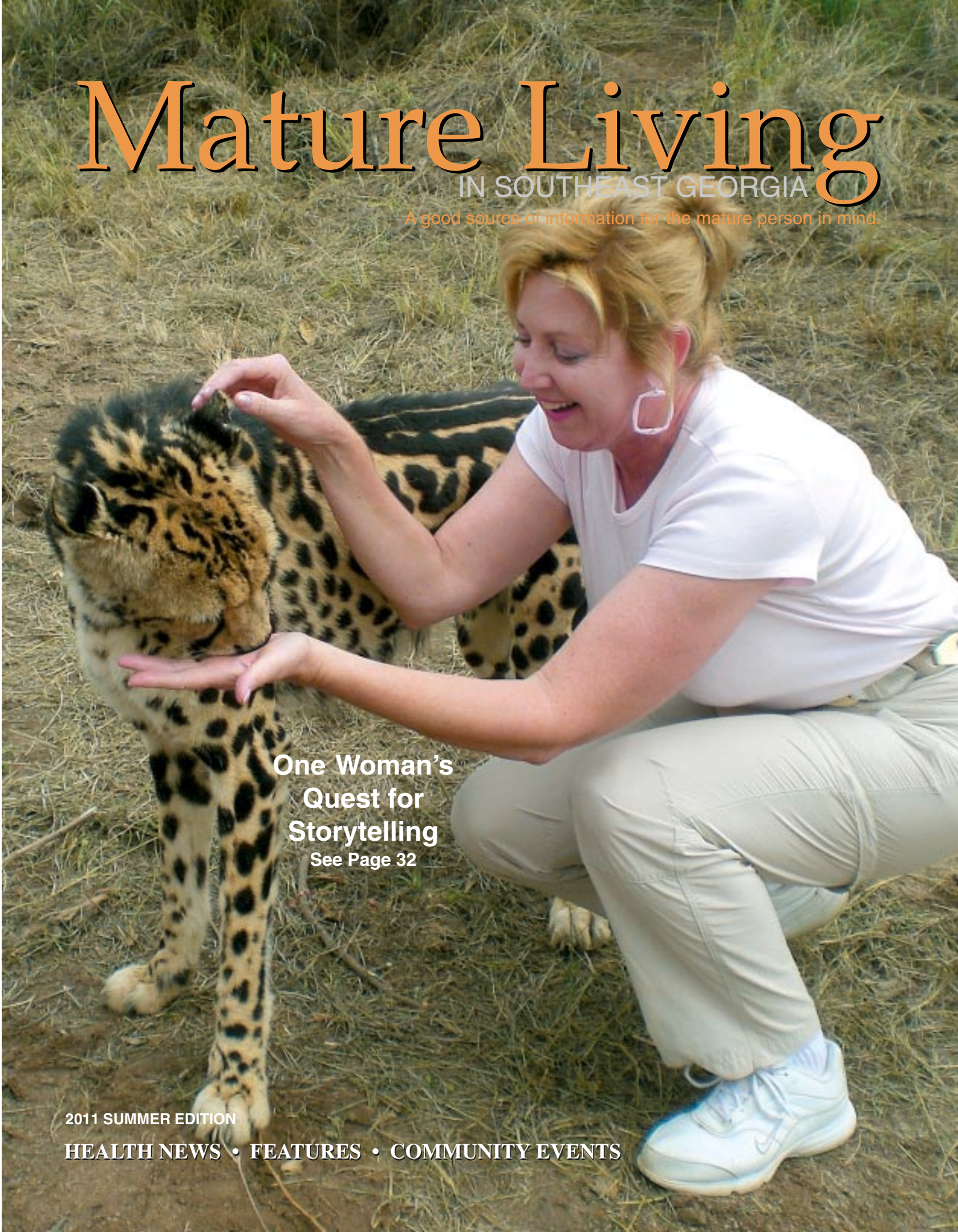


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WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE?

ON THE COVER

In this edition's cover story, Mary Ann Anderson will take you on a journey around the world in her experiences as a travel writer. Mary Ann's travel articles have been



featured in newspaper around the world including the Taiwan Daily News and Sydney (Australia) Morning Herald.

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FEATURES

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- Johnny Aycock on NASA - **Page 27**
- Lifetime of Memories - **Page 37**
- Vidalia Valley - **Page 51**

A note from the editor...

Are the gnats getting to you? It seems as if they have been around the entire summer this year. Take a break from outdoor activities (and the gnats) and find out what's inside this issue.

Once again we have some great features about your friends and neighbors. Did you know that one of our very own played a key role in the Saturn Rocket program, or you might want to know more about Vidalia Valley's streamlined bottling. There is also information on Social Security, medical and safety news, and upcoming community events.

So get out of the summer heat and enjoy Mature Living. Thanks again for your continued support.

-Jamie Gardner

Social Security Help for Those Nearing Retirement

Dear Savvy Senior,

Can you recommend some good resources that can help me decide when to start my Social Security retirement benefits? I'll be 62 early next year and want to carefully weigh all my option, but could use some help.

Nearing Retirement

Dear Nearing,

Figuring out the best age to start claiming your Social Security retirement benefits is an important financial decision. The difference between a good decision and a poor one could cost you tens of thousands of dollars over your retirement, so doing some homework and weighing your options now is a very smart move.



JIM MILLER

What to Consider

As you may already know, you can claim Social Security any time from age 62 to 70, but the longer you wait, the larger your monthly check. But there are actually many factors you need to take into account to help you make a good decision, including your current financial needs, your health and family longevity, whether you plan to work in retirement, whether you have

other retirement income sources, and if you're married, your spouse's situation.

To help you compare your options and make an informed decision, there are a number of resources and services available depending on how much assistance you need.

SSA Tools

A good place to start is at the Social Security website. Just go to socialsecurity.gov and click on the "Retirement" tab at the top of the page and access their "Plan for Retirement" tools where you can estimate your benefits at different ages

and get guidance based on your personal situation.

Or, if you would rather have face-to-face assistance, call 800-772-1213 and schedule an appointment to visit with a claims representative at your nearby Social Security office.

The Social Security Administration also offers a bevy of free publications (see ssa.gov/pubs) that you can have mailed directly to you. "Retirement Benefits," "When To Start Receiving Retirement Benefits" and "How Work Affects Your Benefits" are three popular publications for those nearing retirement.

Other Resources

If you need help in addition to what the government offers, some good resources include the "Social Security Claiming Guide" which is published by the Center for Retirement Research at Boston College. This easy-to-read 24-page guide sorts through all the options, spells out how much you can get, and answers frequently asked questions. Go to socialsecurityclaimingguide.info to read it online or to print a copy for free.

Another good publication is "When to Take Social Security Benefits: Questions to Consider" (see whentotakesocialsecurity.info). Offered by the National Academy of Social Insurance, a nonprofit research and educational group, this 16-page booklet uses a question-and-answer format to guide you through the key issues. To get a free hardcopy mailed to you, call 202-452-8097.

You can also get help online at websites like analyzenow.com, which offers a free tool called "Social Security Planner" that helps singles and couples calculate the best time to take their retirement benefits. And AARP's new Social Security Benefits Calculator (www.aarp.org/socialsecuritybenefits), which lets you estimate how much you'll receive in monthly and lifetime benefits, based on your salary and your age when you file. Or, for a \$40 annual fee, maximizemysocialsecurity.com provides a comprehensive new tool to help retirees, spouses and survivors make decisions to maximize their benefits.

If, however, you'd like more personalized help, there are financial advisors and investment advisor firms that for a fee can assist you by taking you through the specific claiming

strategies. One such firm is Social Security Solutions (socialsecurity-solutions.com, 866-762-7526), which offers three levels of service including their “Premium Plus” plan that runs multiple calculations and comparisons, recommends a best course of action in a detailed report, and gives you a one-on-one session with a Social Security specialist over the phone to discuss the report and ask questions. Fees for their services range between \$20 and \$125.

How to Prevent Falls

Dear Savvy Senior,

Can you write a column on fall prevention tips for elderly seniors? My 81-year-old father, who lives alone, has fallen several times over the past year. What can you tell us?

Concerned Daughter

Dear Concerned,

Falls are a big concern for millions of elderly Americans and their families. In the United States, roughly one-third of the 65-and-older population will suffer a fall this year, often with dire with consequences. But many falls can be prevented. Here are some steps you can take to help keep your dad up on his feet and reduce his risk of falling.

Check His Meds: Does your dad take any medicine or combination of medicines that make him dizzy, sleepy or lightheaded? If so, gather up all the drugs he takes – prescriptions and over-the-counter – and take them to his doctor or pharmacist for a drug review.

Schedule an Eye Exam: Poor vision can be another contributor to falls. If your dad

wears glasses, check to see if he’s wearing the correct prescription and beware of bifocals. Multifocal glasses can impair vision needed for detecting obstacles and judging depth.

Check His Balance: Balance disorders – which can be brought on by a variety of conditions like inner ear problems, allergies, a head injury or problems with blood circulation – are also a common cause of falls. If your dad is having some balance issues, make an appointment with his doctor to get it checked and treated.

Start Exercising: Improving balance through exercise is one of the best ways to prevent falls. Strength training, yoga, stretching, tai chi are all great for building better balance. Some simple exercises that he can do anytime are walking

heel-to-toe across the room, standing on one foot for 30 seconds or longer, or getting up from a chair and sitting back down 10 to 20 times. For more balance exercise tips, call the National Institute on Aging at 800-222-2225 and order their free exercise DVD and free exercise book or you can see it online at go4life.niapublications.org.

Modify His Home: Because about half of all falls happen around the home, some simple modifications can go a long way in making your dad’s living area safer. Start by picking up items on the floor that

could cause him to trip like newspapers, books, shoes, cloths, electrical or phone cords. If he has throw rugs, remove them or use double-sided tape to secure them. In the bathroom put a non-slip rubber mat or self-stick strips on the floor of the tub or shower, and have a carpenter install grab bars inside the tub and next to the toilet. Also, make sure the lighting throughout the house is good, purchase some inexpensive plug-in nightlights for the bathrooms and hall-

ways, and if he has stairs, consider putting hand rails on both sides. And in the kitchen, organize his cabinets so the things he uses most often are within easy reach without using a step stool. For more tips, call the Eldercare Locator at 800-677-1116 and order a free copy of their “Preventing Falls at Home” brochure.

Other Pitfalls: Believe it or not, the improper use of canes and walkers sends around 47,000 seniors to the emergency room each year. If your dad uses a cane or walker, be sure it’s adequately adjusted to his height and that he’s using it properly. A physical therapist can help with this, or see the Mayo Clinic slide show on how to choose and use a cane (mayoclinic.com/health/canes/HA00064) and a walker (mayoclinic.com/health/walker/HA00060). Another possible hazard is pets. If your dad has a dog or cat, he needs to be aware that – because they can get under foot – pets cause a lot of falls. Shoes are another issue to be aware of. Rubber-soled, low-heeled shoes are the best slip/trip proof shoes for seniors.

Savvy Tip: Consider getting your dad a home monitoring system which is a small pendant-style “SOS button” that he wears that would allow him to call for help if he fell. Available through companies like lifelinesys.com and lifealert.com these systems

“Falls are a big concern for millions of elderly Americans and their families. In the United States, roughly one-third of the 65-and-older population will suffer a fall this year, often with dire consequences.”

cost around \$1 per day.

Send your senior questions to: Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070, or visit SavvySenior.org. Jim Miller is a contributor to the NBC Today show and author of “The Savvy Senior” book.

Family & Community

Through trials, Kim Tatum leads by giving

By David Tootle

There is nothing like the love of a close family. Kim Tatum of Reidsville knew this type of love growing up, and she has passed it down to her own two children. Her family taught her that involvement in the community is important, and this type of involvement has brought great fulfillment to her adult life. In fact, many people in Tattnall County know Kim only because of her civic involvement. If they knew about her family and the circumstances that shaped her, they would only appreciate her more.

Growing Up

Kim was the older of two daughters born to Kenneth and Kay Youngblood. Kenneth served with the Georgia State Patrol and Tattnall County Sheriff's Department, while Kay was employed with the Department of Corrections at Georgia State Prison. Kim and her sister Krystal Trull were raised near the prison.

"I lived there until I was about twelve," Kim recalled, "before we built a house on the outskirts of Reidsville. My mom and dad loved us, and we did fun things as a family. I'm sure that's where many of my values come from."

"Daddy worked a lot on weekends," she continued. "When he did get a weekend off, the stuff we did was simple, like getting in the back of a pickup with other families and going to the river. We'd get on the river bank or a sandbar, and Daddy would take our grill and cook chicken - that was his specialty. We didn't get to swim much in the river; they were afraid we'd drown. So we just waded up to our ankles. We went to the beach for most of our family vacations."

By the time the family moved closer to Reidsville around

1975, the girls were already attending school at Pinewood Christian Academy in Bellville. Kim remembers her "school family" was also tight-knit and compassionate.

"We were a small school with small classes, and we were all real close," she explained. "We did things together like playing basketball. I remember good times on bus trips going to games, camps, and other things."

The Youngbloods lived just outside of Reidsville until Kim was a senior in high school.

"Daddy decided for some strange reason that he wanted to move into town," Kim remembered. "We never knew what Daddy was going to do; he was always full of surprises. With him, it was never a dull moment. When you left in the morning, you didn't even know what kind of car was going to be there



THE TATUM FAMILY - (L TO R): KAMERON, KIM, KEN, AND KAY-LYN.

when you got home. I think that 'moving to town' idea had something to do with his love for television. We couldn't get cable TV a mile out of town then, so they built a house in town."

"Daddy and Mama have always been there for us," Kim

Continued on page 8

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added. "They provided well for us over the years."

Marriage and Children

Three years after her high school graduation, Kim went to a dance at the Reidsville Armory with her friend Tona Hightower. It was there that she met Ken Tatum.

"I guess Tona knew Ken," Kim told us, "and during the night she formally introduced us. We talked until it was time to go home, and Tona was supposed to spend the night with me. So, we all went back to my parents' house, Ken stayed for a while, and we all watched TV. Twenty-seven years and two children later, here we are!"

Kim and Ken were married on August 11, 1984, at Pineview Baptist Church near Tison, a church his family had helped establish. Four years later, they welcomed a daughter, Kay-Lyn. After four more years, their son Kameron was born. Today, Kay-Lyn is 23, and Kameron is 19.

"We've really enjoyed them and have had fun watching them grow up," Kim said. "They're real close, and they never really fought much."

The two Tatum children have another "brother" in first-cousin Tyler Trull, Krystal's son, who is 21.



WITH DADDY - (L TO R): KIM YOUNGBLOOD TATUM, KENNETH YOUNGBLOOD, AND KRystal YOUNGBLOOD TRULL.

"It's like Tyler's mine, too," Kim said. "I say I have three children, and so does Krystal."

For the Youngbloods, a big part of life growing up was involvement in athletics.

"Our TV stayed on sports, and we went to ball games," Kim remembered. "Even during that lull between our high school years and when our children started playing, Friday would come

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and Daddy would say, 'I'm going to the ball game; anybody going with me?' It didn't matter if we knew who was playing or not, we went to the football and basketball games. That's just what we did, and we still do."

For the first part of that "lull," Kim had her two children and stayed at home tending to them. When Kameron was a year old, she felt the need to return to the work force. Ken, who works at the dairy at Rogers State Prison and is also a licensed funeral director, heard about an opening in the prison farm's office.

"Daddy had retired," Kim recalled, "and he told me that if I wanted to go back to work, he would babysit Kameron. I told him Kameron was too young, but he said, 'Oh, we'll be fine; I really think you need to go back to work.' So I said,

'OK.' I still remember leaving Kameron with Daddy that first day, unsure as to how it would work."

Kim stayed at Rogers for seven and a half years. When her children became involved with sports at Pinewood, she decided she needed more flexibility.

"I realized that this was the beginning of their involvement, and I just wanted to be free to go where they would be. The Lord put me in the right place."

Kim had worked with former Tattnall County Tax Commissioner Don Cobb when she was younger. When Cobb was contemplating retirement, he called to see if she wanted to work part-time until he left the office. At approximately the same time, Elliott Lanier at Ace Hardware in Reidsville was looking for a

part-time bookkeeper. Tatum ended up working for both, joining Ace full-time after Cobb retired.

"Elliott and Logan (his son) are family-oriented, and they realize the importance of school events," Kim said. "We've had the understanding that my children come first, and it has worked. They've been great."

Fighting Cancer

Kim became acquainted with Gay Sollosi of Glennville when Gay's husband Tom taught her children. When Kay-Lyn and Kameron were nearing graduation, Gay was diagnosed with cancer and lost her battle. The experience caused Kim to pay more attention to her own health.

"I've told Mr. Sollosi that his wife and the Lord are the reasons I'm here. I was a few months behind on getting my

mammogram, and watching her made me think, 'I've got to get that done.' So I went to Claxton to get it a few months late. I think the Lord had his hand in that, too, because the lump was so small when they found it. Had I gone when I was scheduled, it may not have shown up yet. Then, by the time I would have gone back, it might have been too far gone."

A friend performed the mammogram and noticed almost immediately that there was a problem.

"She said, 'Let's do the sonogram and ultrasound; I know they're going to order one.'" Kim said. "So we did."

These images were sent to a pathologist, and Tatum got word the next day that she needed to see a surgeon. Since Kay-Lyn had an appointment

Continued on page 11

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Continued from page 9
in Savannah that week, Kim took her films and got in to see a specialist.

“He said, ‘I can’t tell you if it’s cancer or not, but I can tell you that, whatever it is, I think we’re going to be able to deal with it.’ I felt a little bit better, and he scheduled a biopsy. Once they did that, he called me to say that it was cancer. I had gone through that whole process in about two weeks.”

Kay-Lyn was present for the call, so she and Kim talked and cried. Next, Kim called her husband, then they visited his parents just down the road.

tra sets of ears, but I never knew I was taking chemo except that my hair fell out.”

“At that point,” Kim said, “they thought I would have the lump removed and then radiation. We scheduled the surgery and were all feeling better.”

Kim’s surgery revealed that the cancer had not spread to her lymph nodes, but it was not completely confined to the milk duct where it had started.

“The type of cancer was what they call a ‘triple negative,’ which means they don’t know why your body decides to produce it. They recommended that I do the chemo(therapy), and the radi-

ation sets of ears, but I never knew I was taking chemo except that my hair fell out.”

Kim wants others to know that an individual can continue to live while undergoing chemotherapy. She insists on sharing pictures of family activities when she was bald, not leaving a “gap” in the family’s memories.

“I wore a hat sometimes, but I tried not to cover it up too much in public,” she told us. “I would even talk to children about it, try to educate them. I think people need to be made aware, because many are uncomfortable with chemo. My pictures show that you can still lead a normal life, even go on vacation.”

Three years later, Tatum says she has been blessed with the results of her treatment.

“I just take one day at a time; that’s all any of us can do. Once you have cancer, you’re not so much scared as you are more aware. If it comes back, you just tackle it again. Just don’t give up.”

Kim says that the five-year cancer-free mark is the one she’s trying to reach. She has a mammogram every six months on the breast where the cancer was and once a year on the other. She has blood work every three months and sees her surgeon every six months.

“He actually said we could push it back some now, but I just feel more comfortable seeing him. That way, if some-

thing comes up, we can handle it before it gets too far.

CARES Is Born

Tatum had been working with Tattnall County’s Relay for Life for ten years and noticed a need for a community-based organization that could offer more immediate, direct help to cancer patients. While in Statesboro for a radiation treatment, she saw a Tattnall transit van pull up with an elderly man. It made her think once again of needy people in Tattnall County who might be struggling with the pain and expense of cancer treatments. Not fully recovered herself, she decided the time had come to start a local organization.

“On the way home, I called two of my friends, Brandon Johnson and Tammy Durrence at South Georgia Bank, and told them we were getting started with CARES (Cancer Association Relief Effort and Support). I think it’s worked because the citizens of Tattnall County know that the money stays right here to help people. We haven’t had to tell anybody, ‘No,’ because the money’s always there. If we give somebody a check for five hundred dollars, it seems like the next week we get five hundred more from somebody, or even a thousand. What we’ve spent always comes back to us.”

In its first three years, Tattnall County CARES has assisted over 75 people financially. To receive help, patients simply need to apply and submit a note from their doctor that says they are currently undergoing treatment.

“We take meals during the holidays, and we buy Christmas toys when there’s a need. Someone may have cancer, and they’re raising their grandchildren. Sometimes we team up



CARES BOOTH - KIM TATUM EDUCATES PATRONS AT THE TATTNALL COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL HEALTH FAIR ABOUT THE HELP AVAILABLE FROM HER ORGANIZATION.

After that came the ride into town to tell Kenneth and Kay.

“The hardest thing I ever had to do in my life was to go in that door,” she recalled.

“My mama was bad, but to tell my daddy that I had breast cancer, it was rough. The doctor wanted to see me the next day, and he said to bring an extra set of ears. So I took Ken, my daddy, my mama, and Ken’s mama. We had a bunch of ex-

tion to follow that, just in case it had gone somewhere else. I said, ‘Fine. If my hair falls out, OK. If it never grows back, fine.’”

“My daddy was so worried about the chemo. I guess it’s just a scary thing, when you see people who don’t have hair. For me, it really wasn’t bad. I know many people have trouble with it, but I was never sick. I gained weight from the

with government agencies or churches.”

Those who need help from CARES sometimes contact Johnson or Durrence, who are the vice president and treasurer, respectively. But many still call Tatum directly, and this has led to several counseling opportunities.

“Sometimes people contact me,” Kim said, “and I tell them the procedure. For instance, there was a lady who was diagnosed with breast cancer a couple weeks ago. Her family called to ask if I would talk to her and to them because they have no idea what to expect. Heck, I didn’t either! A doctor might say, ‘You’ve got breast cancer; do you have any questions?’ but at that point you may not even know what your questions are yet. So I sat down with this family and started from Day One. I told them what would happen all the way through, even stuff the doctor probably wouldn’t think to tell them. I think it’s therapeutic for me to talk about it.”

Tattnall CARES accepts donations at P.O. Box 22356, Reidsville, GA, 30453, and many community organizations have raised funds for them through projects like cookouts and beauty pageants. Classes have collected change and sent it in (sometimes hundreds of dollars), the annual “Tattnall Productions” stage show donates annually, and individuals have listed it as a beneficiary in their wills.

“We try to keep the name out there,” Kim said, “and people surprise you with donations from their group’s activities. Every little bit helps. The folks at Ace are big supporters, and they’ve also helped me as I’ve been active in the community.”

The organization does have its own fundraisers. In addition to selling CARES T-shirts and yard signs, they recently held a bass tournament which they hope will become an annual event. They do “bucket drives” in the spring and fall; and, as a public service, they participate in the annual Health Fair at Tattnall County High School.

Citizen Of The Year

All of this community service was bound to be recognized. Tatum had been working on projects with the Greater Tattnall Chamber of Commerce for several months when members informed her that she had been chosen as Reidsville’s nominee for Tattnall County Citizen of the Year for 2010.

“I told them, ‘No, I do not want to be on this. I don’t like stuff like that. Let me get in the background, wash dishes or something, and y’all go out there and do things like this.’”

But her friends insisted that she remain on the ballot, and the awards banquet was set for March of that year.

“They introduced everybody who had been nominated,” Tatum recalled. “When they started reading the presentation, of course I knew it was me. Undoubtedly, my family already knew, because they were

all there, mine and Ken’s.”

Since receiving the award, Kim has become president of the Chamber, which tries to draw business into Tattnall County and promote existing business.

“We try to do everything through email or telephone if we can,” she told us, “because everybody’s so busy. We meet bi-monthly or quarterly, depending on what’s going on. Anytime a member has something going on, we can shoot an email to all our contacts, about 1400 people in several counties. Our executive director is David Avery; he tells me where to be and when to be there, and I’m so thankful.”

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One place Tatum was expected to appear was the Chamber's "Business After Hours" event in May of 2010 at the Reidsville Concerted Services office. Also in attendance was State Senator Jack Hill.

"It's not uncommon for Mr.

tion about me! Everybody was clapping, like a standing ovation, and I was so embarrassed! He gave me a copy; I'm so proud of it."

Saying Goodbye

Little did Kim and her family know that her father would only be around for a couple of

over again, it would be the same."

In addition to Pineview Pastor Gregg Ussry and Pinewood's Founding Headmaster Tab Smith, several speakers eulogized Kenneth, including his eldest daughter.

"Believe it or not, I didn't

day about my daddy crying when he found out about me having cancer, and someone said, 'I can't imagine your daddy crying.' I told her, 'My daddy cried all the time, he was just a big teddy bear.' He loved us, loved his grandchildren, and loved people. And he was always doing crazy stuff; Mama would call and say, 'You ain't ever gonna believe what he's done!' We had a fun life together."

The fun ended, though, when it was time for Daddy to go to work.

"He would go down the hall as my daddy, and then he put that uniform on. When he came back, he was still my daddy, but he was first and foremost a peace officer. That was his job, and he did his job well."

"He never spanked us," she continued, "not that we didn't need it. But we respected him. I don't think it was fear; he never gave us reason to be scared of him."

As a matter of fact, Kim says that her father would often call her on the telephone just to say "good night."

"People say they envied us because we were that close. He might call in the morning and say, 'It's a little bit chilly; you dress those babies warm and be sure they've got their undershirts on.' Those seemed like little things then, but you don't realize how big they were."

Instead of celebrating Kenneth and Kay's 50th anniversary in June, the family marked the one year anniversary of his passing. But Kim's mother is not alone these days. Much as the couple did with Kameron, Kay watches out for her niece Brooke Hinson's children. Spencer, the oldest, is named for Brooke's father, who was



DONATION - KIM TATUM PRESENTS A CHECK TO HER ONCOLOGIST, DR. MARK TAYLOR, AT THE LEWIS CANCER AND RESEARCH PAVILION IN SAVANNAH. THE MONEY WAS RAISED AT A PINWOOD FUND RAISING EVENT FOR TATTNALL COUNTY CARES.

Jack to come," Kim explained. "He's even hosted them before. I gave anybody an opportunity to speak who wanted to make an announcement, and he said he wanted to say something. He asked me to come stand up there beside him and started reading this Senate proclama-

months to enjoy his daughter's awards. Kenneth Youngblood died suddenly on June 22, 2010, leaving a big void in their lives where a large, loving man had once been.

"I told them at the hospital that horrible day, 'I have no regrets. If I had to live it all

even shed a tear," she told us. "I guess I psyched myself up for it. I couldn't not do it. Mr. Smith spoke, talking about his young trooper days, things that happened at Pinewood, and the love he had for my mama. We had a good funeral."

"I said something the other

Kenneth's brother. The younger daughter, Kenzie Kay, is named for Kenneth and Kay.

"They keep us going some days," Kim said of the children.

Just as it helps to talk about her cancer, Kim says it is good to discuss the loss of her father.

"You may cry, but it helps," she explained. "Tears are a part of life. There's a balance; we're not happy all the time."

As she reflects on the Citizen of the Year award, she can still see her father's face and hear his voice.

"I am so thankful for it. It was a great honor for me and one of the happiest nights of my daddy's life. I'm so happy he was there to share it."

Pointing to the award on her office wall, she added, "That's why it's hanging there, because he wanted it there."

Teach Your Children Well

Kay-Lyn Tatum once told her mother she was surprised by a friend's recent comment. This friend had confided to Kay-Lyn that her parents had told her something was not possible for her.

"My children will tell you, 'My mama has never said that I can't do something,'" Kim said. "You don't sit back and say you can't; you attempt it. If it doesn't work out, you may have to take a different route. You can do it, you just have to be a strong person."

Ken and Kim have also tried to teach their children independence.

"If they said, 'Mama, ask them,' I would say, 'No; you ask them; you've got a mouth, and you can talk.' So, my children have always looked you in the eye, shook your hand, and talked to you. I've tried to instill in them to be themselves and not to let people tell them that they're not worth anything."

The Tatum children have also learned to become involved with civic activities.

"I believe it's our duty," Kim told us. "If we don't care about our community, people moving in certainly aren't. I've tried to help them realize the importance of being involved. I'm proud right now that they're both still here. As long as they are, I think they ought to take a stand in the community, and they are."

Kim Youngblood Tatum is known as a giving member of the Tattall County community. The compassionate family heritage she has shared with her children, her friends, and even with strangers has endeared her to many.

"People say that I'm always doing stuff for others," she con-



CARES FISHING TOURNAMENT - KIM TATUM PRESENTS THE PRIZE FOR "BIGGEST FISH, 7 AND YOUNGER" TO SPENCER HINSON.

cluded. "I try to put other people first. If I hear that somebody has a need, it drives me crazy if I can't help them somehow." ¶

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Advances in the Treatment of Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD)



**By Anthony J. Avino, MD,
FACS**

Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) is a condition that results from fatty deposits (plaque) that build up and clog or narrow the arteries in the

arms, legs, brain, kidneys, and other organs. Also known as atherosclerosis ("hardening of the arteries"), the buildup of plaque narrows or completely blocks the supply of blood and oxygen to muscles and organs.

PAD is the leading cause of disability among people 50 years of age and older and in those with diabetes, and it affects about ten million Americans. Unfortunately, only about one in four are accurately diagnosed and treated. Those at highest risk are people with a history of past or present smoking, diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or a

personal history of heart disease or stroke. People with PAD have four to five times more risk for heart attack or stroke, and symptoms can become severely disabling or progress to nonhealing ulcers, gangrene, and amputation in severe cases.

Do I Have PAD?

The arteries most commonly affected by PAD are those to the legs. Warning signs that blood may be restricted to the arteries in the legs include aching, heaviness, and pain with walking. Symptoms are usually in the calf muscles during walking and

are relieved by standing or sitting. The pain is worse with rapid walking or walking up hills or stairs because this requires greater oxygen demands than blocked arteries can supply. Leg cramps while sitting, standing, or in bed are rarely caused by PAD and are more related to muscle spasms. As PAD progresses, symptoms may include pain or numbness in the feet or toes during rest or nonhealing wounds. Again, the calf pain associated with PAD occurs only with prolonged walking and not during

Continued on page 17

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PRO-AM (9:00 am)
PRO-AM Awards (6:30 pm)

THURSDAY, AUGUST 25

Practice Round (8:00 am)
PRO-AM (9:00 am)
PRO-AM Awards (6:30 pm)

FRIDAY, AUGUST 26

TOURNAMENT PLAY (8:00 am)

SATURDAY, AUGUST 27

TOURNAMENT PLAY (8:00 am)
Vidalia Championship
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TOURNAMENT PLAY (8:00 am)
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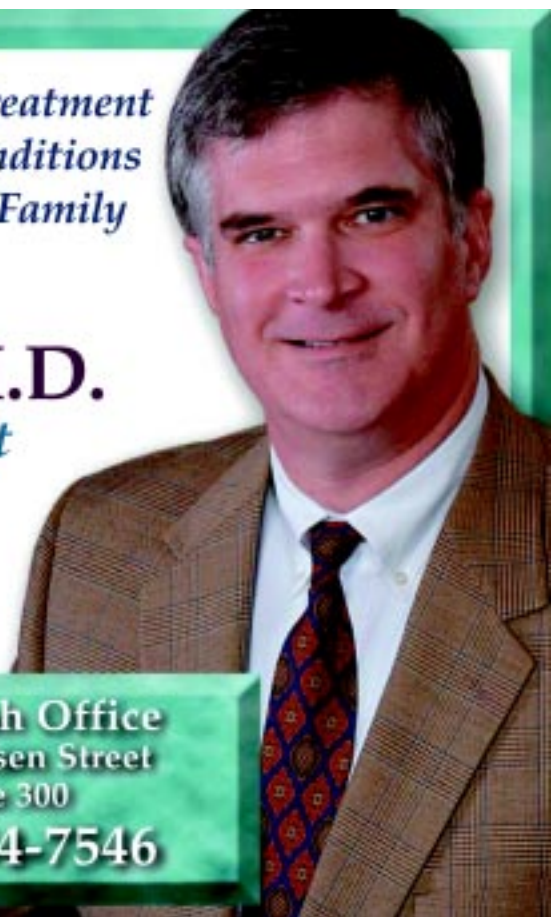
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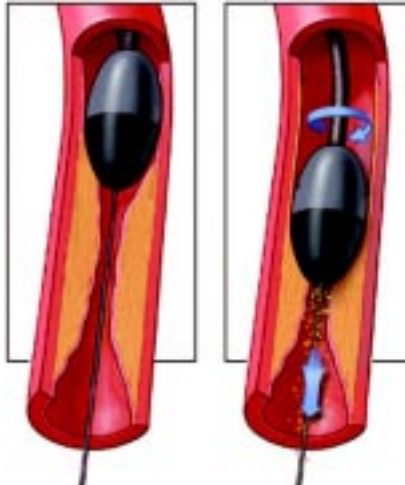
Continued from page 15

sitting, lying, or standing.

PAD is easily diagnosed by a trained physician. If caught early, it can often be managed with lifestyle changes and medications. Conservative measures include quitting smoking, dietary changes, an exercise program, and tight control of diabetes, blood pressure, and cholesterol. Most patients should take aspirin and a statin (cholesterol-lowering medication), both of which have been proven to lower the risk of stroke, heart attack, and death.

Angioplasty and Stents

When medication and lifestyle changes are not enough, minimally-invasive or open surgical procedures may be required to increase blood supply. Fortunately, advances in technology have allowed vascular surgeons to treat most patients without surgery.



IN THESE DRAWINGS, AN ARTERY NARROWED BY PLAQUE (LEFT) IS REOPENED USING THE NEW ATHERECTOMY DEVICE.

In recent years, technological advances have revolutionized the treatment of PAD and offer further treatment alternatives to surgery. Angioplasty involves threading a small tube with a balloon attached through the skin and into the artery in the groin. The balloon is then guided across the blocked artery and inflated to open the blocked artery. In some cases, a metal stent (a wire mesh tube) may be left in place to keep the artery expanded. Stent technology has improved significantly in terms of the low profile of the delivery system and the increased strength and improved metal design. Some stents are now covered with a thin wrapping of material attached to the metal stent to prevent the plaque from reforming inside the artery. These procedures do not require surgical incisions and

Continued on page 19

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More than just Man's Best Friend

Many people think of therapy dogs as guide dogs leading the blind, or dogs sitting with seniors at an assisted living facility.



While therapy dogs are responsible for these jobs, they do so much more -- including acting as a trusted companion for someone diagnosed with cancer.

Although many therapy dogs are specially trained in their roles, just about any well-mannered dog can serve in a therapeutic capacity. People may be surprised at all the many assistance roles dogs can play.

* **Seizure alert:** Some dogs are trained to alert epileptics and those with seizure disorders to an upcoming episode, although this method of detection is not always foolproof. In general, seizure dogs provide com-

panionship and security to a person during and after an episode.

* **Cancer therapy:** Getting diagnosed with cancer can be a stressful event. Going through chemotherapy and radiation can take its toll on the body. Cancer patients often need all of the love and affection they can get or sometimes just a quiet companion. In a program like Pets for Pals, therapy dogs sit with cancer patients, often sensing what ill people need. Dogs have the innate ability to love unconditionally. Having a dog around gives patients a different topic of conversation other than their health and treatment. Petting a dog has been known to lower blood pressure and reduce stress as well.

* **Helping hands:** Individuals who are handicapped may rely on dogs to do tasks around the house, from turning on lights to grabbing remote controls. Some dogs help companions move around a space by offering stability and a handhold.

* **Security:** Dogs have long been used as security guards. But even if a dog isn't a trained guard, he or she can alert if something is amiss in the house or if someone is at the door or outside of the home. Individuals who live alone can benefit from the companionship and level of security that dogs provide.

Many therapy and service dogs start their lives as stray dogs or shelter dogs. Some training facilities actually seek out calm, well-mannered shelter dogs and give them a new lease on life as a person's helper or companion.

Continued from page 17

are performed in an outpatient setting. Patients are typically given a sedative during the procedure and are able to walk after the procedure and to resume normal activities within two days.

Stenting does have limitations in certain arteries where there is excessive motion like across the groin or knee, both frequent sites of plaque formation. Even the latest generation of stents is prone to recurrent plaque formation over time, and these vessels may require reintervention.

Latest Technology

Atherectomy is the process of cutting away the atheroma (the plaque that forms on the inside and within the wall of an artery). The latest devices utilize orbital technology in

which a diamond-coated "crown" safely rotates at hundreds of revolutions per second within the blockage. The device slowly sands away cholesterol and hard plaque into microscopic-sized particles that are washed away by flowing blood. The hard plaque is removed while preserving the normal artery wall, and this changes the ability of the blood vessel to enlarge or dilate (improved compliance) back to normal size. Similar to stenting, a typical procedure takes from one to two hours in an outpatient setting, and patients are up and walking within a few hours.

Advanced Disease

Patients with the most advanced disease may require open surgical bypass procedures. These involve the use

of an extra vein, taken from another part of the leg, or an artificial graft which is sewn into the normal artery above or below the area of blockage to go around or bypass the blocked segment. This type of surgery typically has very good long term results but does require hospitalization and a longer recovery.

Although many blockages require treatment, millions of patients have blocked arteries that do not cause a significant risk to their life or limb, and many do not require any intervention at all. A vascular surgeon can determine if blockages are best treated with medicine and lifestyle changes alone, or if one should undergo minimally-invasive interventions or surgical bypass. These decisions are complex and de-

pend upon the severity of the symptoms, the extent and location of disease, the patient's age, and other medical conditions.

Savannah Vascular Institute will be conducting screenings for PAD on Tuesday, September 13 and Tuesday, September 27 at the Oglethorpe Mall. They will be located in the Macy's court from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. each day.

Dr. Avino is a board-certified vascular surgeon who specializes in minimally-invasive vascular procedures at Savannah Vascular Institute. He is accepting new patients at the Vidalia office (1811 Edwina Drive) as well as the Savannah office (4750 Waters Avenue) and can be reached at (912) 721-8364.

A WWII Veteran's exemplary life

Sixty-seven years have passed since 94-year-old Victor Isaac Higgs (shown in the photo to the right after he was commissioned in 1944) left the United States of America to go overseas to fight in World War II. He was drafted during the peak of World War II. Then twenty-seven-year-old Victor was living in Baxley with his wife and young son. Allowed to choose between the Army and the Navy, he opted for the Army. He first went to Fort Mac in Atlanta, received his physical, and was inducted into the Army.

"I was among thirty men who went there because of the draft," Victor said, "and I was one of three they kept. The rest of the men were sent home."

After his induction he went to Texas for seventeen weeks of basic training, which consisted of intense hand-to-hand combat training at Fort Waldis in Mineral Wells, Texas.

He was allowed to go home for ten days after combat training was finished. In June of 1944 Victor said goodbye to his wife, son, and family. He then left to go overseas to fight in the war. He served in the 3rd Armored Spearhead Division in the Army. First, Higgs was sent to France, where he earned

the rank of Corporal. A member of the machine gun squad, he was a rapid-fire machinegun operator. The job of the spearhead division was to hold back the enemy if the infantry couldn't. Stationed wherever the fighting was the most intense on the European front, his division had to move around frequently.

Higgs fought in France, Belgium, and Germany. One time he saw a fellow soldier pick up a machine gun with his bare hands and fire it. The soldier quickly realized his hands were badly burned.

"Normally," Higgs stated, "the machine guns sat on a tripod on the ground when in use. A machine gun will continue to fire rapidly as long as the trigger is held and the gun has ammunition."

The Second World War involved more nations and soldiers than any other war before or since. The technology was grander and more deadly. The Axis Powers comprised Germany, Japan, and Italy. The USA, France, the USSR, China, Britain, and its Commonwealth were the Allied powers. The epic World War II battles on land, in the air and at sea were fought with voracity on two fronts.

Ninety-one divisions were



mobilized during World War II, which included 68 infantry divisions, one mountain division, 16 armored divisions, five airborne divisions, and two cavalry divisions. The 3rd infantry division had the most casualties with a total of 25,977. The 3rd Infantry Division was involved in the Mediterranean and European Theaters. Casualties are defined as killed in action, wounded in action, captured and interned and missing in action. (Source: Army Battle Casualties and Non Battle Deaths in World War II,

lot of casualties.”

Major General Maurice Rose commanded the Third Armored Division and led it in combat from Aug. 7, 1944, to his death on March 30, 1945. Rose was the only major general to be killed in combat in Europe in WWII. He led the 3rd AD in combat during five campaigns in Europe in WWII. Major General Rose was famous as one of few commanding generals to frequent the front lines during combat.

When they were not fighting and when he had spare time, Corporal Hipps spent a lot of time reading a small New Testament. He read that little Bible through three times. He also attended church while he was overseas. He went to a Catholic church with his buddy as well as to a Protestant church.

Victor passed up a chance to avoid actual combat. He was offered a chance to take a pastry class and work as a cook in the mess halls. His self-respect would not allow him to do so. He felt his place was in battle.

In that pre-computer age, everyone had to depend on the post office to keep in touch with their loved ones. Victor wrote letters to his wife and family. When he wrote letters, he would



VICTOR HIPPS WITH HIS SON, EDWARD HIPPS

Final Report, December 1, 1941 - December 31, 1946.) The casualties from WWII were astronomical. The war affected everyone and most families had at least one family member serving overseas.

Corporal Hipps said, “I saw a lot of combat in the war and a



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miss his family, the tastiest mashed potatoes that we had eaten in a while. The soldiers loved them and kept going back for more until they were all devoured.”

At the end of the war, Victor was hospitalized for 4-6 weeks in England for battle fatigue or shell shock, another name for his condition. He was not injured, but was completely exhausted.

Following the war’s end, Corporal Hipps stayed another year overseas working with a construction company in Mourmelan, France. He helped to rebuild roads all throughout that country. Interestingly enough, he also worked as a guard over the rock crushers in a German prison. When his year was finished, they offered him more money if he would stay longer, but he refused the offer. He was too eager to return home and be with his fam-

ily again.

Victor came home for good and was discharged from the Army in 1946 at Camp Gordon, Augusta. He received several medals for heroic service to his country. Through the GI Bill he then went to school, specializing in farming practices and improvements. He farmed, operated heavy equipment for the county, helped build roads and also worked as a carpenter.

“My services and experiences from WWII taught me to make the best of everything, to live life right and treat people right,” Hipps said.

Victor’s son Edward Hipps said, “My father has always tried to model this. He has worked hard, too. This philosophy which his father taught him he has passed down to us, his children.”

Victor was married to Ethel

Reeves Hippy, who died of cancer in 1982. Ethel worked as a secretary for many years at Altamaha Elementary School.

As a young schoolboy, Victor lived with his parents in Fitzgerald. He finished the fifth grade and dropped out of school to help work on the family farm. His mother died in childbirth when he was still young.

“When the family called me to come to my mother’s room, I stopped at the foot of her bed and held onto the iron bedpost,” Hipps said. “She called my name, but I remained at the foot of her bed; she called my name again. I was so scared I didn’t answer or move or do anything. When I finally answered, she encouraged him by telling me I was going to be all right. I was very close to my mother and always enjoyed

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spending time with her. It was hard for me to lose her, but she was right. I did all right. I've only had one dream about her."

Victor was born June 26,

oldest living male member of Melton's Chapel United Methodist Church, he has two children, Edward (Mary) Hipps and Linda Hipps Jacobs. He is

Jamey (Sharon) Jacobs, and Jennifer (Steve) Simmons and is delighted with his six grandchildren, Brittani (Brent) Yawn, Kinley (April) Hipps,

ter, Kaylie Yawn.

There is no way to ever thank Victor I. Hipps enough for the sacrifice and service that he made so that we could have the freedoms that we enjoy today. What could be more heroic than to leave one's family, to go overseas and fight for our freedoms and liberties?

Victor faced many dangers during the war with bombs and shrapnel falling just inches away from him. He is thankful and knows that God kept him safe from harm. The 91st Psalm reads: "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee."

The following verse is a reminder of where our protection comes from: "But let all those rejoice who put their trust in you; let them ever shout for joy, because you defend them; let those also who love your name be joyful in you. For you, O' Lord, will bless the righteous; with favor you will surround him as with a shield." (Psalm 5:11-12).

Hipps' humility shines through in his daily life. His strong love for God, his country and his community runs strong. His faith and trust in God are evident, and we appreciate him and are proud that he is a part of our community. ¶



VICTOR HIPPS IS SHOWN WITH HIS BIRTHDAY CAKE

1917. He celebrated his 94th birthday with family and friends on June 26, 2011. The

blessed with four grandchildren, Tommy (Teresa) Hipps, Timothy (Wendy) Hipps,

Logan and Drew Jacobs and Valerie and Eliana Simmons and a great-great-granddaugh-

Did You Know?

Men and women who die without a will do not automatically have their assets seized by the government. When men and women die without a will, they leave what is known as intestacy. The only time a deceased person's assets end up with the government is when the deceased has no living next of kin. Should a man or woman with living family or dependents perish without a will, a formula is then used to distribute the deceased's assets. While this formula ensures family or dependents get some of the deceased person's assets, it does not necessarily mean the deceased's

wishes will be honored. To ensure their wishes are honored, a person must have a will in place. Otherwise, the formula will be used to distribute assets.

Contrary to popular belief, children do not have to be born from legal marriage to share in the distribution of assets. What's more, laws have changed to include de facto partners in the distribution of assets when the deceased leaves no will. Previously, this only applied to spouses. To determine the rules of asset distribution when a man or woman dies without a will, consult an attorney.

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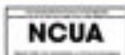
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Sun safety guidelines get an update

For years doctors and safety experts have preached the importance of being smart about sun exposure. Considering skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the U.S., according to statistics published by the leading cancer organizations, many people have long heeded the warnings. Although many of the precautions remain the same, this season individuals may want to pay attention to some of the newer information about sun safety.

UV Rays and the Ozone Layer

The sun is responsible for life on the planet as we know it. Without sunlight, plants would fail to thrive and there would not be adequate warmth to heat up the planet. Still, the sun is

a double-edged sword. The warming rays responsible for life can also be detrimental. A primary component of sun rays -- ultraviolet rays -- can cause skin and eye damage.

UV rays come in three types:

1. UVA: These rays cause skin aging and wrinkling and contribute to skin cancer, such as melanoma. They are the most common UV rays to reach people.



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2. UVB: These rays are also damaging, but the ozone layer blocks much of them from passing through. Some do make it through and can be harmful.

3. UVC: These rays might be lesser known to the general public, but they are the most harmful. These rays are blocked by the ozone layer in the atmosphere and don't reach the earth.

Although the ozone layer filters much of the harmful ultraviolet radiation, the thinning of the ozone layer due to greenhouse gases and other effects of human life poses a problem. Some portions of the ozone layer are depleting.

Changes to Sun Protection Guidelines

* It is widely known that the sun is responsible for pro-

ducing vitamin D in the body. That vitamin D works in concert with calcium to produce strong bones. Vitamin D is sometimes known as the "sunshine vitamin." Three-quarters of U.S. teens and adults are deficient in vitamin D, according to information in the Archives of Internal Medicine. While the old way of thinking was to get 20 minutes of unprotected sun exposure a day to generate vitamin D, new thinking offers that supplements and fortified foods are the safest way to get vitamin D, especially for those who are deficient.

* Err on the side of caution when applying sunscreen. It's not just about applying some and reapplying a half-hour later. Because the level of dosage cannot be adequately mea-

sured, it's best to play it safe and apply a thick coat of sunscreen. Apply as frequently as you'd like, especially if you have been swimming or sweating and feel that the protection could be waning. Pay special attention to the back of the hands, back of legs, neck and where swimsuits can bunch up skin to create higher points that the sun will touch first. And use the highest SPF you can find. This way if enough isn't applied, it still may offer better protection than a low SPF.

* Sunscreen alone may not be enough. People should think about wearing clothing that also offers sun protection. A thin cover-up or T-shirt will not offer protection. In fact, the sun can get through easily. Look for special clothing that offers an SPF.

* Some dermatologists also advise wearing a sunblock and an antioxidant-enriched moisturizer. The sun can cause free radicals that break down elastin in the skin, causing wrinkles and drying. A moisturizer can help combat this.

* There has been a longstanding rule that tanning beds are not a safe way to get a tan. That information has not changed. Tanning beds dish out harmful UVA and UVB rays. They're not a safe way to develop a "base tan" to make skin less susceptible to burns.

Staying smart about sun exposure means keeping abreast of the changes to sun-safety guidelines. People should put caution first when venturing out into the great outdoors this warm-weather season.



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“Shutting down the manned space program is a big mistake”

By Helen Gardner

Johnny Aycock, who spent many days working on different projects at the Huntsville, Ala. Space Center, feels that the government is making a big



JOHNNY AYCOCK

mistake by shutting down the manned space program. His comments given in an interview for this issue are included in the following sentiments:

“The space program has been great for America. It has developed so many products that have been useful for individuals as well as for industry. It has provided 100’s to 1000’s of good paid jobs for the American people.

“I think the missile program has given the most dividends of any program that the government has ever given us. The only other program that

comes close to equaling the space program in my opinion is the interstate system. Some of the better known things that the space program has given us include: advanced breast cancer screening that catches tumors in time for treatment; Light Emitting Diodes (LED) used for experiments on the space shuttles, which are now being used to perform surgery on patients with brain cancer; a heart defibrillator that restores the proper rhythm of a patient’s heart; weather satellites that warn us of coming hurricanes and provide information to help us understand our environment and the

effects of climate changes. We see the results every day when we use our ATM or pay for gas at the pump with an immediate electronic response via satellite. Technologies developed for exploring space are even being used to increase crop yields and to search for good fishing regions in the sea. Do you have a cordless drill or dust buster? With-

out the space program we wouldn’t have these devices. The space program gave us smoke detectors. These are just a few of the advantages we enjoy today given by the space program.

“I don’t think private companies will invest the money it will take to give them the return on their investment and the reason is almost no company makes any sizable investment without strong investments from the tax payers.

“I am also very concerned

with America’s ceding its hard-earned global leadership in space technology to other nations, and am stunned in a time of economic crisis that this move will force as many as 30,000 irreplaceable engineers, workers and managers out of the space industry.”

Johnny Aycock started working at NASA in June of 1962 in Huntsville on the static testing platform for the Saturn Missile and then later he helped to build the relic of the

Apollo Five that was placed on July 13, 1999 in the Space Museum in Huntsville.

The Saturn Five was the missile that propelled the first man to the moon. In 1963-64, Aycock was in charge of the erection of the test stand for the Saturn Five rocket engines. It was composed of 12,000 yards of concrete, and the section that held the engine had 73,000 pounds of welding rods as well as many screws and bolts. The steel flame deflector weighed 2,000 pounds. To keep the deflector cool, water was supplied by five 96-inch pipes with five pumps, each with engines as large as a locomotive engine. They drilled 55,000



ABOVE IS THE REPLICA OF THE SAURN 5 ROCKET AYCOCK HELPED TO CONSTRUCT AT THE U.S. SPACE AND ROCKET CENTER IN HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA.

five-sixteenth inch holes in a pattern to spray the water into the flame deflector.

The steel on the top flange of the girder was 5 1/2 inches thick while the bottom of it was 4 inches. The platform was tested and retested several times to make sure it worked as it was supposed to do before it was actually used to send the rocket into space.

“When a person goes into space, he will grow in height up to

“It was very exciting, very informational and educational to work at NASA. I found the people there to be friendly, very dedicated and willing to explain what they were doing in order to help each other understand what was being done.

“Security was tight but all you had to do back then was to have a badge and a sticker on your vehicle in order to report to work. It was nothing like it has to be today. Back then people could be trusted. There was nothing that required the type of

security we have to have today.”

Aycock began working at NASA when a construction company that employed him won the bid on the job. He was made supervisor on the job and remained in the position until he retired from the construction company.

Johnny Aycock grew up on a farm in Surrency and graduated from Surrency High School. He is the son of the late Doc and Molly Aycock. As a child growing up, he watched his family struggle every year to make a living, borrowing money to get the crop in the ground and to harvest it, only to be able to pay off their debts at the end of the season and start right back over the next year doing the same thing. He said in farming there was no way to control what the farmer got for his product and at selling time, he had to walk up to someone and



JOHNNY AYCOCK IS SHOWN, RIGHT, WITH BUDDY ADAMS. THE TWO MEN WERE VERY ACTIVE IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF SPACE MOUNTAIN AT WALT DISNEY WORLD IN ORLANDO, FLORIDA.

1 or 1 1/4 inches. After he comes back, it takes three to six months for his body to return to what it was before going on the trip. Sometimes it never gets back to where it was,” Johnny said.

Aycock said if you could harness in ten minutes the heat from a firing rocket, it would be sufficient to heat every home and business within a five state area if the temperature were only four degrees above zero.

say, “What will you give me for my product.”

As he became a young man, he told his dad there had to be a better way to make a living and there had to be someone out in the world that would be willing to pay you a good salary for doing a good job. His brother Vernon Aycock was already in the construction business, so Johnny turned to him to help secure a

Continued on page 30



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And from there he decided that if he wanted to make a better life for himself, it lay on his shoulders to do so.

His theory, in order to better himself, was the same then as now: live a clean life and be productive, dependable, and honest. His advice for anyone today entering into the work force is to find a trade that you like, learn as much as you can about the trade, and develop your skills. Then apply his theory to life and things will fall together.

Before retiring, Johnny worked and lived his dreams for 59 years. Lately through he has come back out of retirement and is working part time at R&B Pump as a supervisor.

Other construction jobs that Johnny has been involved in were building 21 bridges, of which 16 were major ones. One of these bridges was the

water to the top of the bridge. It had a clearance of 205 feet at mean tide. He was also the supervisor of building the Jefferson Barrack Bridge over the Mississippi River. This bridge is on the south side of St. Louis, MS. Another bridge that he helped to build was over the Ohio River.

Another project that Johnny worked on was the roofing of a place most all of us know about. It was the roof of the space dome at Disney.

A funny incident that Johnny recalls happened in Meridian, MS, while building an additional building for a power company. It was bad weather and lightning struck an existing building very close to where they were working. When the lightning hit, it burned out two of the main breakers' motors and caused the steam from the boiler to blow open, creating tremendous noise that none of them were familiar with. Not knowing what the problem was or if the plant was going

to blow up caused everyone to start running any way he could to find a way out of the build-



A SATURN ROCKET TEST STAND AT HUNTSVILLE THAT AYCOCK HELPED TO BUILD.

ing or to find somewhere for cover.

"We were running in every direction. Finally when we found out what had happened, we all started to tell how the person in front of us or the one behind us was going in order to get away. The more each of us told on the other, the funnier the incident became. We created a circus describing each other's behavior after the incident. Nobody was hurt, but one thing was factual: every one of us was scared and confused and we all were going somewhere, even if we didn't gain much ground," he said.

Johnny is married to Lillian Courson Sellers Aycock and is the father of three children; one son, John Steven Aycock and two daughters, Janice Hayes and Joan Dyal. He is the step father of one son, Darrell Sellers and one step daughter, Bela Caldwell. He has five grand-

children and five great grandchildren and three step grandchildren and three step great grandchildren.

Johnny has spent many hours speaking to classes at school and to clubs about the space program and working with steel and building buildings. He has many stories to tell about his experiences. He began his career on Memorial Day in 1948 and retired the first time in 1991. Today he is still working part time.

Finally, Johnny reminded us that for thousands of years we humans have gazed at the night sky and wondered about the presence of life elsewhere and what was on the moon. He stated that the space program has given us answers to many of these questions. He said without the space program we wouldn't have gained many of the inventions that we are enjoying today. ¶



JOHNNY WORKING ON A PROJECT MAKING CERTAIN EVERYTHING LINES UP PERFECT.

Panama Canal Bridge. This bridge was a little over a mile long and was 386 feet from the

Going green need not cost more green

Inexpensive, eco-friendly ideas

Many people think that adopting an eco-friendly lifestyle is expensive. Although there are some eco-conscious products and practices that can be pricey, most people will find going green doesn't have to cost a lot of money.

Installing extensive solar panels or switching to organically grown food are ways to be green, but such decisions can prove costly. Fortunately, there are many other ways to go green without spending much.

- * Wash laundry in cold water. Only use warm water when washing heavily soiled items
- * Clean filters in the car and home routinely. Clean filters enable items to operate more efficiently.
- * Turn down the temperature on the water heater.
- * Recycle everything that you can. If your town or city doesn't collect recyclables, bring them to the transfer or recycling center.
- * Buy recycled products.

* Switch to a low-flow toilet or place a water-filled plastic bottle in the toilet tank to cut down on the amount of water used.

* Remove excess items, including golf clubs or fishing gear, from a car trunk to improve fuel efficiency.

* If possible, walk or bike to work instead of driving.

* When cooking smaller meals, save energy by using a microwave or toaster oven.

* Mend clothing before buying new items.

* See if appliances or other items can be fixed before you shop for new things.

* Use a water filter on your faucet instead of purchasing bottled water.

* Compost food scraps for the garden.

* Donate items that you no longer need or use.

* Skip take-out food or convenience items, which use a lot of packaging and mass-produced meats.

* Grow your own food and herbs in a backyard garden.

* Bathe young children together to reduce water consumption.

* Put on or remove layers of clothing instead of adjusting the thermostat in the house.



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MARY ANN ANDERSON:

A woman's quest for storytelling

By **Mary Ann Ellis**

On June 15, 2011, Mary Ann Anderson stood under the searing sun in front of the Jeff Davis Historical Society Museum and watched in horror

and with ceaseless tears as flames shot from the roof of the old yellow building. Not only historical artifacts of Jeff Davis County went up in flames that day, but also many unique and irreplaceable ones of her own. As president of the historical society, she had filled her office with memorabilia from her world travels—tickets from the Polar Express in Durango, Colorado; a copy of every single magazine she's ever

been published in; a hand-embroidered knick-knack box from England; a silk scarf from Mexico; the list of personal treasures covers three pages. Many pre-digital family pictures disappeared in the fire;

among others, a picture of her mother and one of Anderson and her husband Roy on their wedding day.

"The fire department arrived in two minutes," Anderson said, "but that old house

istry of Historic Places. Long before she became president of the historical society, Anderson had occupied an office in the building in return for curator services.

"I loved my office in

Anderson's career as a travel writer inadvertently brought her to the museum. When she tried to write at home, she found herself jumping up from the computer to do a load of laundry or stopping to romp in the yard with her cats, Miss Murray and Simba.

"I needed office space away from home so I could stay focused," she chuckled. "My original plan to write at home just wasn't working. When the offer came to work at the museum, it was perfect and I jumped at it."

Mary Ann Anderson grew up on a farm in Jeff Davis County with her parents Harry Edgar and Lottie Brown Thigpen. Her childhood interests in reading, travel, nature, and history led her via Jeff Davis High School, Brewton Parker College, and Mercer University to a career in travel writing, and what a career it has been. A Brewton Parker professor told her she had a real gift for writing and advised her to use it. At Mercer, another professor told her she could be a female Lewis Grizzard and put her in touch with someone at the Macon Telegraph, where



MARY ANN ANDERSON TAKES FLIGHT NEAR RISING FAWN IN NORTH GEORGIA. HER PICTURE MADE THE COVER OF THE FLORIDA TIMES UNION'S ENTERTAINMENT SECTION.

was made of heart pine and there was little they could do."

The museum was known locally as the Pace House and was the only building in Jeff Davis County on both the Georgia and the National Reg-

istry of Historic Places. Long before she became president of the historical society, Anderson had occupied an office in the building in return for curator services. "I loved my office in there," Anderson said. "I could write surrounded by my own history and take care of the museum at the same time. I had this wonderful old couch that I'd had forever. I'm incredibly sad now that it's gone."

Continued on page 35

Announcing Three Physicians Board Certified In Sleep Medicine.



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Steven P. Hill, M.D.

Dr. Steven Hill is a Board Certified Neurologist and is also Board Certified in Sleep Medicine. He presently has a practice in Vidalia at 1811 Edwina Drive. He specializes in treating sleep disorders and is available for sleep consultations. His office contact number is 912-538-0003.



John E. Schoell, M.D.
Medical Director, Meadows Sleep Center

Dr. John E. Schoell, Medical Director of the Meadows Sleep Center, is Board Certified in Pulmonology/Critical Care and Sleep Medicine. His office is in Vidalia at 1707 Meadows Lane, Suite E. He specializes in treating sleep disorders and is available for sleep consultations at his Vidalia office and also at our satellite locations, located in Baxley at 821 S. Main Street, Swainsboro at 601 N. Main Street, Statesboro at 100 Brampton Ave, Ste. 1F, and also in Dublin at Dublin Internal Medicine at 104 Fairview Park Drive. His office contact number is 912-537-4949.

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Complaints of sleep difficulty are common among the elderly, with primary sleep disorders such as Obstructive Sleep Apnea and Periodic Limb Movement Disorder being increasingly common in the aged. Typical symptoms of sleep problems in the aged include difficulty falling asleep and maintaining sleep, early morning awakenings, excessive daytime sleepiness, loud snoring, pauses in breathing, and unpleasant sensations in the legs. Evaluation of sleep problems should include careful screening of poor sleep habits and other health conditions, such as heart disease, diabetes, lung disorders, and high blood pressure. A formal sleep study may be needed when a sleep disorder is suspected and marked by daytime sleepiness and dysfunction.

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she became an editorial page columnist. Soon afterwards, she started reviewing bed and breakfast inns across Georgia for the newspaper. Her desire to be syndicated led her eventually to McClatchy-Tribune Information Services, the group that currently syndicates her travel articles and a cocktails and spirits column entitled "On the Rocks." She has been published in almost every major newspaper in the world, including the *Taiwan Daily News* and *Sydney (Australia) Morning Herald*. Having traveled to five continents, thirty countries, and almost every state in the United States, she's still going strong, but hasn't traveled quite as much this past year as usual. In the past it wasn't uncommon for her to travel three or four times every month.

Her face glows as she speaks of her travels.

"I'd go to France anytime," she laughs, "just for the cheese, and by the way, the French people have always been really nice to me. Provence is so beautiful."

She's been to Africa eight times and has been named an honorary Kenyan. On her last trip to Africa, her group ran into some trouble in the form of a mob scene; the driver was arrested and roughed up a bit.

Democratic Republic of Congo to see the endangered mountain gorillas. Fewer than 700 remain in the world today.

"Those gorillas were the most serenely beautiful thing I've ever seen in my life I think," Anderson said. "The silverback sat arrogantly with his back to us, watching his family, but it was



**-PHOTO COURTESY OF JEFF DAVIS LEDGER
THE JEFF DAVIS HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM (THE PACE HOUSE -
BUILT IN 1890) PRIOR TO THE JUNE 15 FIRE THAT DESTROYED A
TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF HISTORY.**



**-PHOTO COURTESY OF JEFF DAVIS LEDGER
A PHOTO OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM FIRE CAPTURED
BY THE NEWSPAPER IN HAZLEHURST ON JUNE 15.**

"Africa can be dangerous," she warns. "Never go by yourself, but Cape Town is the most beautiful city I've ever seen."

One of the highlights of her career was being selected by the Uganda Tourist Board as one of only five journalists to travel to and hike into Bwindi Impenetrable Forest in Uganda and the

obvious he knew we were there. He was protecting them every minute. The guides told us not to run if he charged us, but I'm sure I would have. And in South Africa the white lions with their coats shining in the sunlight are a sight to behold."

Her travels have changed her whole outlook on life, especially on endangered species.

"I will never go to a zoo again. I can't stand it," she shudders. "I realize that zoos have a place in society. Not everyone has a chance to go to Africa, but after seeing these beautiful wild animals in their natural habitat as they should be, I've lost any fancy I ever had for zoos."

Another thrill came as recently as last year when she flew with the Blue Angels-not in a jet, but in Fat Albert, the giant C-130 Hercules that kicks off and supports the Blue Angels' shows. On another occasion when she went hang gliding, the picture found its

way to the front page of the entertainment section of the Florida Times-Union. She's visited the real Whistle Stop Café in Juliette, Georgia, just outside of Macon, and stayed at some of the world's most wonderful hotels, including several Four Seasons and the Ritz Carlton in Singapore.

“And I’ve stayed at some of the worst,” she laughs. “In II Ngwesi, one of Prince Williams’s favorite places in Kenya, our group stayed in rooms with open walls called bandas. There were no screens, just poles to hold up the thatched roof. It was completely open air, and mosquito netting hung around the bed. We left to go eat, and I inad-

my story.” Remarkable events came with her job. Anderson met Prince Andrew, the Duke of York, at a private reception at the British ambassador’s residence in Washington, D.C. Many are the dignitaries she’s met—President G.W. Bush, among others. She became a bit of a celebrity herself as one of the few journalists invited

largest circulation of any magazine in Georgia.

While Anderson has spent literally years of her life looking for “offbeat and intriguing” places to write about, she’s been involved in other activities as well. For example, she is a tour director for a women-only travel company. She leads the Savannah to Charleston trip twice a year. Her book

Kingdom, she always remembers that heritage and her South Georgia roots.

“My career has given me opportunities I would never have had if I’d chosen another one,” she says. “I have been blessed. But no matter how far across the earth I travel, my favorite pastime remains exploring the undiscovered back-

roads of Georgia and the South in search of all those wonderful and little-known stories of fiction and nonfiction alike just waiting to be told. For example, one of my favorite places is Little St. Simons Island off the Georgia coast. Everyone should go there at some time or other. It’s amazing.”

As Anderson and the other members of the Jeff Davis Historical Society meet and make plans to replace the charred museum, they are providing an outlet for those stories, a way to get them into the hands of the public. She has been in the process of writing not

just world history, but her own as well as Jeff Davis County history for decades now. Nowadays she’s working in a temporary office in the Hazlehurst City Hall Annex, strangely enough a former fish market, to help preserve the county’s heritage, which mingles strongly with her own. How fitting is that! The results will surely meet with success as this energetic, efficient lady leads the group forward. ¶



MARY ANN ANDERSON IN A SAMI VILLAGE IN FINLAND. THE TRIP WAS HER FIRST ABOVE THE ARCTIC CIRCLE.

vertently left on the light over my bed. When we came back, the white netting was completely black with insects, bats, and God only knows what else. I was terrified. I had a can of bug spray, but I wasn’t sure how effective it would be against all those creatures. I figured out where the opening in the net was and made a running dive for it and safety. Fortunately, I survived to tell

on the inaugural flight of the world’s longest nonstop airline flight from Newark to Singapore—about nineteen hours. She jumped at the opportunity. Then she wrote of her travels to share with the world.

Her article “50 Must See Places in Georgia” for *Georgia Magazine* won first place in the Readers’ Choice awards. *Georgia Magazine* has the

credits include *From Grits and Gravy to Sweet Potato Pie: Recipes from the Bed and Breakfast Inns of Georgia’s Magnolia Midlands*; *In the Bough of the Chinaberry Tree*; and *Ain’t Nothin’ Sweeter than a Magnolia Moon*, all of which reflect her southern heritage.

Whether she’s riding on the back of an elephant in South Africa, in the Galapagos writing about the tortoises, or interviewing Jim Fowler of Wild

Two Ladies call Ailey “Home” since 1950s

By David Tootle

Though not a native, Raynita Stewart has lived in the quiet village of Ailey in Montgomery County for over 50 years. Raynita and her

many changes in the town, which sits adjacent to Mt. Vernon on U.S. Route 280 about twelve miles west of Vidalia.

“I’ve seen the good times,

“In school, I studied in what was called the Baby Rae Primer,” she recalled. “I didn’t want my name to be like the baby in that book, so I decided to just make a ‘y’

since.

When she graduated from Glenwood High in 1940, Stewart was much more concerned about her future employment than with the spelling of her name.

“There were two things I really felt like I wanted to do,” she remembered. “I either wanted to be a missionary or a schoolteacher.”

In those days, however, it wasn’t easy to finance a college education. Despite her desire and best efforts, Raynita was unable to qualify for the financial aid she needed.

“The National Youth Administration helped poorer students work their way through college,” she ex-



MYRTLE BRASWELL (LEFT) AND RAYNITA STEWART MOVED TO AILEY IN 1957.

longtime friend, Myrtle Braswell, have called Broad Street, Ailey’s most historic thoroughfare, home since Stewart purchased a small white house there in 1957. Born and reared in Wheeler County, the two came to Ailey for employment opportunities and have stayed for a lifetime. They have seen

and I’ve seen the bad times,” Raynita told me during my visit to their home in June. “I really love the people here.”

Depression Children

“I was born July 31, 1923, to Charlie and Clara Stewart,” Stewart remembered. Her parents named her “Rae Nita,” but she didn’t like the spelling.

out of that ‘e.’”

The two-word spelling of her name (“Ray Nita”) continued until just seven or eight years ago, when there was some confusion regarding her Social Security benefits. She completed a form at the Dublin Social Security office, asserting that her name was “Raynita.” It has been ever

plained. “I applied for NYA aid at Brewton Parker, but I didn’t get accepted.”

Though disappointed, Stewart took advantage of new post-graduate work being offered at her old high school. She learned bookkeeping, typing, and shorthand. The fees were a dollar a month, which covered typ-

ing supplies and maintenance on the Underwood type-writers. Eventually, she became a Home Economics teacher's aide at Glenwood through the NYA program. There she fulfilled one of her dreams by helping to teach classes.



DOWNTOWN AILEY - THE LEFT SIDE OF THIS STRUCTURE HOUSED THE PETERSON COMPANY STORE IN THE 1940S, WHILE THE RIGHT SIDE WAS AILEY HARDWARE COMPANY.

“I was in my heyday,” she explained. “I loved it.”

Myrtle, a friend who was three years older than Raynita, was living in Glenwood with her sister Grace and Grace's husband. Since graduating from high school in Alamo, she had trained and found work as a beautician.

“Her family had moved back out to Scotland (in nearby Telfair County), where Myrtle had been born,” Raynita remembered. “She decided to stay with her sister.”

While Raynita and Myrtle were already friends at this time, two events occurred in the late 1940s that tightened the bonds of their friendship to near-sisterhood. The first of these was almost catastrophic for both.

Brush with Death

While living with her parents, Raynita attended First Baptist Church in Glenwood along with Myrtle and several other young adults. On December 23, 1946, three carloads of young church members delivered packages of fruit as a Christmas outreach. One of the cars became stuck in the mud.

“Somebody said, ‘Don't cut the motor off; you won't ever get it back on,’” Raynita recalled. “The car that tried to pull us out with a cable was not having much luck, and we were leaning over the back seat trying to see what they were do-

ing. Somebody told us, ‘You better move back and roll those back glasses up, or that line might break and cut your heads off,’ so we did.”

“Part of the car was submerged, and there was a little rusted-out place,” she continued. “We didn't know, but carbon monoxide gas was seeping up. We were inhaling it, and Lessie Palmer and I got the worst of it.”

When Raynita, Myrtle, and the other girls in the back seat stopped chatting and laughing, their companions saw that they needed help. They rushed them to the nearest doctor, who worked to help them though he believed at least two of them were doomed.

“I can remember feeling kind of sick,” Stewart said, “and I remember thinking that I was just hungry because we hadn't had any food. I came around for a moment as they were calling my name, but I couldn't answer them. At the doctor's, they got my jacket off and gave me some kind of injection. I came

around, but they almost never got the other girl back. For all those people involved in that, we became closer as members of the little church.”

Soon after this event, Myrtle's sister and brother-in-law also moved to Scotland. The Stewarts invited Myrtle to join their family, taking her in as “one of the girls.”

“She's been a member of my family ever since,” Raynita stated.

Introduction to Ailey

A teacher at Glenwood, Mrs. R. E. Rainey, set in motion the events that would send Raynita to Ailey.

“She learned of the Ailey Hardware Company needing a bookkeeper,” Raynita explained, “She took me to an interview, and I can remember talking with Mr. James Peterson and Mr. Malcolm Peterson. My first day of work with them was on November 14, 1941.”

Raynita started at a salary of ten dollars a week. She had no means of transportation.

“Atlantic Trailways came through at that time, and I would ride the early morning bus that made up in Glenwood,” she remembered.

Continued on page 40

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The bus stopped in Ailey near her new workplace, and Raynita was able to observe the townspeople going about their daily tasks as she took the short stroll to and from the bus. Her memories of these walks are still etched clearly in her mind.

“We had a postmaster named Mr. Bruce McIntyre,” Raynita remembered. “Four trains came through Ailey each day, and he would pick up the mail from one of those. He would throw the mail bags over his back and just stand there. It was so interesting; he would not move a peg until that entire train pulled off.”

Three other observers could see the postmaster as well. Raynita remembers men named Carlos Robison and Arch McIntyre sitting with Willie Peterson, the President of Montgomery Bank, on a marble ledge beneath a window of the bank building. That structure, just across from the depot, still stands on one of the four central corners of downtown Ailey. The city’s post office at that time was very close to the depot, near where the three men often sat. Today’s post office location is the third one that Raynita re-

members. Onions were already being grown in the area back in the 1940s. Some days, farmers loaded onions onto boxcars at the depot, and the smell was almost overwhelming.

Stewart worked in the other central building of the town,



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a structure which also stands today. Many have known this building in recent years as Attorney Tom Everett's office; but it is, in fact, a two-part commercial building belonging to the Peterson family. The portion in which Everett's office was located, on the corner, housed the Peterson Company Store in the 1940s. The other half was the home of Ailey Hardware Company where Raynita was employed.

"There were trees in front of the Peterson Company Store," said Raynita, "and there was a hitching post out front for animals and wagons. It's long gone, and that area is paved now."

"I can recall one gentleman from Mt. Vernon, Mr. Ben Cadle," she continued. "He would come up there in

rubber boots, and he had an old Model A automobile. In the back, there were just piles and piles of turnips, which he would sell."

Stewart also remembered that the Cadles lived in Mt. Vernon near the location of the convenience store which sits beside the Brewton-Parker campus.

The Peterson Company Store was actually two businesses. A lady named Bessie Morris operated a dry



TABLE FULL OF CLIPPINGS - RAYNITA STEWART POINTS OUT PEOPLE WHO ONCE WORKED WITH HER AND MYRTLE AT THE SHIRT PLANT IN AILEY.

goods store in the front of the

building. Marcus Simons sold groceries in the back portion where a door opens onto Broad Street today.

Next door to the dry goods shop was Ailey Hardware Company. Malcolm Peterson entrusted the operation of the store to J. R. "Remer" Kitchen, who lived at the intersection of Broad Street and U.S. 280 in one of Ailey's most historic homes.

"Before the days of tractors, farmers would come and bring their Cole Planters," Raynita

Continued on page 43



John I. Waldrop, M.D. welcomes new patients to the Hughston Clinic's Vidalia office. Dr. Waldrop is the doctor with experience - having performed over 9,000 knee and hip replacements in the past 25 years. He specializes in Total Joint replacement, Partial Joint replacement, Surgery of the Knee, Hip and Shoulder as well as Arthroscopic Surgery. He has been instrumental in the development of Partial Knee replacement and is part owner of Jack Hughston Memorial Hospital. "The Jack" is a private doctor owned hospital with ALL private rooms along with a very personalized and professional staff. The hospital also has a very high patient satisfaction rate.

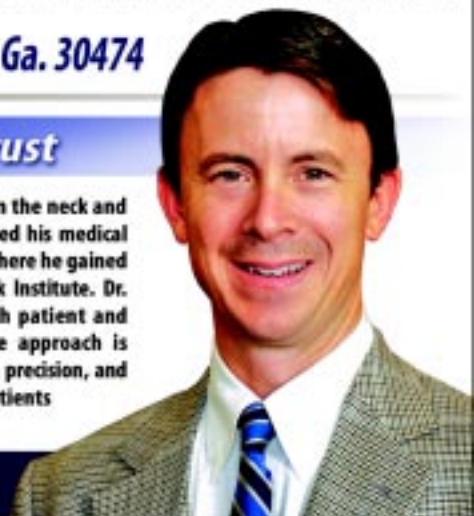
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recalled. “Mr. Remer would sell them parts, then get out beside the building and work on those.”

The Petersons have long been at the business and social nucleus of Ailey. Another family whose name has become synonymous with the community is the Thompsons. By the 1940s, this founding family had established a productive sawmill on the southeast side of town, a business their descendants still operate.

“The Thompsons bought a lot of merchandise from us,” explained Stewart, “and they operated the lumber company right where the post office neighborhood is today. They were very instrumental in making Ailey a nice place to live over the years.”

After two years at Ailey Hardware, Raynita applied to be a typist at Camp Stewart (now Fort Stewart) and was accepted. In the meantime, Malcolm Peterson had established the Ailey Manufacturing Company, a sewing factory for men’s shirts, just across the railroad tracks from the hardware store.

“It was formed to give the women in the area employment,” Stewart said. “The lumber company was already hiring the men. When they started, the minimum wage was 40 cents an hour.”

Malcolm Peterson’s secretary at the shirt plant was leaving, and he asked Raynita to accept the position. She did.

“I was local, and I was a little country girl who had never been away from home very much,” said Stewart. “I had a Christian mother and

daddy in Glenwood, and I enjoyed being at home.”

Having resisted the urge to depart the area, the next step for Raynita would be to leave home and establish her own household in the village she was growing to love.

From Commuters to Residents

Myrtle took a position at Ailey Manufacturing in 1949. For several years, she and Raynita commuted from Glenwood and worked at the apparel factory. The plant prospered, expanding onto the present-day site of BestLine Sash and Door. Raynita served as the firm’s secretary, while Myrtle was an inventory supervisor. In 1957, the opportunity arose

exactly what I did. This house became available, I bought it, and I’ve been here ever since. I want to live here until my time is up.”

Myrtle followed Raynita to Ailey, and the two could easily walk to the shirt plant from their new home. Ailey Manufacturing diversified, branching off into the production of ladies’ blouses and men’s jackets. School children would visit the plant, often writing letters to Raynita and the office staff afterward, explaining what they had learned.

The two ladies loved their adopted hometown. Events from the last 50 years in the usually-quiet village have provided them with vivid

piece of metal fell and killed a man. I can see that today; they had to leave him there until somebody could come and see about him.”

Before Broad Street was paved, Raynita remembers a day when there was a commotion outside her office door beside the railroad tracks. She went outside to find a large group of men watching two snakes fight to the death in the dirt road.

“That drew a crowd that day,” she said. “They didn’t have much to do, huh?”

That wooden building where Raynita worked, used by Ailey Manufacturing as a pressing department and warehouse, burned to the ground on the evening of



THIS BROAD STREET BUILDING BELONGING TO AILEY MANUFACTURING COMPANY BURNED ON NOVEMBER 2, 1957.

for them to become residents of Ailey.

“I remember Mr. John C. Peterson saying, ‘Miss, you stay over here all the time; you come early and stay late. You just need to move your bed on over here.’ That’s ex-

periences.

“At one time, right in the center of town, there was a windmill,” Raynita remembered. “In the 50s, they decided it was no good any more and ordered it to be taken down. Unfortunately, a

fire started on November 2, 1957. Stewart says the cause may have been spontaneous combustion.

“That night, the flames just went straight up in the air,” she recalled. “There was a house right there beside it, and the fire got so hot that it

pulled the tar right out of that house.”

Many of Raynita’s memories involve annual events. Long ago, the Ailey Garden Club hosted a picnic each fall to welcome back the Brewton-Parker faculty. It took place in a park, now overgrown, on Broad Street.

“There were a lot of children in town, and they would go there to run and play games,” Raynita said. “They had picnic tables, and it was a lot of fun. The food not used would be distributed to the poor.”

The annual Peterson Reunion each July was a favorite event for the community. The Petersons also played a big role in Christmas celebrations, hosting open houses and breakfasts during the season.

“The annual Christmas Night program at Ailey Methodist Church, which often featured many of the Peterson children, was beautiful,” Raynita told us. “They would get a tall Christmas tree from the Bud Adams place, and it would reach the top of the church. They would write down your name when you came in. This was so that no one would be left out when they gave out red peppermint sticks at Congressman Hugh Peterson’s home after the service.”

Among the interesting acquaintances made by the ladies during their years in Ailey was a guest of the Congressman’s family, a Bulgarian artist known as “The Great A. Tasev.” Tasev, who stayed in a guest house on the Peterson property known as his “Palace,” had an imaginary girlfriend named Louise. He sometimes worked all day to serve guests an excellent meal of stuffed peppers, offering toast and jam for dessert.

Some of Raynita’s clearest memories are of Dr. J. W. Palmer, who sometimes left patients in his office on Sunday morning in order to attend Sunday School. Palmer, who was a physician for the Seaboard Air Line Railroad, often made trips to Washington, D.C., on railroad business. Raynita remembers that he was regularly seen with a short, unlit cigarette in his mouth.

“Late one Saturday night, down there at his office, some boy got in the back of his 1954 Chevrolet. When the doctor got in and started for home, this fellow raised up and tried to rob him. Dr. Palmer was going really slow, so he pulled a fast one on him by just jumping out of the car!”

A Church Family



AILEY BAPTIST CHURCH - RAYNITA AND MYRTLE ATTEND THIS CHURCH ON BROAD STREET WHERE RAYNITA IS A DEACON.

Raynita and Myrtle are members at Ailey Baptist Church, located across U.S. 280 about a half mile from their home. The church has been an anchor for the two devout women, reinforcing their faith and tying them even more tightly to the community.

“I have been a member since 1961,” Stewart explained, “and I am an ordained deacon. We deacons help the church any way we can. Our church has a lot of younger people now; and, fortunately, it is growing. We have a great fifth Sunday night sing with local talent.”

During my visit to the ladies’ home, Stewart took me to the dining room table, where she had spread out many mementos of Ailey Manufacturing and Ailey Baptist Church. Among these keepsakes was a small history book about the



MANUAL CALENDAR - RAYNITA'S FATHER, A STOREKEEPER, RECEIVED THIS SINGER CALENDAR AS A PROMOTIONAL ITEM.

beginning of the church. Its founder was Glenn Thompson, the namesake of Glennville. His descendants were among the Thompsons who have been so instrumental in Ailey's development.

Among the newspaper clippings were church news items, including some that documented an unusual "pastor swap" in the summer of 1974. That year Ailey Baptist exchanged preachers with a Baptist congregation in London, England. Rev. Kenneth Witting came to Georgia to lead the local church, while Ailey's pastor, Robert Brewer, preached in Britain. In one of the photos, Witting's son was celebrating a birthday in Ailey.

Myrtle retired from Ailey

Manufacturing in 1987. Four years later, Raynita followed. The two have enjoyed retirement in Montgomery County, especially savoring travel opportunities and church activities. This year, however, Myrtle suffered a mild stroke and has been largely confined to their home on Broad Street.

"She's up every day, but she has to use her walker," Raynita explained. "She hasn't been able to go to church yet."

On the afternoon of our visit, the ladies received no less than three different visits from compassionate church members. Two of these visitors were Ailey Baptist Pastor C. B. Easterlin and his wife Sara, who visited with Myrtle before joining

Raynita and me in the front parlor. After sharing their thoughts about a moving baptismal service the previous week, the pastor and his wife departed. Another church member brought some vegetables from his garden for the ladies to enjoy, then Raynita and I went in to see Myrtle. In good spirits, she told us that she enjoys the people of Ailey just as Raynita does.

"Ailey is a nice place," Braswell told me with a smile. Then, nodding to Raynita, she added, "And nobody loves it like she

does." Finally, she gave me a friendly warning: "Don't let it get in your shoes; you'll be coming back."

Myrtle Braswell and Raynita Stewart have been watching Ailey for over 60 years. They chose the village as their home back then, and they're happy they did.

"Ailey today is not the Ailey of then," Raynita concluded. "Things change; people live and die. It's just part of life. We have some mighty pleasant memories of the folks who have lived here and those who still do."



SHARING MEMORIES - (L TO R): SARA EASTERLIN AND REV. C.B. EASTERLIN LISTEN AS RAYNITA STEWART TELLS ABOUT HER SISTER'S PIANO AND HER OLD HYMNALS.

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Don't Get Stung by Pesky Insects

Bees and wasps can be a pain to live around ... literally. Exploring a number of traps and repellents could be the key to enjoying the outdoors this season.

At least 40 Americans die each year due to bee or wasp stings. Many other people face allergic reactions from the venom or serious pain.

Most bees are not aggressive and look to avoid scuffles with people. They may sting out of perceived danger or fear or if a person comes too close to a nest or surprises the winged creature. Wasps, such as yellow jackets, could be a bit more spunky and territorial. Africanized killer bees do have the potential to swarm and be dangerous.

While bees and wasps can be beneficial, policing other insect populations and pollinizing flowers, most people prefer to keep them at bay.

Repellents

A first try at keeping wasps and bees away from outdoor living spaces should involve some sort of natural repellent. Many insects are put off by certain smells. You can try citronella. Some people swear by baby pow-

der, and dust it on themselves and other areas of the garden. One of the more effective repellents are mock wasp nests. Because these insects are territorial and will often fight to the death, they won't build a nest too close to another wasp nest. Using a fake nest can deter wasps from setting up home base nearby.

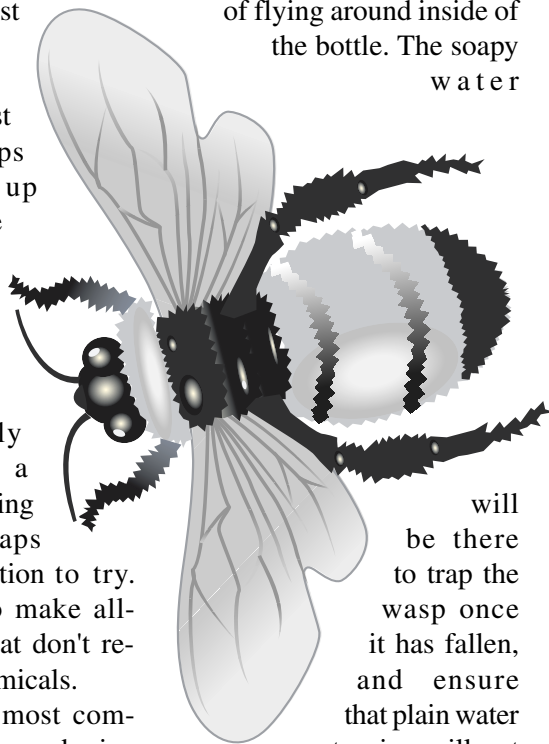
Traps

For those who have found that repellents simply aren't making a dent in the buzzing population, traps are the next option to try. It's possible to make all-natural traps that don't require harsh chemicals.

One of the most common traps can be made simply from an empty soda bottle. Cut off the top of the bottle so that it is in two parts, the round reservoir and the pouring spout. Fill the reservoir with water and a little dish liquid. Tie the bait to the bottom of the spout and invert the top of the bottle so that it forms a funnel into

which the wasps will fly. Coat the entrance of the funnel with a little cooking oil or petroleum jelly so the wasp will slide into the opening.

The wasp will investigate the bait and eventually tire of flying around inside of the bottle. The soapy water



will be there to trap the wasp once it has fallen, and ensure that plain water tension will not suspend the wasp and prevent drowning.

If these types of traps are placed out early enough, an individual can sometimes trap the queen and cause the nest to be built elsewhere. Some tips include frequently changing the bait and burying the deceased wasps so

they cannot warn their friends of the danger through olfactory warnings. Different baits work better at different times of the year. In the spring, try hamburger meat. In the summer, sweet sources of food, such as crushed grapes, will work.

There also are commercially made traps that will catch bees and wasps.

Sprays

Some people say that vinegar works to repel honeybees but can attract wasps. Others say that spraying bleach on wasps will kill them. Others argue it only angers the bug and causes it to sting. Commercial wasp sprays will be effective but can have a host of chemicals in them and may not be safe around children and pets. Sprays should be used as a last resort and used on existing nests or areas where bees are seen congregating. Individuals should not spray bees as they are flying through the air because they risk injury from the spray to others and themselves. If hornets, wasps or other types of bees are a nuisance that cannot be controlled by the homeowner, a professional should be brought in.

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Sometimes Vidalia onions from the 1200-acre Stanley Farms operation in Toombs County cannot be graded “U.S. #1.” Because of their size or shape, or due to cosmetic flaws, they are not considered acceptable for grocery store shelves. In past years, these “#2” onions were considered a waste product—but no more. Today, they are shipped to the Vidalia Valley facility on Ga. Highway 178 south of Lyons, where Vince Stanley and his staff know what to do with them.

“It costs just as much money to grow that onion as it did the one that made it to the shelf,” Vince says, “so it’s important to try to get value out of it.”

Onions in the Family

Vince is the youngest son of R.T. Stanley, owner of Stanley Farms. The Stanleys began growing sweet Vidalias, according to R. T.,



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in 1975, when they were not yet world famous.

“We were big in growing tobacco,” R.T. recalled. “Me and my daddy were farming together, and we decided to start looking at something else besides tobacco because

of the health situation; we thought there would come a day when it wouldn’t be too popular. That’s when we decided to plant five acres of Vidalia onions, and it worked out real well. They were real sweet and tasted good, so we

kept adding a few acres every year.”

For many of those years, onions that were not “Number Ones” were simply discarded. Some of them were taken by a firm in Uvalde called Manning Farms, which

began around 1981. For 18 years, the Manning Family produced sauces with Vidalia onions, but decided to get out of the business in 1999.

“They approached us and wanted to know if we’d be interested in buying it,” R.T. remembered. “Because of Vince, we decided to do it. He promised us that, if we would buy the business, he would make it work, and he’s kept his promise.”

Vince had earned a Forestry degree at the University of Georgia, and had worked with Weyerhaeuser for several years.

“I was ready to come back to the family farm, and this gave me the opportunity to do it,” he told us. “It’s worked out well.”

Vince’s return to the Stanley operation completed a circle. All three of R.T.’s sons now work with him in the family business, as he did with his father.

“Daddy does the bulk of the farming,” Vince explained, “and he grows row crops. Brian is in charge of sales of fresh onions and also helps me with processed products. Tracy is our engineer; he continues our automation and does the fix-alls. I’m in charge of the processing plant.”

The Vidalia Valley plant on Highway 178 was constructed in 2006. When onions from the Stanley Farms packing shed on U.S. 280 in Vidalia grade out at “Number Two,” R.T. sends them to Vince for processing.

“When we had a chance to get this going and utilize a product we were wasting, we decided that would be a win-win situation,” R.T. explained.

Unique Product Line

Vidalia Valley currently offers a line of 14 relishes and salsas, 13 sauces, and 17 salad dressings, with new recipes in development constantly. Why so many varieties?

“People are always looking for something different,” R.T. says.

“I don’t know anywhere where you can go and buy Balsamic Bleu Cheese Dressing, other than here,” Vince confirmed. “That’s really our niche, providing something that’s different. Whatever Kraft and Hidden Valley are doing, we’re not; we’re doing something different. Usually, that’s having Vidalia onions as the key ingredient.”

Vince says that many sauces that carry the name “Vidalia



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Onion” use only a minimal amount of Vidalias in the product, sometimes as low as 2 or 3 percent. He then contrasts this to his Cucumber Dill Dressing, one of R.T.’s favorites.

“That’s got 15 percent Vidalia Onion and 15 percent cucumber. Our relish, one of our best sellers, is 93 percent Vidalia onions. In a one pint jar, we actually put a pound of onions. It just cooks down with a little vinegar and sugar. We’re actually the only grower AND processor of Vidalia Onions in the country. We’re going to stuff our products full of onions to give you a genuine taste.”

“We are able do that,” R.T. added, “because we have the supply. Other people don’t like to buy the Vidalias because they’re seasonal. They



300 GALLONS AT A TIME — VINCE STANLEY CONTROLS A HUGE COOKING VAT WHERE THE SAUCES, RELISHES, AND SALSAS ARE PREPARED.

don’t want to get involved with too many Vidalias in their product.”

Vince agreed, adding, “It’s an expensive ingredient for them, so they use the

minimal amount and use it as a coattail for sales. We tell people to go with the guy who



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actually grows his own onions.

Vidalia Valley inherited approximately 25 of its recipes from the Manning Farms business. Of the 40 or more developed since then, some can be credited to Vince and his staff, others to Research and Development specialists who have

ing points in today's health-conscious market. Stanley Farms grows a portion of its onions organically, as many of today's customers prefer this method of production.

"We grow 50 acres of organic Vidalia onions," R.T. told us. "It's harder to sell them now with the economy like it is, but we still have customers who want organic. Wal-Mart sells them."

Some products bottled at the Vidalia Valley facility may not contain onions at all. But keeping the machinery running at the plant is a key to the profitability of the operation.

"You don't want to keep the tractor in the shed if you don't have to," said Vince, "so we try to run our machinery year-round. We do a lot of types of bottling here," said Vince, "and we process (chop, peel, saute) onions as an industrial ingredient. We've recently acquired an IQF (Individually Quick Frozen) facility, where we freeze Vidalia onions. It's at the old industrial park in Lyons."

Vidalia Valley sells gift box combinations of many of their products. They also offer an interesting "niche" in labeling, according to Vince.

"We can create a private label. A small gift shop might want their label on the product to show that this is something in which they're specializing.

Also, if a couple gets married, they may want to have a little Georgia theme on a gift they're giving to guests. We can put their faces on the label of something like Georgia Peach Hot

come in to help.

"We like to watch trends," he told us. "For the last five or six years, balsamic vinegar has become pretty popular, so we have a couple of recipes that include that. One that we're really excited about that's still in the test stage is our Strawberry Balsamic Vinaigrette. We're always looking at what's hot and what's not."

But no matter the recipe, Vidalia Valley tries to use fresh ingredients that respond to consumers' desires and demands.

"We like to use any kind of natural ingredients we can draw in," Vince told us. "We want to use something like a vegetable or a fruit in a product, try to make it all-natural or create an exotic taste."

Some of these ingredients come into the plant already processed, like apples; but many, such as cucumbers, come straight from the farm.

"Any time we can handle the fruit or vegetables raw, we like to do that," said Vince. "You get the best taste and can often keep it as an all-natural product. A lot of times, when

you buy it already processed, you've got some chemicals or preservatives in there."

Many relishes are all-natural and fat-free, both good sell-



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One client that already takes advantage of special label-

Continued on page 56



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ing is Sam's Club. While we visited, several pallets of Parmesan Herb Vinaigrette in 32-ounce bottles, with Sam's private label, were readied for shipment.

From top to bottom of the supply chain—from bulb to bottle to consumer—the Stanleys are involved in not only the production and sale of their products but also in quality control.

“When you're in that position,” Vince explained, “there's only one or two people you can look at if something goes wrong. Also, you can offer a product at a great price with great quality.”

Touring Vidalia Valley

The cooking and bottling area at Vidalia Valley is in the



THE COOKING AND BOTTLING AREA AT VIDALIA VALLEY CAN PRODUCE APPROXIMATELY 3000 GALLONS OF SAUCE, DRESSING, SALSA, OR RELISH IN A SINGLE DAY.

Continued on page 59

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near of the building, isolated from the rest of the facility to lessen the risk of contamination. From the company offices up front, one must pass through a warehouse-type storage area to reach it. Here, dry ingredients and empty containers are kept.

“We bring in whatever we can in tankers,” Vince explained. “If we can’t, we do it in barrels. If we’re just using a little bit of something, it comes in buckets and boxes. We still use the can opener around here, but wherever we can, we get things in bulk.”

Great care is taken, even in this storage area, to prevent foreign matter from entering the final product. Bottles and jars are stored upside down in their boxes since they do not yet have tops. Regular clean-ups occur during breaks in the cooking. Finally, chemicals like chlorine and disinfectants are kept behind lock and key.

Just off the large storage area are two smaller ones. One is a cooler zone capable of holding about 50,000 bushels of onions for up to six months, though most items leave much sooner. Anything needing refrigeration can be held here. Huge boxes of onions, already peeled, await shipment.

“Notice that everything we’ve got here has a lot number or a label,” Vince pointed out above the roar of large refrigeration units. “Everything has to be traced. That’s very important. If there is a problem, we want to insure that it doesn’t happen again.”

The final storage room, beside the entrance to the cooking area, is a large pantry where spices are kept. Vidalia Valley purchases these in bulk—cinnamon, salt and pepper, beet powder, celery seed, jerk seasonings, mustard seed, lemon pepper—the list is huge.

“We’ve got a lot of spices we use,” Vince told us, “because that’s what makes a product unique many times.”

Once inside the cooking and bottling room, one sees a food preparation area on one end, the bottling line on the other, and a metal mezzanine in the center where the actual cooking is taking place. To enter the room, one must put on a hair net and wash his hands. The air is saturated with the smell of spices cooking.

Vince says the mezzanine is a “layer of separation” which

helps to reduce errors in production. Ingredients are prepared and weighed, then placed on a pallet that’s lifted to the mezzanine. There, workers have a recipe sheet which tells them how much of each ingredient to add to the mix. On this day, they are cooking hot sauce.

“Only certain people are allowed on the mezzanine,” he explained. “If we put only the correct amount of product up there, we decrease the chances of putting the wrong product in the kettle.”

“We’ve got two 300-gallon kettles and three tanks where we can mix about 1500 gallons at a time. After we cook and mix it, it goes to the filler line. Today we’re using a line that’s filling 5-ounce bottles, the normal size for hot sauce.”

Vidalia Valley bottles most of its sauces and dressings in 8.5- and 12-ounce containers. Salsa and relish come in 16-ounce jars.

The bottling machinery can fill from 6 to 8 containers at a time, about 100 every minute. A cap goes on, then a black plastic seal is applied in a small heat tunnel. A printer places a lot number on the bottle, then a label is applied. Finally, a worker places the containers in boxes or on pallets for shipment. The plant’s capacity is about 3000 gallons per day.

“You never want to make a huge supply of anything because you want to keep it fresh,” Vince told us. “We usually cook up about a three month supply of a given product. We may cook 300 gallons, or as much as 3000, depending on how well it sells. That way, we’re always bringing fresh products to the shelves.”

In addition to its endless varieties of sauces, relishes, and salsas, Vidalia Valley offers 3 gift boxes containing different mixes of products. Their products are also sold in 12-bottle cases. Orders are taken on their website, www.vidaliavalley.com, and customers can call (877) 956-6466.

In a world where being “Number One” is often praised, the “Number Twos” that make it to Vidalia Valley do pretty well for themselves. And by nurturing sweet Vidalia onions from the bulb to the bottle, Vince Stanley and his family have made themselves a “One and Only” in their chosen field. ¶



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upcoming community events

Happenings in Toombs and Montgomery Counties

- August 1 - Lyons Merchants Association and Community Blood Drive - 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. - Toombs County Agri-Center, Lyons.
- August 3 - Downtown Vidalia Association's Coffee Before Hours - 8:00 a.m. - Farmer's Home Furniture Company, 602 East First Street, Vidalia.
- August 9 - Vidalia Community Blood Drive - 1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. - Vidalia Community Center, 107 Old Airport Road, Vidalia.
September 7 - Downtown Vidalia Association's Coffee Before Hours - 8:00 a.m. - Tummy Treasures, 117

Church Street, Vidalia.
- September 15 - Serving Up Toombs-Montgomery - 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. - A public event featuring area businesses, products, and services. Includes complimentary food, door prizes, services, and drawings for great prizes. Admission is \$10 - Banquet Facility, Hawk's Point Golf Club, 1801 Loop Road, Vidalia.
- September 22 - Downtown Vidalia Association's Business Matters After Hours - 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. - Historic Pal Theatre, 100 SW Main Street, Vidalia.
- October 3 - Lyons Merchants Association and Community Blood Drive - 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. - Toombs County Agri-Center,

Lyons.
- October 4 - Downtown Vidalia Association's Coffee Before Hours - 8:00 a.m. - Buy\$mart Pharmacy and Home Medical, 805 East First Street, Vidalia.
- October 7 & 8 - Real Squeal BBQ and Music Festival - Lyons - Amateurs compete in downtown Lyons on Friday, Kansas City BBQ Society sanctioned competition among professionals in Partin Park on Saturday along with kids activities (\$5 adult admission) - Local music downtown Friday, with country/pop artist Mandy Gawley in concert at Blue Marquee at 7:30 p.m (Tickets \$15 to \$20). Acoustic bands throughout the park Saturday, with folk-rock sister duo Larkin Poe at the Blue

Marquee at 8:00 p.m. (Tickets \$15 to \$20). - For more information, call (912) 526-6445.
- October 11 - Vidalia Community Blood Drive - 1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. - Vidalia Community Center, 107 Old Airport Road, Vidalia.
- October 22 - Vidalia High School Decade Reunion, 1970-80 - Dinner and dance, Poker Alice Band and Big K Sound with Kurt Kight - Hawk's Point Golf Club, 1801 Loop Road, Vidalia - For more information, call (912) 657-4514.

Contact the Toombs-Montgomery Chamber of Commerce at (912) 537-4466 for information about these and other area events.

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upcoming community events

Happenings in Tattnall County

- The Wiregrass Festival 2011 is being held again at the beautiful Courthouse Square in downtown Reidsville, Georgia. This year the festival is honoring the Tattnall County's faith community with a theme of "Foundations of Faith... A focus on the role of the faith community." The date of the festival will be Saturday, September 24, 2011 from 9:00 am until 5:00 pm and Sunday, September 25, 2011 from 1:00 pm until 5:00 pm. For more information regarding any of the events, contact the Greater Tattnall Chamber of Commerce at 912-557-6323 or 912-288-1132.

- Wiregrass Festival Golf Tournament - Held at the beautiful Brazell's Creek Golf Course at the Gordonia Altamaha State Park in Reidsville on Saturday, August 20, 2011 beginning at 8:00 am. Check in at 7:30 am. For more information call the Greater Tattnall Chamber of Commerce at 912-557-6323 or 912-288-1132 or visit the website at www.wiregrassfestival.com.

- Miss Wiregrass Festival Beauty Pageant - Held Saturday, September 10, 2011 beginning at 2 pm for younger ages and 7 pm for older ages at Tattnall County High School on Highway 57 between Reidsville and Glennville. Open to all contestants. For more information call the Greater Tattnall Chamber of Commerce at 912-557-6323 or 912-288-1132 or visit the website at www.wiregrassfestival.com.

Alma and Bacon County Events

- Guysie Mule Roundup - 1st Weekend in October

- Big Buck Contest: - Opening Day Southern Firearm Season

Community Fall Festival - 31st of October

Taste of Christmas - 3rd Thursday in November (ticket required)

Christmas Parade - 1st Saturday in December

Tour of Homes - 1st Thursday in December

For more information please call the Alma, Bacon County Development Authority/ Chamber of Commerce at 912-632-5859.

Hazlehurst and Jeff Davis County Events

October

- Jeff Davis County Fair - From rides and entertainment to the grass-covered midway, the Jeff Davis County Fair at the Jeff Davis County Fairgrounds has it all, including live animals, cotton candy, caramel corn, arts and crafts, and plenty of homemade fun and food. Contact the Chamber of Commerce at 912375.4543. Safe and Sober & Mule Poor Trail Ride (also in January) - Sponsored by the Jeff Davis Safe and Sober Committee, participants enjoy fellowship around the campfire on Friday night and then Saturday is filled with horseback riding along the banks of the Altamaha River at Bullard Creek Wildlife Management Area followed by a chuck wagon lunch.

November

- 1890 Homestead Celebration - From syrup making to old-fashioned church services to cane grinding, the two-day 1890 Homestead Celebration takes a look at life in the last part of the 19th Century.

Veterans Day Parade - With floats, marching bands, and memorial events, the Veterans Day Parade has become one of Jeff Davis County's most exciting events. Representing veterans from all branches of service, Jeff Davis County pays homage to the men and women who have served in both peacetime and wartime. Annual Tractor Pull - Located at the Jeff Davis Fairgrounds, kids of all ages will enjoy this entertaining event complemented by food and fun.

Baxley and Appling County Events

- November 24th Moonlight Madness 6:00 until 9:00 downtown Baxley

- December 3rd Christmas Parade begins at 6:00 p.m. with Winter Wonderland immediately afterwards and fire works at 8:00 p.m. at fair grounds

- Walk thru Bethlehem First Bapt. Church December 9, 10, 11 beginning at 6:00 p.m. Christmas in the Park a nondenominational service and music at Water Works Park on Wednesday December 14th.

- Annual Chamber Banquet Tuesday, January 31st at Baxley Church of God social hall at 7:00 p.m. with guest

speaker Van McCall.

For more information please contact the Baxley-Appling County Board of Tourism at 912-367-7731.

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- 1 small Vidalia onion, chopped
 - 1 tbsp olive oil
 - 1 garlic clove, crushed
 - 1/2 cup tomato ketchup
 - 1/3 cup fresh orange juice
 - 1/4 cup clear honey
 - 1 tbsp dark soy sauce
 - 2 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- 2 3/4 pounds Saint Louis-style spareribs, cut into individual ribs, salt and freshly ground black pepper, to season

Directions

- Pre-heat the oven to 325 F. In a frying pan, sauté the onion in the oil for 5 minutes or until soft. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute, then add the remaining sauce ingredients, bring up to a simmer and cook for 1 minute. Allow to cool slightly then whiz together in a blender.

- Put the ribs in a large roasting pan (line it with foil for easier clean-up) and season with salt and pepper. Pour over the sauce and toss the ribs to coat. Cover with foil and cook for 30 minutes. Increase the oven temperature to 400 F, uncover the ribs and cook for a further 30 minutes, turning over halfway. Transfer to a plate and allow to cool slightly before serving.

- Alternatively you can broil or BBQ the ribs -- season and cook in the broiler or over coals for 10 minutes on each side. Brush the ribs with some of the sauce then turn and broil or grill for 5 minutes. Repeat 3 to 4 times until the ribs are cooked through, with a sticky coating.



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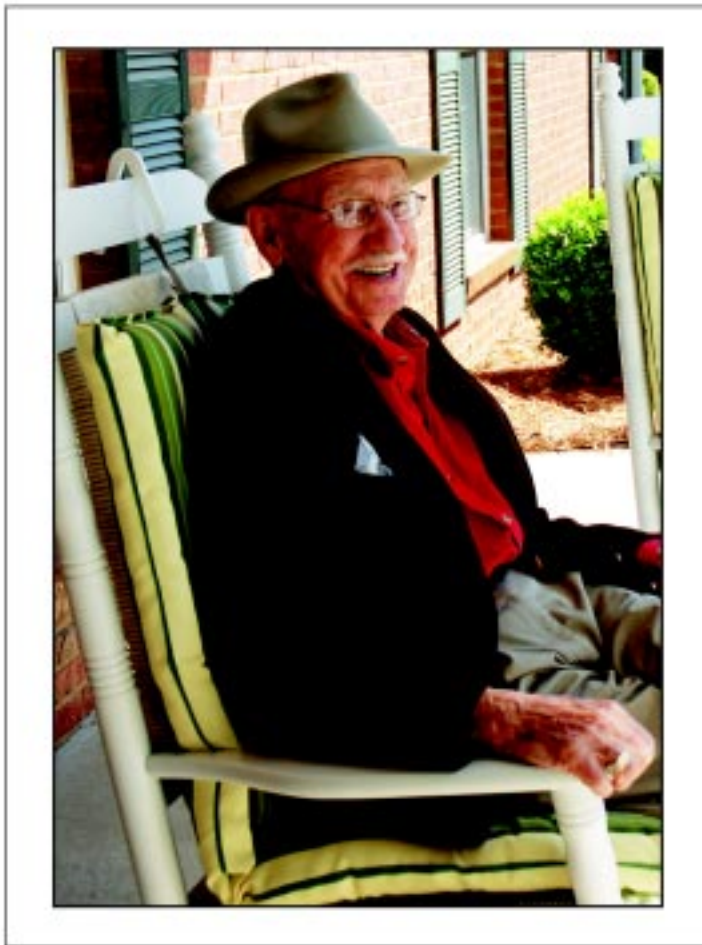
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