

The fabric of Bertie County since 1832

Opinion

# Learning from Alabama..

What could we North Carolinians learn about ourselves when we sort out the results of the Dec. 12 Alabama special U. S. Senate election?

Nothing, you say. We are not like Alabama. They are Deep South. We are mid-South. They are mired in their George Wallace "Stuck in the mud" tradition while we North Carolinians have thrived in our Terry Sanford "New South" progressive tradition. Not so fast.

Remember when those traditions clashed in 1972? Wallace and Sanford faced each other in the Democratic presidential primary in North Carolina. Wallace beat Sanford by more than 100,000 votes, effectively ending Sanford's presidential bid.

But you say that was a long time ago.

It was, but if given the same choice even today, many of today's North Carolinians would choose Wallace over Sanford.

And, today, if they had the opportunity, they would join their brothers and sisters in Alabama and vote for the Wallace clone, Republican Roy Moore, rather than Democrat Doug Jones, the Sanford stand-in.

Almost certainly, Alabama has a greater percentage of people in the Moore-Wallace camp than North Carolina has. But the significant presence of such voters presents a formidable challenge to Democratic candidates in both states.

In recent years, meeting that challenge has been virtually impossible in Alabama and almost as difficult in North Carolina. To give Democrats a chance to beat a Moore-Wallace candidate in Alabama or in North Carolina, Democrats must take on some tough tasks.

First, inspire, mobilize, and get to the polls hardcore Democrats, including liberals, African Americans, pro-choice advocates, those concerned for the poor and downtrodden, and the poor and downtrodden themselves. If they go to the polls, they would be reliable Democratic voters, all. But to get them there requires well-organized registration and election-day efforts.

Be prepared to cut off or minimize diversions from this core support group. In 1972, third party candidate U.S. Representative Shirley Chisholm, an African American from Brooklyn, garnered about 60,000 votes. Almost all of them would have gone to Sanford if Chisholm had not been in the race.

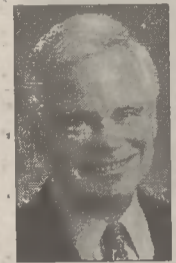
In Alabama, people disgusted with Moore need a message that makes them angry enough to believe they have a public duty to vote against him.

Being angry might not be enough to motivate some of these people. In addition to the anger with a Moore-Wallace type of candidate, some will demand a positive message to show how the alternative is really going to make a difference.

Secondly, find ways to discourage people who would vote for a Wallace-Moore candidate from going to the polls. Dampen their enthusiasm with constant reminders of the Republican candidate's sins and inconsistencies. Roy Moore's alleged misconduct seemed to present a God-given opportunity to discourage more voters from voting for him. Thirdly, find an appeal to conservative and moderate voters who generally vote Republican, but are concerned about what the election of a candidate like Roy Moore would do to their state. These potential supporters need assurances that their vote for a Democrat will not elect someone who is going to push a far-left agenda. The trick is to accomplish this objective without pulling the rug out from under the core Democrats whose enthusiasm, election-day work, and votes are critical.

If the Doug Jones campaign finds a way to win by mobilizing the Democratic base, discouraging Moore supporters from voting, and finding ways to appeal to moderates and conservatives who usually vote Republican, North Carolina Democrats will have a model to follow in the 2018 and 2020 elections.

D.G. Martin hosts "North Carolina Bookwatch," which airs Sundays at noon and Thursdays at 5 p.m. on UNC-TV.



D.G. MARTIN  
One On One



# Family, laughter and Nerf guns...

This past weekend was one of those weekends where nothing seemed to go right for me, but it was amazing how something simple as a few Nerf guns could change all of that.

While out for a quick trip to Greenville to pick up my new phone, Gabriel begged for us to take him to Toys "R" Us to spend his birthday money.

He had not so patiently held on to this money since September, and he was determined to spend it while we were there.

Like most children, Gabriel already has a plan and any money is as good as spent when he gets it.

Inside the wonderland of toys, Gabriel browsed the remote control cars, diecast cars, dinosaur and finally the aisle of Nerf guns.

In the Beachboard house Nerf guns are a popular item. My youngest three children Drew Gabriel and Cheyenne Grace love to have Nerf gun fights and shoot

each other along with my walls, windows and everything else.

I get tired of picking up the bright colors foam bullets from every corner of my house.

Gabriel studied each gun on the shelf and decided he wanted a mega Nerf gun that shoots the extra large red bullets.

After reading the sales sign that added, "Buy any Nerf gun and get a second for 40 percent off," Gabriel decided Drew needed a new one, too.

After about what seemed an hour of watching him debate what guns he could buy, Gabriel made a decision.

He knew he would have money left over, so before checking out he made a stop to pick out a new diary for Cheyenne Grace.

"I want to buy her something, too, because her birthday is not until April," he said.

He carried it all to the check-out line, pulled out his wallet and bought his items.

Little did I know those two Nerf guns would be bring the laughter and stress relief I needed after the dreary weekend I had endured.

When we got home Gabriel had already unboxed the guns, load-

ed the bullets and was ready for war.

Gabriel and I ran through the house, hiding behind the furniture and firing away at each other.

Once the bullets were all shot, Gabriel would call a "timeout" and we would spend at least 10 minutes searching for a hard-to-find bullet.

When his dad got home, Gabriel begged for him to have a Nerf war with them.

To hear the trampling through my house, anyone would think there was a stampede of elephants in my living room, but the laughter would make anyone having a bad day smile.

As I watched them duck and dodge bullets, while leaping over the couches all of my worries faded as I tried to avoid being used as a target.

In that moment I realized sometimes I get overstressed and fail to notice the greatest blessings: family, love and laughter.

Leslie Beachboard is a Staff Writer for the Bertie Ledger-Advance. She can be reached via email at lbeachboard@ncweeklies.com.



LESLIE BEACHBOARD  
Small Town Girl

# Chasing Metallica...

One of the good things about doing concert photography is I am fortunate enough to shoot many bands for which I am a huge fan.

One such band is Metallica, the Bay Area rock group.

I became a fan after their second album, "Ride The Lightning," in 1984. I even did a review of that album for my college newspaper, mentioning them as one of hard rock and metal's best new acts.

I had seen them several times - including on the Master of Puppets Tour in 1986 when they opened for Ozzy Osbourne.

I started shooting national acts around 1996, and by then Metallica was one of the biggest bands on the planet.

They were one of my "bucket list" artists - a band that I really wanted to document as a photographer.

I finally got that chance in October of 2009. On the same day, I trekked with my friend Tina to Hampton, Va., to shoot my all-time favorite act KISS - on a Friday to be exact - I received an email from Metallica's publicist stating

I was approved to shoot the band in Charlotte, N.C., that Sunday.

Excited beyond measure, I made sure all my work for the following Monday was completed so I could make the trip.

I even took a laptop to do other work as I waited in my car in the parking lot across the street. I arrived three hours before doors opened - primarily because it was my first time in downtown Charlotte.

Usually when you are approved to photograph the headlining band, you get to shoot the openers.

I can't remember why exactly, but the group of us photographers didn't shoot the first act but did shoot the second one.

Then it was time for Metallica, touring in support of their "Death Magnetic" album.

The band - singer/guitarist James Hetfield, drummer Lars Ulrich, bass player Robert Trujillo and lead guitarist Kirk Hammett - played what is called "in the round" - a large stage situated in the middle of the arena with a different seating configuration.

This stage was about three and a half feet high, giving us the perfect view to photograph every member of the band easily.

We had the first three songs to shoot.

The first song was pretty much a wash - it was so dark the band members were in silhouette most of the time while green lasers swirled around them.

The stage lights improved dramatically for the second and third songs.

During the second song I spent much of my time shooting Trujillo, Ulrich and Hetfield.

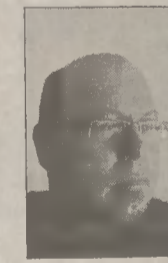
As the intro to "For Whom the Bell Tolls" started, I realized I hadn't taken any of Hammett, who was running around from mic stand to mic stand (there were six set up - three on the side where we started shooting, and three more on the 'back' side of the rectangular stage).

I decided that I would turn my attention to Kirk. Wherever he went, I followed. I often wondered if he was thinking, "You again?" as I arrived at the same spot where he stopped to play.

The whole show was phenomenal, and I have some good photos I will always treasure.

I was tired Monday morning when I arrived at work, but Clayton to Hampton to Clayton to Charlotte and back to Clayton was a fun weekend.

Jim Green is a huge Metallica fan and the Sports Editor for the Bertie Ledger-Advance. He can be reached at jgreen@ncweeklies.com.



JIM GREEN  
Around Here

# Bertie Ledger-Advance

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