

# The Next Stage

VOLUME 25, ISSUE 2

Newsletter of The Huntsville Division Alumni Association

May 20, 2020



## Next Board Mtgs:

(2ndThurs each qrtr)  
Jul 9,  
Oct 8, 2020  
**2:30 pm** Faith  
Presbyterian Church,  
SE corner of  
Whitesburg/Airport.

*Come see how  
efficiently your Board  
members plan events  
and convey project  
progress!*

## Dates to Remember:

### 2020

**-6/6: Summer Picnic  
IS CANCELLED!!**  
-Fall Dinner TBD  
-12/5: Christmas Party

Specific details will be  
provided closer to the  
date of the event.

Don't miss out on fun  
times with dear  
friends. Time is  
passing far too  
quickly, and CV-19 is  
stealing some of it!

*We'll be together  
when we can!*

## Monthly:

**1st Wed:** Ladies  
lunch, 11:00, Gibson's  
BBQ/S. Mem. Pkwy.  
Call Faye/551-0126  
for details.

**2nd Tue:** Call Bill  
Russell/650-5400 if  
interested in meeting  
for breakfast.

**3rd Wed:** Lunch at  
Logan's/Balmoral  
12:00. Call Jim  
Gasaway 256/353-  
7199 and ask to be  
added to his emails!

**Events are on "hold"  
due to CV19, unless  
otherwise noted.**



## **NO PICNIC @ GREEN MTN THIS SUMMER!!!**

In keeping with the Corona Virus-19 (CV19) "lockdown," the Board elected to abide by safety precautions and not risk getting together for our annual picnic (originally June 6). Even though Alabama is slowly "re-opening" by Government regulations and procedures, most of those attending the picnic are high-risk candidates for CV19.

We have become a family of friends over the decades, and the risk of possibly bringing harm to any member of our HDAA family is simply too great. So, we may miss this picnic, but there are other events planned the rest of the year and we'll, hopefully, be able to be with our HDAA family members once again! *Nothing* can keep this HDAA bunch down!

**Stay Well, Stay Healthy, Shelter at Home, Wash Hands! CV19 will be overcome.**

## Northrop Grumman Answering the CV19 Call Together

Like many companies, Northrop Grumman (NG) is doing all it can to ensure safe working conditions for employees (at work and at home), as well as supplying expanded resources to face today's challenges.

During this time of crisis, employees are continuing mission-critical work for customers in support of national security and human discovery. Great pride is taken in their mission to define possible, and they are committed to doing what they do best: solving tough problems.

NG continues to hire, with more than 10K open jobs in the U.S. and internationally, and talent scouts conducting virtual interviews and NG conducting job fairs.

NG has been very active within local communities during the CV19 pandemic by supporting health care workers, first responders, service members, and food banks with financial and in-kind donations; helping get students technology for virtual learning; and using 3D printers to provide thousands of face shields per week to hospitals. To help boost the economy, NG has also been advancing payments of ~\$30M per week to critical suppliers to keep NG smoothly moving forward.

*(Excerpt from NG/answering the call together, 4/21/20)*

## NG Aerospace Engineering Intern Achieve New Heights

Kirk Davis, an aerospace engineering and rising senior at the University of AZ is applying his engineering skills this summer at NG on the MQ5B Hunter Program (unmanned aircraft) in flight sciences and test engineering in Sierra Vista, AZ. He analyzes data collected during testing and normal flight.



Kirk is shown at left at NG's Innovation Ctr. using the virtual reality simulator as a demonstration guide.

Kirk loves learning more about and working with unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). He hopes to work at NG when he graduates to continue working with UAVs to see what the future holds.

He works with a very diverse group of employees with backgrounds ranging from business to communication to engineering. He says he never expected such a large and prominent defense contractor to feel as tight-knit and be as welcoming as NG has been.

*(Excerpt from NorthropGrumman.com)*

*(So... the Thiokol-like tradition of hard work and great camaraderie continues on for the new generation!)*

### Thiokol Greenway Update

As with everything else, work on the Greenway has slowed down somewhat due to the corona virus. However, Cecil Stokes and Glenn Webb have remained hard at work on the project.

The slab should be poured before too long, the sign is currently under construction by Trav-Ads, and will be installed when the slab is ready.

Being considered is a “roof” (protection from the weather elements) of some type, as well as a couple of benches for those who wish to sit and reminisce a bit.

Total cost of the entire project is expected to be ~\$8,000, with the HDAA budget covering the bulk of the cost. However, don't be alarmed if we have to solicit a \$1 or \$2! Several Board members have already stepped up and offered to help support this tremendous reminder of Thiokol/Huntsville Division.

Personally, we look forward to being able to walk the greenway near the turf where we spent so many great years.

This will definitely be a job well done! *Thanks for all the time and effort you both have extended, Cec and Glenn!*

### FRIENDS IN THE NEWS (?)...

Since we've all been sheltering at home to keep CV19 from spreading, we certainly must all be suffering a little Cabin Fever. If you've already had your limit of Net Flix, Hulu, Roku, and the hundreds of channels on your cable that produce little stimulation of the ol' gray matter, try reading a good book you've been promising yourself to read. Or, write an email (or better yet, a handwritten letter) to an old friend you haven't heard from in a while. Take a ride in your car for a change of scenery, and see what a beautiful TN Valley we live in: all the green and lush vegetation, the sweet aroma of magnificent flowers and trees in full bloom, realizing what a great country we should be grateful in which to live. And, if you want a better reminder and have access to a computer, check out this link in your search engine: John Wayne 1970 Variety Show Celebrating America's History at the below link.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UFv-fqQ9D\\_Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UFv-fqQ9D_Y)

Now, if viewing that didn't give you goosebumps, I'll be surprised....Gets you set for July 4th!

### Technology & Kids

Concerned that your grandkids spend too much time on their iPads, iPhones, tablets, computers when they come visit you? True, they have more access to screen time than ever before, which may or may not be good for them.

Technology gives kids opportunities to learn about their world, expand their imaginations and connect positively with friends and family. However, too much screen time can lead to speech delays, inactivity, obesity, mental health challenges, etc. There's also the danger of unhealthy content of what they may be viewing. Monitor their viewing times and choices.

Mayo Clinic recommends screens be kept out of bedrooms and put away at least 1 hour before bedtime, no screen time for children less than 18 months (though health/educational interaction with adult caregivers may be considered for 18 mth to 2 years). Children 2-5 limit to no more than 1 hour; 6 and older 2 hours/day, as long as it doesn't interfere with home-work and other activities. Each family should craft screen guidelines such as at [www.healthychildren.org/mediauseplan](http://www.healthychildren.org/mediauseplan). Try it!

(Excerpt from Mayo Clinic, 5/2020.)

THE THINGS YOU TAKE FOR GRANTED SOMEONE ELSE IS PRAYING FOR.

Be Well,  
Be Healthy,  
Be Happy.  
Be Strong.  
Wash hands  
and CV19  
will soon be gone!

Sage Words of Wisdom:

COVID-19...

Like constipation,  
this, too, shall pass!

If you want to touch the past,

TOUCH  
a rock.

If you want to touch the present,

TOUCH  
a flower.

If you want to touch the future,

TOUCH  
a life.

Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory.  
- Dr Suess

## OUR TREASURES ARE....WHAT?!?

(In keeping with CV19 clean-out frenzy, I couldn't resist this piece. It's long, so brace yourself!)

Every time our Jana comes home, she peruses the house, rolling her eyes upward, saying "You guys really need to start getting rid of *stuff*." We know what she's thinking: if we don't get rid of it, then she and my sister will have to do it at some point in time! And, having lived in this house for 58 years (I've only been here 40, so not as much *stuff* from my side of this duo), you can imagine all the *stuff* we have accumulated. Now, multiply that by the fact that we are both sentimental. If someone gives us something, then we must keep it, for they thought of us, picked it out, and gave it to us from the heart. As my Don is fond of saying, "You don't dust. You caress and reminisce!" Have to say that's probably very true (but don't tell him!). Guilty as charged.

So, the last time Jana was home, she handed me a book, *the life-changing magic of tidying up (the Japanese art of decluttering and organizing)* by Marie Kondo. Now, my initial reaction (in my head, of course) was profound indignation that our treasured items throughout our home were mere *stuff*. As she looked in my "library" (aka, where most of my books are stored)/project room (endless projects that have yet to be done...and, *how* many years have I been retired?!?), she waved her arm expansively as she stated, "You don't need most of this *stuff*!" Well, now....It's my *stuff* (once again, not vocalized, of course)....and most of it treasures, assuredly!

She even indicated one time that my bursting-at-the-doors closets housed clothing that, heaven forbid, I probably hadn't worn in 3 or 4 years! (Don't tell her...but, some haven't been worn in decades...and there's even one sweater that belonged to my mother, who passed away in 1989, God rest her soul.) But, I loved wearing those clothes (though would probably never wear them again because of being so outdated or, more likely, because they'll never fit again). But, don't tell Jana I said that. Most of those clothes bring me great joy (aka, fond memories) when I see them.

So, you now have enough background information to have a better understanding of why Jana then said, "Why, how selfish of you!!! Why not get rid of all that you no longer wear and let someone who just might need it, get some use out of it and can actually wear it, appreciate it, and get joy from it!"

But, Jana had planted a seed. And, after I let that... *harrumph*...insulting book sit a few days, I decided to at least read through the very detailed contents section. Remembering how most homes in Japan were relatively small and always neat as could be (recalling from nearly 50 years ago when I lived in Asia...but, we all know how "white-haired" recall can be), I thought that perhaps, just perhaps this sweet, young thing (Ms. Kondo, obviously not a sentimental bone in her body in my humble opinion) might be on to something. I decided to read this book while waiting on my better half to complete his physical therapy at a nearby medical facility (one hour at a time, the length of his PT).

This book actually made sense! And, the further along in

the book I read, it re-affirmed some of my long-held beliefs about "everything has a place, and it should be in that place!" Those were not Ms. Kondo's precise words, but, almost! (Having been raised in a military family, we heard this all the time. Think it must have been derived from war/campaign times, sitting in fox holes in the dark, and the absolute necessity of having to know where everything is located to save one's very life. In a split second's time, one might have to lay hands on something to protect oneself, and it could be fatal if the sought item(s) was not where it should have been.)

Ms. Kondo even gives detailed instructions on how to begin the decluttering process, how to keep only those items which bring true joy (hmmm....where have I heard *that* word before?) to your heart, how to organize those items you keep, how to store those items, and NOT to keep anything "just because."

Now, having been raised by parents who survived WWII, the Great Depression, and so many years of life itself, you Always keep things "in case you might need it." And, if you know engineers, you always have at least one, more likely two "backups" for most everything you own. So, there again, it's no wonder we have so much treasured *stuff* in our home. Besides, by the time one reaches our age, it's almost obligatory to have gathered memorabilia from all of one's life experiences, isn't it?

One of Ms. Kondo's most profound statements in this "life-changing" book is you should NOT let anyone in your family know of this decluttering and organizing process, lest they be tempted to keep some items themselves. Of course, if there are certain things in your home that you feel *should* be kept in the family, by all means give family that option. But, why encumber someone you love with items that might be outdated, very worn, etc., "just because" you can't bear to totally part with those items yourself? Difficult, thin line to walk there....but, Ms. Kondo spells it all out pretty clearly. (I must confess, this is precisely how I get rid of a lot of my treasured things. Sorry, y'all!)

So, all of the above saga to say, THANK YOU, Jana, for guiltting me into beginning the process of decluttering and, hence, organizing our home. Now, hopefully, it won't be such a difficult process when our time comes to leave this ol' terra firma. And, who knows, the items of which we dispose just might truly bring joy to another, as they have brought joy to us.....for years, and years, and years and.... Am grateful for Jana's assertiveness and applaud her persistence. Just wish she'd remember who's the parent and who's the (retired and now qualifies for Medicare) "child." 😊

And, for those who haven't read Ms. Kondo's book, I highly recommend it! You might just find joy yourself in getting rid of some of your life's accumulation of *stuff*. At this point in our lives, there's a lot to be said for simplifying rather than complicating our remaining days. *Clean it out!*

**Simplify your life so you can truly begin to live it...**

*unstressed. Life is good!*

# The Next Stage

The Huntsville Division Alumni Association  
P.O. Box 4185  
Huntsville, AL 35815-4185

Place  
Stamp  
Here

REMINDER: \$12 DUES FOR 2020 WERE DUE 1/1/20.

IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY SUBMITTED, PLEASE  
CONSIDER DOING SO SOON. THANKS!

Memorial Day—5/25  
Flag Day—6/14  
Father's Day—6/21  
Independence Day—7/4  
Labor Day--9/7

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THE NEXT STAGE

MAY 20, 2020

The Next Stage is the quarterly newsletter publication of the Huntsville Division Alumni Association, Inc. Distribution: approximately 100. (FYI: Started with ~350 25 years ago.) Editor: Patti Wilson.

Its address is POB 4185; Huntsville, AL; 35815-4185.

The 2020 HDAA Board consists of :  
President/Tom Bryant, VP/Gerald Roberts,  
Secretary/Cecil Stokes, Treasurer/  
Membership/Charlie Thomas. Directors:  
(20) Ron Clements, (20) Harold Whitesides,  
(20) Sam Zeman; (21) John DeHaye, (21)  
Don Royston, (21) Patti Wilson; (22) Bill  
Barnes, (22) Jim Gasaway, (22) Paul McFall.

Ex-officio members of the Board are:  
Historian (position vacant), and Cecil  
Stokes/WebMaster.

Contact Cecil for details about the HDAA  
website and how to view more photos in color!

**CV19 cancelled our Spring Breakfast, now  
our Summer Picnic. But, rest assured that  
we WILL get together when the time is  
right, and we can maintain the same  
precautions we now use.**

**Stay strong, stay happy, stay healthy! 😊  
And...see you before long!**

## In Fond Memory...

We join the families in mourning the loss of  
family, friends and prior coworkers:

**Dian Avery:** Secretary in Jim Byrd's Materials Group, 1973-75.

**Vernon Bush:** Worked in Production Engineering, retiring as Director of the  
Production Department.

**Ruth Owen Franklin Lee:** Wife of Bob Franklin, long time Program  
Manager, then Director of the Production Plant.

**Joe Hamilton Parsons:** Worked in the Plastics Shop 1959-1995.

**Mary Leo Greenhaw Whisenant:** Secretary in Program Management.

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They will be sorely missed by us all, since they truly touched our lives.

If you learn of a prior coworker passing, please let a Board member know.

In these challenging times of the CV19 pandemic, life can take unexpected turns  
very quickly. Let those you care about know how much they mean to you. Reach  
out to check on them and see if they need help in any way. It'll be appreciated!



*Joy is the simplest form of gratitude. - Karl Barth  
Be grateful for good memories shared from times together.*

*When those you love die, the best you can do is honor their spirit for as long as  
you live. You make a commitment that you're going to take whatever lesson that  
person was trying to teach you, and you make it true in your own life.*

*- Patrick Swayze*