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Volume 16

Number 6

November-December 2004

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### **PREZ SEZ**

I am nearing the end of my term as president of SCS and Southern Nuclear Retirees group and I consider myself privileged and honored to have served. Although it has been an honor, it has also been one of the most difficult things I have ever tried to do. When Jerry Vandergrift asked me if I would serve I was very hesitant, to say the least, but Jerry assured me that you are a very forgiving, helpful and understanding group. How true that has been.

One example: at our last meeting our speaker made a very short presentation, which would have made our meeting very, very short. Several of our members, noting my distress, came to my rescue and volunteered some very interesting real life experiences they had had with motorcycles. This filled the time nicely.

You all have been so forgiving of my shortcomings and so understanding of the difficulty I had in handling our meetings this year.

I also want to say that without the encouragement and help from the board of directors, officers, committees and all our members, I couldn't have made it through the year. I thank all of you.

I hope that you all will continue to support our retirees organization by attending meetings and, if

asked to serve on one of our committees next year, you will consider helping if you can. But if you can't, please don't stay away. Come and enjoy the fellowship. There is no other place you will find the friendship and fellowship with former professional associates and personal friends.

Thanks again to everyone.

— Sid Varagona

### **NOVEMBER MEETING**

See the invitation on Page 3 of this newsletter.

— Dora Brandt

### **NOVEMBER PROGRAM**

The speaker for our Annual Meeting will be Laurie Stroud, Editor and Co-Owner of Birmingham Christian Family.

Ms. Stroud was born and raised in Birmingham and is the daughter of a Lutheran minister. She graduated Cum Laude from Vanderbilt University with a degree in English. She also studied at St. John's College in Oxford, England.

Ms. Stroud began her professional career in 1985 at WBRC-TV in Birmingham. Much of her seven years in television was dedicated to reporting and sharing with the public information about medical advances and services. She also co-anchored the morning news with long time TV personality, Bill Bolen.

Ms. Stroud left broadcasting to pursue a career in public relations with HealthSouth Corporation. During her employment at HealthSouth, she served in several capacities including Public Relations Director for HealthSouth Birmingham Network and Regional Business Development Director for Alabama and Georgia. She coordinated numerous charity fundraising events such as the United Cerebral Palsy Telethon. She also had the opportunity to start and serve as editor of a national health magazine, *Outcomes*.

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Since 2000 she has produced *Birmingham Christian Family*, a monthly magazine (35,000 copies) distributed throughout the Birmingham area. This magazine is designed to provide Christians and the community at large with ways to grow and develop as part of Birmingham's Christian Family. It promotes positive living by sharing with readers the latest news on entertainment, healthy living, parenting and inspirational literature as well as what individuals and organizations are doing to address the needs of the family.

Ms. Stroud is the recipient of numerous awards such as Outstanding Medical Reporting from the Medical Assoc. of Alabama, and Best Health Series from the American Psychiatry Assoc.

She and her husband, Jeff, own The Christian Family Publication, Inc. which, in addition to the Birmingham publication, includes franchises in Nashville, Atlanta, Jackson (Miss.), Indianapolis, Tuscaloosa, and the Tennessee Valley (Huntsville/Cullman/Decatur). They also have three sons - Benton (6), Jonathan (5), and Trae (5).  
— Fred Ehrensperger

### HURRICANE IVAN CANCELS BARBER MUSEUM TOUR

Hurricane Ivan came through our area on Thursday, September 16, and almost all of our SCS Retirees stayed home on Friday to pick up brush, wait for the power to come back on, etcetera. Only Buddy Coggin made the drive to Barber's Museum, and he got the full tour! If the demand is there, this tour will be rescheduled for sometime in the spring. Watch the newsletter or check our SCS Retirees' website for a new schedule date.

— Jack Goertz

**Want to keep up with what's happening?  
Got a computer?  
Visit the SCS Retiree Website  
<http://www.scsretirees.com>**

### SCS RETIREE LEADERSHIP FOR 2004

#### 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

**SOUTHERN NUCLEAR AND  
SCS RETIREES  
HOLIDAY LUNCHEON ANNUAL  
MEETING**

**VESTAVIA HILLS COUNTRY CLUB**  
Vestavia Hills, AL

**Wednesday, November 10, 2004**  
**11 a.m. – 2 p.m.**

**Meeting Agenda**

11:00 a.m. – 11:55 a.m.  
Sign in / Holiday Luncheon Social Hour

11:00 – 11:30 a. m.  
Board of Directors meeting

12 Noon  
Seated Luncheon will be served  
Menu:  
Tossed Green Salad, Pecan-  
crusted Breast of Chicken, Wild Rice  
and Chef's Vegetable Medley  
and Peach Crisp served with  
Vanilla bean Ice Cream

12:40 p.m.  
Program: Laurie Stroud, Editor  
of *Birmingham Christian Family*

1:15 p.m.  
Business Meeting / Election and Installation  
of 2005 Officers

1:30 p.m.  
Door Prizes and Adjournment

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Each of you should have received a copy of this invitation in the mail by now. But, just in case you did not, here are the particulars.

**Price:** \$15 per person; \$30 per couple (spouse or guest).

**Payment:** Make check payable to SCS Retirees and mail to Dora Brandt at 1616 Heritage Place, Irondale, AL 35210 on or before November 5. Be sure to note for Dora your spouse's name or the name of your guest, as applicable.

**Cancellation:** no later than Nov. 8, by calling Dora Brandt at 956-0502. After that date, no exceptions, except in case of family emergency.

*Please note this is a firm reservation.*

**BIRTHDAYS**

**NOVEMBER.** 1-Ozen Batum, 4-Elizabeth Wintter, 7-Emma Laura Patrick, 8-Mary Hendricks, 9-Grady Smith, 10-Jean Guthrie, 11-Noel Chambless, 13-George Burson, 14-Frank Brewer and 23-Mildred Fleming.

**DECEMBER.** 3-Attie Fleming and Bill Holcombe, 9-Jackson Wintter, 13-Betty Allen, 18-Mac Pate, 20-Linda Rooker, 26-Jack Townsend, 29-John Plaxco, 30-Jack Greenhill and 31-Buddy Coggin.

— Jay Dorrance

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR THE NEW  
YEAR!**

Several positions are needed to help the SCS Retirees Board of Directors next year. We're looking for a volunteer for each of these positions:

- Sunshine Committee—keeps abreast of all Retirees, their passing, and any illnesses or accidents or hospital stays. Informs the

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newsletter editor of what's happening, and makes a brief announcement at our meetings.

- Membership Committee—works closely with treasurer and keeps the official membership list. Sends out the membership invitations annually to all eligible to join us.
- Program Committee—helps select speakers for our meetings. (This is possibly the easiest job imaginable! People love to come speak at our meetings, and there are already lots of suggestions for speakers for future meetings)!
- Fellowship Committee—This position has been open for the past two years. We need someone who is willing to work with the Travel Coordinator of the APC Energizers to keep the SCS Retirees in synch with the great trips the Energizers are offering. Main function this year would be to keep our group notified of the Energizers' trips in time for us to take advantage of these opportunities.

If you're interested in helping out in one of these positions, please let me know at your earliest convenience. You can either reach me by e-mail (goertz@mindspring.com) or by telephone (205-991-7766).

— Jack Goertz

### **OBITUARIES**

#### **In Memoriam**

**William Russell Brownlee**, 98, of Birmingham, Alabama passed away Sunday, August 22, 2004. He retired on January 1, 1971, from SCS after 20 years of service. He became SCS President in 1967 and CEO 1969 to 1971. From 1971 to 1986 Mr. Brownlee served as administrative manager for the Southeastern Electric Reliability Council (SERC) a voluntary organization. He also served 12 years with the Commonwealth & Southern Corp. before coming to SCS in 1951. He is survived by his wife of 72 years, Elizabeth Marquet Brownlee, a daughter, two

grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews. Private graveside services were held for Mr. Brownlee.

**Russell E. "Abe" Lincoln**, 81, of Birmingham, Alabama died Tuesday, August 31, 2004. He retired in September 1986 from the SCS Electrical Department after 31 years of service. Mr. Lincoln was preceded in death by his wife, Mildred. He is survived by two sons and two daughters, a sister, eight grandchildren and one great grandchild. A funeral service was held Friday, September 3 at the Rideout Roebuck Chapel with burial in Jefferson Memorial Gardens.

**Evander E. (Van) Peavy**, 70, of Birmingham/Pensacola passed away in his sleep on Tuesday, August 31, 2004. He retired from SCS (date and department unavailable). Mr. Peavy was preceded in death by his first wife, Barbara, and is survived by his second wife, Diane, a son and a daughter, two stepsons, four grandchildren and his mother. A memorial service was held at Cedar Hill Chapel in Pensacola, Florida, on Thursday, September 2, and a graveside service at Southern Heritage Cemetery in Birmingham, Alabama on Friday, September 3.

— Jay Dorrance

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Not much new this month. We have sent a check to United Way for \$750, which was the amount we budgeted for this year, and we gave a check to Dora Brandt for the refreshments and door prizes for last meeting. In addition, we sent a check as a memorial for Abe Lincoln's death.

We had a check from Paul Cone to renew his membership for this year.

— Henry Garrett

**Every generation of Americans needs to know that freedom consists not in doing what we like, but in having the right to do what we ought.**

— Pope John Paul II

## **A NOTE FROM MEMBERSHIP**

Membership renewal forms will be available, at the Southern Nuclear and SCS Retirees holiday luncheon annual meeting on November 10 for those who wish to get a jump on the new year by renewing and paying dues for the coming year 2005.

— Gene Kachelhofer

## **IN THE SPOTLIGHT**

DANIEL WILLIAM (BILL) COUGHLIN

It was a wonderful year! In October 2003 Bill Coughlin and his wife Lenore celebrated their golden wedding anniversary, and in June 2004 Bill became an octogenarian. Bill met Lenore Ross at Mississippi State College for Women (now a university) and they were married in 1953. They have five daughters, one son and 12 grandchildren. The families of their children live from sea to shining sea; Florida to Oregon, and two live in the Birmingham area. In addition to rearing their children, Lenore was on the University of Alabama at Birmingham faculty for about 13 years.

Bill began a distinguished Army career in a training program at Mississippi State University, enlisted in 1942 and was sent to Fort Eustis, Virginia. He was enrolled in a pre-engineering curriculum at Georgetown University and then sent to Camp Swift, Texas for final training. As a PFC, he sailed to Cherbourg, France on the Sea Tiger troop ship in September 1944. Bill talked about eerie days and nights in the Rhineland, including some close calls but no Purple Heart. All of us thank Bill and millions of others who have served in harms way to preserve our freedom. After the European armistice, Bill served in the occupation army until March 1946. He sailed home on the troop ship General Anderson.

Upon his return to the United States, Bill enrolled in the civil engineering department at Mississippi State University and received his bachelor's degree in 1949. After graduation he was employed by the Mississippi Highway Department, but a friend recommended that he apply for a position with Southern Services in Birmingham. He began his Southern Company employment in 1949 in the

design department under the leadership of Dick Randolph. He worked on a wide variety of projects until his retirement in 1986.

Hydroelectric sites represented his major assignments beginning with Harris and Sinclair Dams. In 1954 a hydro project section was created and Bill was assigned to the Coosa River development area that included the Wallace Dam pumped storage facility. He worked with Sam Hardigree on Gulf Power projects and Jake Benziger on Chattahoochee projects. Bill made two trips to Hitachi laboratories in Japan to participate in hydroelectric turbine testing. Bill noted that his Southern Company family was a close knit group, and individuals were always willing to help you with all kinds of practical problems.

Bill has been active in scouting programs including becoming an Eagle Scout himself. When his son was a cub scout, he led a backpack trip to New Mexico. Bill has hiked over 300 miles of the Appalachian Trail as a member of the Appalachian Trail Club of Alabama. The segments include hikes at the southern end of the trail in Georgia and at the northern end in Maine.

In addition to his participation in SCS Retirees, Bill has other interesting ways to enjoy his retirement. He has served for many years as a sacristan for funeral services at St. Francis Catholic Church. Recently, he became the editor of a quarterly newsletter for the Anti Tank 406 Infantry Regiment. The main purpose of this publication is to provide a way for company members to keep in touch with each other. Bill and Lenore are members of the Eastern Wrangler Club of the Birmingham Square Dancing Association. Bill and a number of his friends used flooring from the razed Shades Valley High School in their Fultondale facility.

Not only has it been a wonderful year, but also Bill and Lenore have had a wonderful life.

— Charles Hickman

## **SEPTEMBER ATTENDANCE**

At our September 13 meeting we had 41 members and guests attending.

— Dora Brandt

## VETERANS DAY

Three years ago, as I listened to a “Remembrance Day” program from Canada, I heard recordings of Winston Churchill, reports radioed from the front lines, and the memories of World War II veterans. I was moved to tears.

I was just a boy during that war. To my friends and me, it was largely an adventure, but I remember the quiet pride and the sadness in the eyes of the mothers who hung a gold star in their window. I wondered if my mom might be next and my big brother gone.

The wars, great and small, were legion this past century. My dad lost his leg in the Phillipines in 1913. Then came World War I, the “war to end all wars,” where an entire generation died in the trenches. One of my uncles, who lied about his age, was the first and youngest soldier from Oregon to die in that war, at the battle of Chateau Thierry.

Only 20 years passed before another generation went to war to stave off aggression by Hitler, Mussolini and Tojo. We had hardly buried the dead and recovered from the shock of the realities of nuclear annihilation when East and West went at it again in Korea. Even though the fighting finally stopped by mutual agreement, the confrontation still goes on. Then came Vietnam. Since then, “little” wars have continued all over the world, like brushfires in the California hills, consuming human and material resources.

On September 11, 2001, we saw the tragedy of the attack on the World Trade Center and its aftermath. Then we watched another war in Afghanistan, which has been swallowing up armies since the time of Alexander the Great, followed by a war with Iraq which, despite declared victory, still goes on. Afghanistan and Korea are heating up again, and we are staring at the specter of yet another major war in the Middle East.

Let us give pause in remembrance of those who died, often alone and forgotten, victims of booby traps and mines, sniper fire or disease and infection, whose resting place is unmarked.

Let us give pause in remembrance for those whose lives ended abruptly on September 11 and for those who continue to die by war and terrorism.

Let us give pause and reflect so that we might carry out our lives in such a way that love and tolerance might overbalance hatred and bigotry in the scales of life and that the dream of peace might become a reality.

If so, those we remember this Veterans Day will not have died in vain.

— Stephen M. Osborn  
*Scottish Rite Journal*  
November 2003

## THANKSGIVING: REMEMBRANCE, RECOGNITION AND APPRECIATION

A recent trip to Plymouth, Massachusetts, was most rewarding. While visiting the replica of the *Mayflower*, which is anchored in Plymouth Harbor, I listened to the compelling story of the men and women aboard who portrayed the passengers and crew of that small sailing vessel during its most famous voyage across the Atlantic in the fall of 1620. Then I walked to a nearby pavilion built over and giving protection to a granite boulder that lies half-buried in the sand at the edge of the shore.

Looking through an opening in the floor of the pavilion, I saw the famous Plymouth Rock, which I had expected to be much larger. As I looked at it, I recalled that there, on December 21, 1620, the Pilgrims, 101 in number and weary from a long and difficult voyage across the stormy ocean, used that rock as a stepping stone to shore. It was a giant step, in significance if not actual length, from the landing boat of the *Mayflower* to the strange soil of the New World where they built new homes and began a new life free of tyrannical oppression.

Turning from Plymouth Rock, I faced Cole’s Hill, which overlooks the harbor. This, I knew, was the first burial ground of those sturdy Pilgrims, and the first winter took its toll. Hezekiah Butterworth, a New England poet, had preserved the tradition that the daily ration was only five grains of parched corn. Many died of pneumonia, and history records that, at

any one time, only six or seven were in proper condition to attend the sick and bury the dead. By the end of the winter, 47 members of the original group were buried on that famous hill overlooking Plymouth Bay.

After the first harvest and before the first anniversary of their landing in the New World, William Bradford, Governor of the Plymouth Colony, proclaimed a day of thanksgiving. Many of the details of that thanksgiving come from a letter written by Edward Winslow, a 25-year-old Pilgrim who served as the colony's ambassador to the Indians. Winslow records that Governor Bradford sent four men on a shooting expedition so that the colonists might have suitable fowl for a special dinner where they would rejoice together. Also, it is known that Chief Massasoit came with 90 men to that first Thanksgiving Day in the Puritan colony. For three days, the residents of Plymouth and the friendly Indians entertained each other and feasted.

The menu for the feast was long. Winslow's letter indicates that it included venison, roast duck, roast goose, clams, other shellfish, eels, white bread, corn bread, leeks, watercress, salad greens, wild plums, dried berries, red wine and white wine. Although Winslow does not mention turkey, we know Governor Bradford had sent four men fowling. Also, he recorded that, in the area of Plymouth, there was a great store of wild turkeys. One tradition says that the Indians brought four wild turkeys to the feast, and this probably became the basis for our tradition of serving turkey at Thanksgiving.

If the Pilgrims, who suffered severe privation and hardship during their first year in the New World, could observe a special day of thanksgiving, so should we with even more gratitude. We live in a wonderfully blessed land of abundance. We should always and for everything give thanks to God and to all of those to whom we are indebted for what has been given to us. Then, the observance of Thanksgiving will be more than a big feast. It will, instead, become a remembrance, recognition and appreciation that reveals the genuine feelings of a grateful heart.

— W. Howard Coop  
In *Scottish Rite Journal*, November 2002

## THANKSGIVING OUGHT TO BE MORE THAN A ONE-DAY EVENT

A psychologist once stated, "It's not in the nature of a human being to be grateful." Everyone tends to look for some "big event" for which to be grateful. But how many such events occur compared to the multitude of little things we experience every day? How many times do we stop to thank God for just being alive? Certainly that's a big event, but we take it for granted from day to day. How many times do we stop to be thankful for our family, our home, our friends, our freedom, our abundant food and the myriad conveniences we enjoy in our wonderful world? Consider our ability to communicate as we do in so many ways and the ever-ready automobile to serve us at a moment's notice. What would our world be like if all telephones and computers were discarded and all autos put up on blocks? In this high-tech world, we cannot foresee what mind-boggling invention may be just around the corner that will affect our lives in some wonderful way.

Then, of course, there is the beauty of the world, the sunshine, the moonlight, the magic paintbrush of autumn. How often do we stop, marvel at a sunrise or sunset, and thank the Creator for the glory of existence? Let us become more conscious of how blessed we are. Let us acquire the spirit of thanksgiving every day of the year for all the little things that mean so much but, alas, are so often overlooked.

— Harold L. Johnson  
*Scottish Rite Booster News*,  
Clinton, Iowa, November 2000

## MOM'S METHOD WAS MAGIC

A GOOD first impression is always important, says Mimi K. of Folsom, Louisiana.

"My mother used a clever trick to get us kids to try new foods," Mimi explains. "Whenever serving something new, like zucchini, she'd prepare just a small amount and serve it in an elegant dish.

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"She'd announce, 'This is a little something special I fixed just for your father. If you would like to taste it, you may...but you don't have to.'

"Of course, we kids would all scramble for a taste. Dad was lucky to get even one bite!

"A couple weeks later, Mama would prepare the dish again in a generous quantity. When she set it out, we kids would exclaim, 'Wow--zucchini for everyone!' From then on, it was a favorite."

— from *Taste of Home magazine*

At bottom, a man is what his thinking is, thoughts being the artists who give color to our days. Optimists and pessimists live in the same world, walk under the same sky, and observe the same facts. Skeptics and believers look up at the same great stars. Clearly, the difference between

## **SCS RETIREES**

**P.O. BOX 2625**

**BIRMINGHAM, AL 35202**

them is the difference not of facts, but of faith, of insight, of outlook and point of view, a difference of inner attitude and habit of thought with regard to the worth and use of life.

— Joseph Fort Newton  
*The Builders, 1916*

***It is easier to accept the message of the stars than the message of the salt desert. The stars speak of man's insignificance in the long eternity of time; the deserts speak of his insignificance right now.***

— *Edwin Way Teale*

**Yesterday is a canceled check; tomorrow is a promissory note' today is ready cash—use it**

— **Kay Lyons**  
*in Reader's Digest*