

ROBERT  
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POST-GAZETTE



## SMITHVILLE REVIEW

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106 South First Street, Smithville, TN 37166  
Phone: (615) 597-5485  
Fax: (615) 597-5489  
Email: news@smithvillereview.com  
Website: www.smithvillereview.com

**Angie Meadows**  
General Manager/Advertising Director  
**Dale Stubblefield**  
Circulation Manager

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## On the other side of a wreck

I've been working wrecks for over half my life after beginning my news career back when I was 25. When it comes to collisions, I've seen it all many times over. And yes, a lot of it will burn itself into your mind's eye if you let it.

Given the fact that I've conservatively worked well over a thousand auto accidents over my career, a few hundred of those resulting in fatalities, I've learned to be careful anytime I get behind the wheel. I assume, as should you, that the other guy will do something stupid. I think the worst of other driver's and, as such, drive very defensively. If I see you coming in the opposite lane I'm going to just assume you are texting or Pokémon hunting and are going to swerve over into my lane and try to kill me.

After all, in the wrecks I've worked there's always that trigger which causes

the crash. Generally, it's distracted driving. Someone is looking down at the radio, texting, their attention is pulled away by kids in the back-seat or looking at a yard sale on the side of the road. Folks often use their cars as rolling offices, forgetting they are navigating a 3,000-pound lethal weapon in public.

There are also those occasional wrecks where you really don't know what happened. One of the most common is the green light scenario where both drivers say they had the green light. Actually, in most cases of the "double green light," I believe both drivers truly think they had the green light. There are also those wrecks where the drivers can only shrug. "I never saw him coming," they will say,

or that "he came out of nowhere" and they couldn't stop.

Well, guess what, the numbers finally caught up to me this past week during a torrential rain storm over in McMinnville. I was driving home from playing tennis and had just stopped at a stop sign atop a hill behind the civic center. I paused to let a car clear from the four-way and began my left turn to go down the hill and then BOOM! Yes, from out of nowhere a slam head-on into a black truck. I never saw it coming. He was coming up the hill and turning right as I was turning left.

While the crash was only at about five miles per hour, it left both of our vehicles with heavy damage, mine getting

about \$5,000 worth. Unable to open my driver door, I slid out the passenger door, walked through the driving rain and pecked on the other guy's window. It slowly rolled down.

"Todd!" I exclaimed, seeing an old classmate of mine looking a little stunned. "Are you okay?"

Aside from a bump on the elbow and a \$500 deductible (perhaps a gofundme account would help) I'm fine. However, I gained an appreciation of how fast things can happen and how "they can literally come out of nowhere" like I have heard. Oh, and as a parting shot let me tell you I would have likely eaten my steering wheel if I hadn't been wearing my seat belt. If you don't buckle up you aren't using the good sense God gave you.

Contact Duane Sherrill at  
news@smithvillereview.com



**THAT NEW GUY**  
by Duane Sherrill

## The big D-Day

In the military, D-Day is the day on which a combat operation or attack is to be initiated. The best-known D-Day was during World War II, on June 6, 1944, the day when the Allied forces landed on the beaches of Normandy, France, in an effort to liberate mainland Europe from Nazi Germany. Long before D-Day of 1944 there was another day in history far more important, the day when the Son of God voluntarily went to the Cross of Calvary on Golgotha's Hill.

This was the greatest day of liberation in the history of the world, when Jesus was crucified for the sins of the entire human race. It is very appropriate that the crucifixion of Jesus be called D-Day, because it made possible the defeat of the power of sin and spiritual death. This day was predicted by God in the Garden of Eden after Adam and Eve had disobeyed God's commandment to not eat from the tree in the middle of the garden, or to even touch it.

It was Satan who deceived Adam and Eve into eating the forbidden fruit, and it was to him that God said that one day a descendant of theirs would crush the head of Satan, who had taken on the form of a serpent in his act of deception. Although death on a cross might not seem to be a defeat, the subsequent resurrection of Jesus from the dead made that defeat a reality. Satan thought he had sealed the fate of the human race, but it was actually his fate that was sealed

instead.

The crucifixion of Jesus can also be called D-Day because it was a day of deliverance for the human race. Satan had succeeded in putting the human race in bondage to sin by his act of deception, but Jesus succeeded in bringing deliverance from sin by His act of sacrifice on the Cross. Unlike the sacrifices in the days of the Old Testament that were necessary every time a sin was committed against God, the sacrifice of Jesus was necessary only one single time.

The sacrifice of Jesus was required only once, because the blood He shed on the Cross paid the penalty for all sins of all times. All who accept this sacrifice can have all their sins forgiven, whether they be in the past, the present, or the future. It is not necessary for Jesus to die again each time a sin is committed, because His sacrifice was good for all times.

D-Day of 1944 will long be remembered in history, but the death of Jesus will be remembered forever because of the defeat and deliverance it brought to the human race. Let's celebrate it in our own life, and seek to make it a reality in the lives of others.

Larry R. Steffe is pastor of the Center Hill Brethren In Christ Church on Miller Road in Smithville. Everyone is welcome to attend. For information, you may email lrsteffe@yahoo.com.



**GUEST EDITORIAL**  
by Larry R. Steffe

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

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## Alexa, spy on me

You've already heard the recent story: Amazon's voice-activated Echo device secretly recorded a couple's private conversations and then sent recordings to a random person. That's the short version, and it has several things wrong with it.

First, of course Alexa is listening to you. How would it hear the wake-up word "Alexa" if it didn't? It also records your every request -- not to spy on you, but to get better at understanding what you want it to do. If you say, "Alexa, put Shredded Wheat on my shopping list" once a month, then even if you slur your words one day, it will ask, "Did you want to add Shredded Wheat to your shopping list?" You can just imagine what would happen if your enemies got ahold of that.

Before we get to the invasion of privacy, imagine if your health care provider or your bank had designed Alexa. You would say, "I want to speak to a representative," and it would answer, "Yes, we will find you a cheese-cake." Compared to the average computer-voice interaction, asking Alexa to do something seems like magic. Even with my Southern accent, it only took a few days before it learned that when I say "Wendy" I don't mean "windy," and when I say "hair a cane," I mean "hurricane." I've also learned you can delete all those requests so no one can ever find out that I asked Alexa to play "Summer Wind" by Frank Sinatra a few days ago.

But if you really don't want it to listen in the background, waiting for you to ask it something,

there's a well-marked button on top of the device with a picture of a microphone with a line through it. It's the off button for the microphone. Very handy if you have someone named Alexa living in your house.

The second thing wrong with that story: The device didn't send the audio files to some random person, as widely reported. It sent them to someone in the family's contact list. You can use Alexa as a phone, but only if 1. The other person you're calling has an Echo device, and 2. They are on your contact list, and 3. They accept your invitation.

And what is privacy in this day and age? If you have a loyalty card from a grocery store, an airline or a credit card, they already know more about you than the IRS. My gym membership form asked me for more personal details than my doctor. My electric company wants my Social Security number. Why? Are they afraid someone else will pay my bill?

When I Googled a few news sites to collect the details on this story, the first thing that popped up was "This site uses cookies, blah, blah, blah." They are collecting information about me trying to collect news about a story about an invasion of privacy, so they can sell it to people who want to know everything they can about me. If I say "no," I can't read the story. How meta can you get?

Are devices like Alexa really the problem? As if Amazon doesn't already know everything about me.

Contact Jim Mullen at mullen.jim@gmail.com.



**VILLAGE IDIOT**  
by Jim Mullen