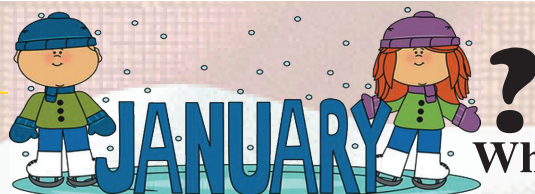


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Downtown Sulphur Bluff, Texas in the 1950's was home to two stores and several businesses. One Hopkins County resident I know spent summers and Christmases at the home place along Hwy. 71. Garland says when he rode his horse to the store he would tie him up at the front of the store. (I've always wondered which one) He says there were always some old gentlemen there for gossip or dominoes, and at least annually, one of them would ask, "Say, ain't you Jap Hays' grandboy?" The year Jap passed away and all the family came back to the Bluff for the funeral, it was cold wintertime. Jap lay "in state" in the breezeway porch of the house til they could hold the funeral. Jap was carried right across the road to the Sulphur Bluff Cemetery. He and his wife Willie rested in peace under a cedar tree until the tree had to be cut down in recent years. Now they are by the stump. Garland always loves a trip back to the home of his childhood memories. Seems Boulder, Colorado and his public school life just couldn't hold a candle to life at "the Bluff". Today, the old Dorner Store has a new name, Bear Country Store, and it's new owners are Billy Emerson and Brad Cecil. Be sure and drop in between 7am and 5pm Monday through Saturday. You'll find country hospitality along with food, gas and groceries. Here's a photo of a recent Saturday at the store.



Sulphur Bluff 6th grade student Jack Phillips is getting to be known as quite a fiddler. His musical choices are country music and Western Swing. At age 11, he is making history by releasing his first music CD. Jack plays fiddle and other instruments and sings on all 12 cuts, with the best in the music scene accompanying him and sharing duets. You can get yours at the store, just \$15!



Jack's first CD release event was at the Bear Country Store on January 7, 2017.

A Fundraiser Brisket Supper to benefit Sulphur Bluff Residents James & Sarona Brown is planned for Saturday, January 14 at 5 p.m. at the new Sulphur Bluff Gym. The Family lost their home & possessions in a fire on December 22.

Around the county, the Saltillo Lions are burning up the court in basketball and the Cumby Trojans are first-place winners in Robotics competition. And I'll watch for you at the corral gate, too. Til next week, let's count our blessings and remember to help our neighbors when we can.

SUDAKO ANSWERS

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

CALIFORNIA HOLIDAY

Tumbleweed Smith



Tumbleweed Smith

We decided to drive to our son BZ's house for the holidays. He lives with his family in Oakland, California. We left Big Spring at 7:15 AM and stayed on interstates until we got to Tucson, Arizona at 3:30 PM. Easy one-day drive. Sunshine all the way. Hardly any traffic. We hit it just right. As soon as we unloaded the car at the hotel it started raining. Big time rain. Snow on the mountains the next morning. We filled up with gas at \$1.99 a gallon in Arizona. The instant we crossed into California the price went up a dollar or more. Did I tell ya California is expensive?

On the second day of our trip we made up for the lack of traffic the previous day. Although we abided by the posted speed limit of 65, cars zoomed past us like we were parked. Crazy drivers, weaving in and out of traffic. In my rear view mirror cars came toward us like self-guided missiles, then turned just in time and scooted around us. We saw only a couple of highway patrolmen. After 9 hours of driving, we spent the second night in Bakersfield, California. Our route had changed from our original plan when we saw signs saying chains were necessary for travel over the Sierras. So we chose the lower, drier route.

We arrived in Oakland in time for lunch with the family. The holidays were so much fun visiting with our son BZ, his wife Margaret and their two sons, 13-year-old Max and 11-year-old Aiden. They live in the suburb of Montclair, a charming little village surrounded by steep hills and dark forests of eucalyptus and redwood trees. Every time I go there I walk the 2 miles into town along a picturesque paved trail that features a canopy of shade trees.

BZ has a recording studio and I got to watch him create a musical background for a singer. The singer happened to be his son Max who writes songs and sings them. "My dad is good at what he does," says Max. "He makes me sound good." I also got to hear Aiden play his violin. He was practicing for an upcoming concert.

Max is a Golden State Warrior fan. We surprised him with a ticket to the Warriors-Mavericks game on December 30. He could hardly believe it. He was thrilled. All six of us went to the game. Susan had given me a present of a parking pass so we were able to park just a few yards from the arena. Margaret was on crutches after undergoing a knee procedure. The day before the game she called the arena to see if she could sit in a seat without climbing stairs. She was given a number to call when she arrived at the arena. She called and within seconds a golf cart that holds six people pulled up by our vehicle. Walking from the golf cart to the arena entrance she discovered one of her crutches was broken. A girl from the arena staff took over at that point, had the crutch repaired and accompanied Margaret to a handicapped section that offered great seats. Max sat with his mother. The rest of us went to our regular seats. After the game, a cart was waiting to take us to our vehicle. The girl who had been such a big help went by to check on Margaret during the game. The Oracle Arena staff was amazing. The Warriors won, which made Max very happy.

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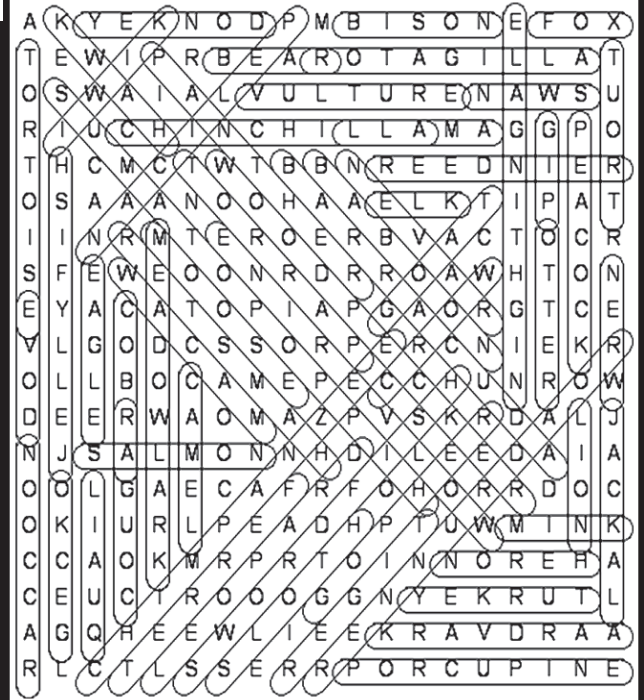
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Ray E. Crumpton

Ray E. Crumpton went to be with his Lord and Savior on Saturday, Jan. 7, 2017, at his home in Cumby, Texas, with his wife of 60 years at his side.

He was born Oct. 10, 1936, south of Cumby. His parents were Ofie and Vera Bennett Crumpton. He married Ann Lindsey on June 24, 1956, at the Washington Street Baptist Church, Greenville. He was a Southern Baptist minister for 53 years.

He graduated from Cumby High School in 1954. He moved to Dallas and worked for Wilson Sporting Goods for two years and the United States Postal Service for seven years. On Aug. 24, 1962, during a two week tent revival at White Rock Baptist Church, he surrendered to God's call to preach the Gospel.

He attended East Texas Baptist College in Marshall, for three years and pastored Hall Baptist Church. He then served as pastor of Prairie Valley Baptist Church, Campbell and Union Baptist Church, Sulphur Springs. He graduated from East Texas State University in 1968 with a Bachelor of Science degree. In 1973, he received a degree in religious education from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in New Orleans, Louisiana. While in the seminary he pastored churches in Louisiana and Mississippi.

He moved to Beavercreek, Ohio (near Dayton), to serve as pastor of University Baptist Mission. He led them to become a constituted church during his time there. God led him to pastorates in Ashland, Kentucky, and Houston, Texas, before leading him back to the Greenville area in 1983.

He returned to ETSU to earn his teachers certification. He taught Earth Science at Quinlan Middle School for 17 years.

During these years he served as pastor at East Delta Baptist Church, Cooper; Peniel Baptist Church; First Baptist Church, Campbell; England Grove Baptist Church, Commerce; Chapel Hill Baptist Church and County Line Baptist Church, Rains County. He served area churches as interim pastor and while serving at Point First Baptist Church, was given the title of Pastor Emeritus by that congregation.

He is survived by his wife; two daughters, Kay Stinson of Aurora, Colorado, and Debbie Blakley and husband Robert of Livingston, Texas; son-in-law Cecil Rowland of Georgetown, Indiana; six grandchildren, Jamie Bodenbender and husband Chad of Salem, Indiana, Michael Rowland and wife Nicole of Ewa Beach, Hawaii, Dustin Beaver and wife Katie of Fort Worth, Samuel Blakley and wife Lizzie of Carrollton, Nathaniel Blakley of Nacogdoches and Danielle Blakley and fiancée Ed Brown of Huntsville; five great-grandchildren, David Hoggarth, Noah Bodenbender, Serenity AllieAnn Bodenbender, Charlie Rowland and Samuel Rowland; sister-in-laws, Georgia White of Houston and Freeda Crumpton Brewer of Greenville, and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

He was preceded in death by his parents; daughter, Cindy Rowland; brothers, Murray A. and J. T. Crumpton; sisters, Marie Bibby and Myrtle Ruth Keller; sister and brother-in-laws, Martha and Billy Pope, Maurine and Cecil Clark, Charles White and Gene Brewer and mother-in-law, Eula Lindsey Parish.

Visitation was from 6 to 8 p.m., Tuesday, at Coker-Mathews Funeral Home. Funeral services were at 2 p.m., Wednesday, at County Line Baptist Church, Hwy. 275 S of Miller Grove, with Rev. Benny Chaffin and Rev. Wayne Darty officiating. Burial followed at Sunny Point Cemetery.

Pallbearers were Rick Berry, Dale Crumpton, Joey Crumpton, Mark Crumpton, Daniel Knight and Darren Money. Honorary pallbearers were David Beasley, Woody Garmon, Doyle Glossup, Johnny Sampson, Marion Spurlock, Lewis Watts and Chuck Wesson.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Gideons International Bible Fund and the Christmas Child Shoebox Fund at County Line Baptist Church.



William K. Byerly

William K. (Bill) Byerly went to his heavenly home Sunday, January 8, 2017. Bill was born in Lake Charles, Louisiana on March 19, 1941 to Kinzie L. (deceased) and Dorothy Byerly who survives.

Bill went to 19 different schools before graduating from Sulpur High School in Sulpur, Louisiana. Bill graduated from East Texas State now Texas A and M Commerce where he fell in love and married Sandra Kay Smith in Arlington, Texas. They were blessed with two children and three grandchildren.

Bill retired as a scout executive with the Boy Scouts of America. Following his time with the Boy Scouts Bill became the Director of Family Ministries at Marvin United Methodist Church. His time at Marvin saw the beginning of the senior adult ministries or the "Grown-Ups" and an extensive travel program for them. Bill's responsibilities also included the Men's Ministry, the church recreation program along with special church dinners and functions. Bill loved serving the Lord and mentoring many who came into his life.

Bill and Sandy shared a wonderful life together living in Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana and finally back to Tyler making many friends along the way. Bill loved to travel and explore the world. Bill was often planning his next cruise or bus trip. Bill has many lifelong friends who always knew they could count on him. Bill loved people and made friends easily. Their daughter Christi Byerly and her son William Zachary Byerly live in Bryan, Texas. Patrick, Bill and Sandy's son, lives in San Diego, California with his wife Jill and their children Bella and Blaze. Bill is also survived by his sister Brenda Byerly and family, Bob Byerly and family, John Byerly and family along with numerous aunts, uncles and cousins.

Services for Bill were held Wednesday, January 11 at 11 am at Marvin Methodist Church, 300 West Erwin Street, Tyler, Texas and visitation followed. Burial was at Restlawn Cemetery on Hwy 154 in Sulphur Springs, Texas under the direction of Murray-Orwosky Funeral Home, Sulphur Springs, Texas. Memorials can be made if desired to Marvin United Methodist Church Eternal Flame Fund. Honorary pallbearers were Gary Vincent, John Hopkins, George Tefteller, Dr. Duane Andrews, Jeff Ford, Bud Buschardt, Rev. Jim Ross, Dr. Jim Garrett, Leon Anderson, Quinton Chamness, Mike Cannon, Garvis Avants, Doug Hunsley, Ron Sallee, Vern Broadus, and Johnny Grigsby.

Arrangements were under the direction of Murray-Orwosky Funeral Home.

August Henry Metz

August Henry Metz, age 92, of Point, passed away Saturday, Jan. 7, 2017, at his home, with his loving family around him. He was born in Oak Harbor, Ohio, Nov. 1, 1924, to Mr. and Mrs. August H. Metz. He married LaQuita Preskitt, in Garland, on Dec. 10, 1974. Gus worked as a salesman for a plastics company for many years. Also, he worked for South Rains SUD, as general manager for a number of years. Gus was a member of Emory Baptist Church. He served his country in the U.S. Army. Gus was a member of Mars Hill Masonic Lodge, Shriners, and the American Legion 156.

Left to remember and cherish his memory are: Wife, LaQuita Metz of Point, Sons: Tom O. Metz of Jacksonville, FL: and Joseph Borowski of Atlanta, GA., Daughters: Mary Goodnight and, Melissa Cathcart both of Point, Grandchildren: Heather, Katherine, Rachel, Caralyn, Jason, Apryl, Jack, August, Connor and Liam, Great-grandchildren: Kiela, Caleb, Logan, Brandon, Christy, Hannah, and Robby, His faithful little companions: Buddy and Chloe. Numerous other loving family and friends. Preceded in death by: Parents, 2 daughters, Susan Metz and Ann Metz; 1 son, John Borowski; 1 brother, and 3 sisters..

Cremation arrangements are under the direction of Wilson-Orwosky Funeral Home.

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Things Could Have Been Worse...

Commentary by Dr. Don Newbury

We mortals aren't much good when routines--particularly those most mundane--are interrupted.

Men who refuse to accept this claim as "you-can-take-it-to-the-bank" stuff--or even to the pawn shop--are urged to take a simple test on which my case can rest: The next time you dress, try putting your other leg in first.

The probability of this claim playing out is greatly magnified at holiday time, when hurrying is exceeded only by scurrying. Some emerge unscathed, others not so much....

I'm going to cite three true-to-life vignettes, two that make eyes water and a third that awakens the "been there/done that" recesses of grandparents' memories. (As if we don't have enough evidence courtesy of our own bodies groaning about growing older, grandchildren come up with observations that nail facts down tight.)

To avoid embarrassment, I'm going to offer anonymity to the par-

ticipants. (Except for a bonus vignette provided by my brother, who always has been guilty as charged.)

Trust me that the accounts are absolutely, hand-on-Bible truths, and, if pressed by compelling reason, sincerity or runaway curiosity, names can be provided later....

Scene I: A salesman, dreading a bumper-to-bumper kind of day, reaches for eye drops to jumpstart his vision. He grabs a cologne bottle by mistake, freezing in place after a single squirt, thus sparing the other eye discomfort. "I look for silver linings," he said, "Folks at the office said they never smelled such a fragrant eye."

Scene II: Since I experienced retina repair and reattachment to its moorings back in the spring, the following account hits home. It is a "there-but-for-grace-of-God" situation in which I could have had a major role--probably even a screaming one.

Another patient for the

same surgery--a man about my age--fouled up early in an attempt to administer treatment at home. He reached for a tube of ointment, forgetting he'd used Super Glue on a home project earlier. (Again, readers, you are getting ahead of me.) Yes, he picked up the wrong tube, squirted and, you can guess the rest....

He was summoned immediately to his surgeon's office, where his eyelids were unstuck without causing any damage.

Don't tell me the surgeon didn't thumb quickly through medical literature for "what-to-do-now" instructions, or maybe he simply Googled. However, if doctors have truly seen everything, maybe an eye glued shut is "old hat."

I do know this: In the future, when I see pictures of glue claimed to be strong enough to hold a truck aloft, I'll assume photo-shopping is involved. There'll also likely be "do-not-try-this-at-home" warnings....

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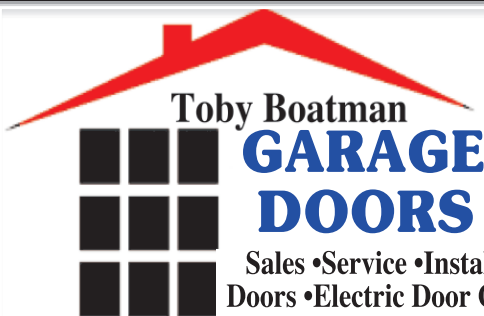
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