



Volume 16

Number 1

January - February 2004

PREZ SEZ

I hope that all of you have had a happy holiday season and that the New Year will be a healthy and happy one.

It is an honor to have been considered and will be a privilege to serve as your new president. I do so with the hope that I can do a decent job. I will do the best that I can. I have a very hard time standing in front of a group and speaking, so if all of you will be patient and understanding of my shortcomings, we will make it through this year.

The first thing I want to do is thank all the officers, committee chairpersons and directors who have agreed to serve with me this coming year. I will need everyone's help. I know that each of these jobs takes time and effort and most of us are busy with other responsibilities so I want to express my sincere appreciation to all of you.

We had a nice crowd of 113 members and guests at our November luncheon at the Vestavia Country Club. I think everyone who came enjoyed themselves. I thought the food and service were very good, and the speaker was outstanding. Thanks to Dora Brandt for taking care of all the arrangements and to Nell King for the use of her

club membership which allowed us to use the country club. Thanks also to Jay Dorrance for finding such a great speaker.

Please note that our next meeting will be in Building 42, in the meeting room downstairs in the back of the cafeteria at 1 p.m. on Monday, January 12, 2004. Come early and have lunch with us in the cafeteria before the meeting. You will enjoy the fellowship.

— Sid Varagona

PROGRAM, THE HISTORY OF FLIGHT & NOTICE OF CHANGE OF LOCATION FOR THE JANUARY 12, 2004 MEETING

Because of a conflict in scheduling, Room 130 will not be available for our Board of Directors or the regular membership meeting in January. We will meet instead in the conference room off of the cafeteria. As Sid said in his message, the meeting will start at 1 p.m.. This is for this meeting only.

The program, brought to us by our own retiree, Wayne Walton, will be in recognition of the 100th anniversary of the Wright brother's now famous flights at Kitty Hawk, NC, on December 17, 1903.

Orville's flight went 120 feet in 12 seconds while in the fourth flight on that same day the other brother, Wilber, covered 852 feet in 59 seconds. That was enough to credit the Wright Brothers with man's first successful flight of a heavier-than-air mechanically propelled airplane that would carry both an engine and a man. A new and improved plane was not patented by the Wright Brothers until May 22, 1906. Wayne will have many more interesting facts on The History of Flight. Don't you dare miss this meeting. We know where you live.

— Jay Dorrance

The three hardest tasks in the world are neither physical feats nor intellectual achievements, but moral acts: to return love for hate, to include the excluded, and to say "I was wrong."

— Sydney J. Harris
Pieces of Eight

**SCS RETIREE LEADERSHIP
 FOR 2004**

OBITUARIES

Officers	
President	Sid Varagona 942-5047
Vice President	J. D. Naramore 629-7075
Secretary	Pat Moore 979-3353
Treasurer	Henry Garrett 853-6079
Directors	
Buddy Coggin	785-5992
Jack Goertz	991-7766
Don Jackson	680-9125
Elliene Jackson	680-9125
Al Mikell	967-0515
Larry Wallace	491-3097
Warren Glover (ex-officio)	822-5753
Committee	
Chairpersons	
Arrangements	Dora Brandt 956-0502
Audit	Wayne Walton 822-1875
Fellowship	
Finance	Tom Steele 836-1904
Membership	Gene Kachelhofer 991-8604
Newsletter	Dan & Myrna Wise 942-2336
Nominating	Charles Hickman 823-4597
Program	Fred Ehrensperger 655-2725
Sunshine	Nell King 822-7562

In Memoriam

Sherwood H. Lawrence, III, 84, of Hoover died at a local hospital on Saturday, November 15, 2003. He was Director of Power Engineering at the time of his retirement in 1984 with 38 years of service. A veteran of WW II, he served as a 1st Lieutenant in the Army Air Corps. He was a 1942 graduate of the University of Alabama and a member of the Shades Mountain Baptist Church.

Mr. Lawrence is survived by his wife of 60 years, Carolyn, a son S. H. Lawrence IV, a daughter Vicki Lawrence James, two grandsons; S. H. Lawrence V and Richard O. Lawrence and one granddaughter; Hadley Carolyn James.

The family received friends at the Jefferson Memorial Garden funeral home on Monday afternoon, November 17, with a graveside service on Tuesday, November 18, at 11 a.m.

Condolences

Our most sincere and heartfelt sympathy is extended to SCS retiree **Jerry Vandegrift** and his family in the death of his brother, Erskine Vandegrift, Jr., who departed this life on Wednesday, October 22, 2003, after playing tennis with some friends. He was 82.

This past year he celebrated the 60th reunion of his graduation from Auburn University. He retired as a senior project engineer from ACIPCO after 40 years of service. As a Boy Scoutmaster he was awarded the Silver Beaver.

Mr. Vandegrift is survived by, in addition to his brother, Jerry, his loving wife, Mary who he had been keeping company with for over 50 years, four children and six grandchildren.

A memorial service for Mr. Vandegrift was held on Saturday, October 25 at 11 a.m. at the Shades Valley Presbyterian Church where he had been a member for the last 48 years.

— Jay Dorrance

2003 MEMORIAL REMEMBRANCES

Remembering these SCS RETIREES:

Phillip Busby - 60, died May 3, William Manly - 79, died June 26; Erskine Bentley - 69, died July 21 and Neil Fredrick - 67, died October 1.

Remembering these retired Southern Company Employees:

Carolyn Funderburg - 79, SCS, died February 10; Pat McDonald - 75, Southern Nuclear, died May 25; Dr. Warren Andrews - 71, Southern Nuclear, died June 19; Philip Shepard - 66, SCS, died August 28 and Sherwood Lawrence III - 84, SCS, died November 15.

Remembering Our Loved Ones:

Marge Passen - (?), died December 17, 2002, wife of Paul Passen; Anita Clark - 70, died January 2, widow of Buddy Clark; Elizabeth Boyles - (?), died February 2, widow of K. W. Boyles; Sarah Burgess - 94, died February 6, mother of Margaret Carter; Lois Brown - 92, died May 11, mother of Peggy Case; Bennie Addison - 71, died May 18, wife of Ed Addison; Clara Thrasher - 70, died June 17, mother of Rev. Herb Thrasher; Martha Welch - 70, died July 26, wife of James Welch; Elvada Brickell - 81, died September 14, wife of M. C. Brickell; Donald Hoppe - 76, died August 28, brother of Myrna Wise and Erskine Vandegrift - 82, died October 22, brother of Jerry Vandegrift.

— Jay Dorrance

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE REPORT

Helen Brothers recently attended a Christmas party with a group of ladies who are Southern Company employees and retirees who get together once a month. Her husband, Glenn, took her so that she could be with her friends again.

Tom Dowdle has cancer and is presently having treatments. Sounds great and he is doing well.

Martha McMillan is at home after breaking her leg the first of August. She's had a difficult time

but is doing much better. She's presently going to therapy.

If you are aware of illness that should be reported to our membership, please call me at 822-7562.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

— Nell King

EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENT FUND

SCS retiree **Paul Fischer**, who died of cancer in 1999, left an enduring legacy to Alabama Public Television through his will. His generous endowment to APT will help ensure the kinds of programs that he and his late wife, Alma, both enjoyed will continue. Mr. Fischer knew that his gift to APT, to be known as the Paul and Alma Fischer Education Endowment Fund, would benefit everyone in the community - not just for a little while, but for years to come.

— Jay Dorrance

BIRTHDAYS

Growing old is not a time of life; it is a state of mind.

JANUARY: 6 - Robert Haubein, 13 - Ralph Tribble, 14 - Jan Ellenburg, 18 - Charlie Michlewright, 22 - Charles Hancock, 28 - Jackie Imbusch and Norma Jean Johnston.

FEBRUARY: 4 - Bob Ellenburg, 12 - Glen Baker, 21 - Veva Naramore and Carl Self, 22 - Henry Vincent, 23 - Tom Shepherd, 25 - Gale Dougherty and Joseph Leamon, 27 - Lera Pate, 28 - John Hargett.

— Jay Dorrance

Never worry about the size of your Christmas tree. In the eyes of children, they are all 30 feet tall.

— Larry Wilde
The Merry Book of Christmas

OLD SCAM, NEW TWIST

A new e-mail version of an age-old scam has been spotted in our area. Some folks are complaining about receiving misleading e-mails from Bonus America offering an unclaimed “free prize” or package. Prizes touted include Daewoo mini-TVs, Nu-Sonic stereo systems and Smart-Cam digital cameras. After clicking on a link to receive the merchandise, they find out a minimum purchase must be made to receive the “free” items. Some allege the actual free items offered are not delivered, or are not worth the value claimed. Many allege difficulties contacting customer service and e-mails and phone calls are not returned. Others allege the company continues to send e-mails after customers request not to be contacted again or experience non-delivery of items ordered. If you have truly won a prize, there should be no redemption fees or other conditional rules to comply with in order to actually receive your prize.

— *Bulletin*
Better Business Bureau
Sept/Oct 2003

DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN?

When I was a girl, ice was a precious commodity," relates Dorie G. of Gatesville, Texas. "Like most families, we didn't have a refrigerator—we had an icebox.

The iceman came by twice a week with huge chunks of ice in his truck. He chopped us a 10- to 25-pound block, depending on what we needed. On hot days, all the neighborhood kids gathered around the back of the truck, waiting for permission to pick up a chip of ice to suck on. At home, I got into trouble more than once after chipping a small piece of ice from the block in the icebox.

Now, as I casually grab a handful of ice cubes from my freezer, I'm amazed at the wonderful

conveniences cooks have today...and I marvel at a simpler time when a chip of ice was something special.

— Doris G.
Taste of Home

A LITTLE WOODEN TRAIN

My grandfather lived in the small hamlet of Hudson, Michigan. Grandpa was a farmer, but whenever someone needed something handmade or repaired, they called him for over 30 years.

Much is learned about desire during lean times. Realizing Providence sometimes replaces the unattainable with something even more prized requires years of maturity. Herein lies the theme of this 1939 holiday story recalling those impoverished days in America.

Late in the Great Depression, most of my clothes were homemade, and my shoes were fixed again and again in Grandpa's shop. My "Gramma" administered home haircuts with love, and we ate well from simple farm fare.

During one of Gramma's shopping trips near Christmas, we hurried through the Sears-Roebuck store. I pulled loose as we passed within view of the toy department. Wandering through the aisles, I came upon the most prized toy of the time, the electric train. I paused and had a fanciful vision of the toy under our Christmas tree. But, there was no possibility of that, for rural electrification hadn't come anywhere near our farm.

Next to the electric train sat a windup model consisting of a sleek black-and-silver engine, bright red-and-silver passenger cars, accompanied by a set of detachable track units.

A faint hope emerged that I might get the windup model. Suddenly, a strong grip on my arm spun me around, and Gramma, checking size, held a pair of bib overalls to my frame.

"Lookee, Gramma, it's the train I want," I said pleadingly while pointing to the toy. But abruptly we moved on, and all I heard were mumbles of "We'ul see, we'ul see."

School wound down to its mid-winter break, and the last day was devoted to singing carols, cutting out red Sants and green Christmas tree profiles, and stringing popcorn on thread. Santa visited the school and I recognized my Uncle Orville and some of his Masonic lodge brothers handing out an apple and a small brown sack of hard candy to each child. Such gifts were all the children received that holiday.

As the rickety wooden school hack bumped along gravel roads on the way home, I thought of the windup train. I had a vision of Santa opening his pack by the tree where boughs tinkled with ornaments and shimmering tinsel. From out of his pack came the black engine with a chrome key in its side, then the red-and-silver cars, and finally a bundle of track.

A soggy mitten slid past my face ending the vision. My friend Kenneth sitting behind me leaned forward whispering, "I'm a getting' the big ole red fire truck we was lookin' at in the catalog."

I said, "I ain't sure I'm getting' the train I wants, 'cause Gramma said, 'If wishes were horses, sure an' the beggars 'ud be a ridin'.' And that was all she'd say."

Christmas Eve, after milking and supper, Gramma whisked me up to my loft room and warned, "Santee don't come 'til the wee ones are fast asleep. Now ye be sain' yer prayers fer 'em younguns without a warm bed the likes o' yours"! She turned down the lamp wick and backed out the door saying, "Sweet dreams, lady."

Next morning, the sitting room stove cracked and popped as I sat cross-legged before the Christmas tree. On the end of each bough, tiny candles sat unlit. A few brightly wrapped packages lay on a white bed sheet covering the tree base. Between the packages, a little wooden train lay snuggled in the sheet's folds. It was no fanciful dream, just a plain wooden engine with red drive wheels, pulling a wooden coal car, followed by a tanker car, a boxcar and a caboose—all coupled with screw hooks.

I pulled the little train out onto the oval braided rag rug, and a momentary sadness engulfed me. A tear formed in my eye. As I reached for a tiny

rectangular tag on a red string trailing from the caboose, a wrinkled hand came over my shoulder and grasped mine. Gramma said softly, "Yer Granpa made 'at in his shop fer you. Now don't be showin' no disappointment, lad. Sure an' there's no boy got a train handmade by his Granpa."

Upon returning to school, I heard stories of fire engines and dump trucks, but none of those toys were lovingly fashioned by the expert hands of an Irish grandfather. The little rectangular tag on a bright red string read, "To Doby from Santee."

— Joseph "Doby" Edwards
Scottish Rite Journal
December 2003

A LITTLE CHRISTMAS HUMOR

A Sunday School teacher was telling her class about the three Wise Men and their gifts. A little girl who had recently become a big sister to a baby brother said, "I guess gold and all that stuff are alright, but I'll bet Mary really wished somebody had brought diapers."

A four-year-old boy was asked to give thanks before Christmas dinner. The family members bowed their heads in expectation, and he began his prayer by thanking God for all his friends, naming them one by one. Then he thanked God for his mommy, daddy, brother, sister, grandma, grandpa, and all his aunts and uncles. Then he began to thank God for the food. He went on to give thanks for the turkey, dressing, fruit salad, cranberry sauce, pies, cakes, and even the "Cool Whip." Then he paused, and everyone waited...and waited. After a long silence, the young fellow looked up to his mother and asked, "If I thank God for the broccoli, won't He know I'm lying"?

SOMETIMES I THINK WE'RE ALONE IN THE UNIVERSE, AND SOMETIMES I THINK WE'RE NOT. IN EITHER CASE, THE IDEA IS QUITE STAGGERING.

— Arthur C. Clarke



SOME OF YOUR SCS RETIREES LEADERSHIP

Left to right: Sid Varagona, J.D. Naramore, Pat Moore, Al Mikell, Jack Goertz, Henry Garrett

SCS RETIREES
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