

# Opinion

A community forum for viewpoints from around the world to your backyard

## The Clinch County News

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 113 E. Dame Avenue • Homerville, Georgia 31634  
 Telephone: 912-487-5337  
 Published by  
 AIR Publications, Inc.  
**A.I. "Len" Robbins, III .....Editor & Publisher**  
 lrobbins@theclinchcountynews.com  
**Holly Mullis.....Business Manager**  
 airpublications@outlook.com  
**Ben Murray.....Production Manager**  
 news@theclinchcountynews.com

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## TALL TALES

By Lem Griffis

Most people have some religion. At least they know which church to stay away from.

A store manager said to the lady: Yes, we have quite a selection of loafers. I'll see if I can get one to wait on you.

What this country needs is a good five-cent anything.

I can remember when a pony tail was not a hair do, just nature's way of keeping off the flies.

I was in town. A lady bumped her car into mine. Both cars were damaged. She wanted me to pay the damages and she was to blame. An officer came up and I asked him what to do about it. He said better pay the damages, if you take it to court it will be only your word again ten thousand of hers.

No two people are alike, and both of them are proud of

Truthfully yours,  
 Lem Griffis

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## The Mid-Day American Workers Nap plan

As a small businessman (I'm 5-foot-9), I'm always on the lookout for ways to improve productivity and office morale.

Over the years, some of my workplace improvement ideas have worked splendidly – 'Popsicle Wednesday' being a fine example. Some haven't, like the ill-fated "Wrestling for a Raise."

But this time, just like last time, I think I am on to something that will revolutionize the American workforce, making our laborers happier, more productive, cure baldness, inspire some new hymns, and jump-start us out of the national tariffic economic malaise.

I can't speak for other businesses (or mine, really), but the greatest impediment to workplace efficiency and joy in the world is what I call the "Mid-Day Slump." Around 2-to-3 p.m. each day, employees everywhere



## Len Robbins

lrobbins@theclinchcountynews.com  
 EDITOR & PUBLISHER

find themselves in the throes of a tired and uninspired malaise. For me personally, my "Mid-Day Slump" lasts from around 9:15 a.m. until about 8 p.m., except when I'm not at work.

For years, I've sought a cure to this workplace ailment – none successful. Apparently, using a cattle prod to keep employees alert is frowned upon in some circles.

One of my children reminded me the other day that when he and his siblings were younger, they were forced to take naps.

Aha! Naps! It's that simple.

Think about it. Every Sunday, I try to take a nap after church, and sometimes during church. I usually slip into nod around 1 p.m.

When I wake up – at around 6:30 p.m. – I am refreshed, renewed, and eager to tackle all sorts of projects – like watching the end of a football game.

In pre-school, and at the nursing home, they make them take naps in an effort to recharge their batteries and make sure they didn't get tired and cranky after noon – basically, to avoid the aforementioned "Mid-Day Slump." My children never actually went to sleep during these mandatory nap times, or since then, but that's not the point.

Just think of the productivity adult workplaces could achieve if workers had the energy in the afternoons that little kids have – skipping about, sticking things into other

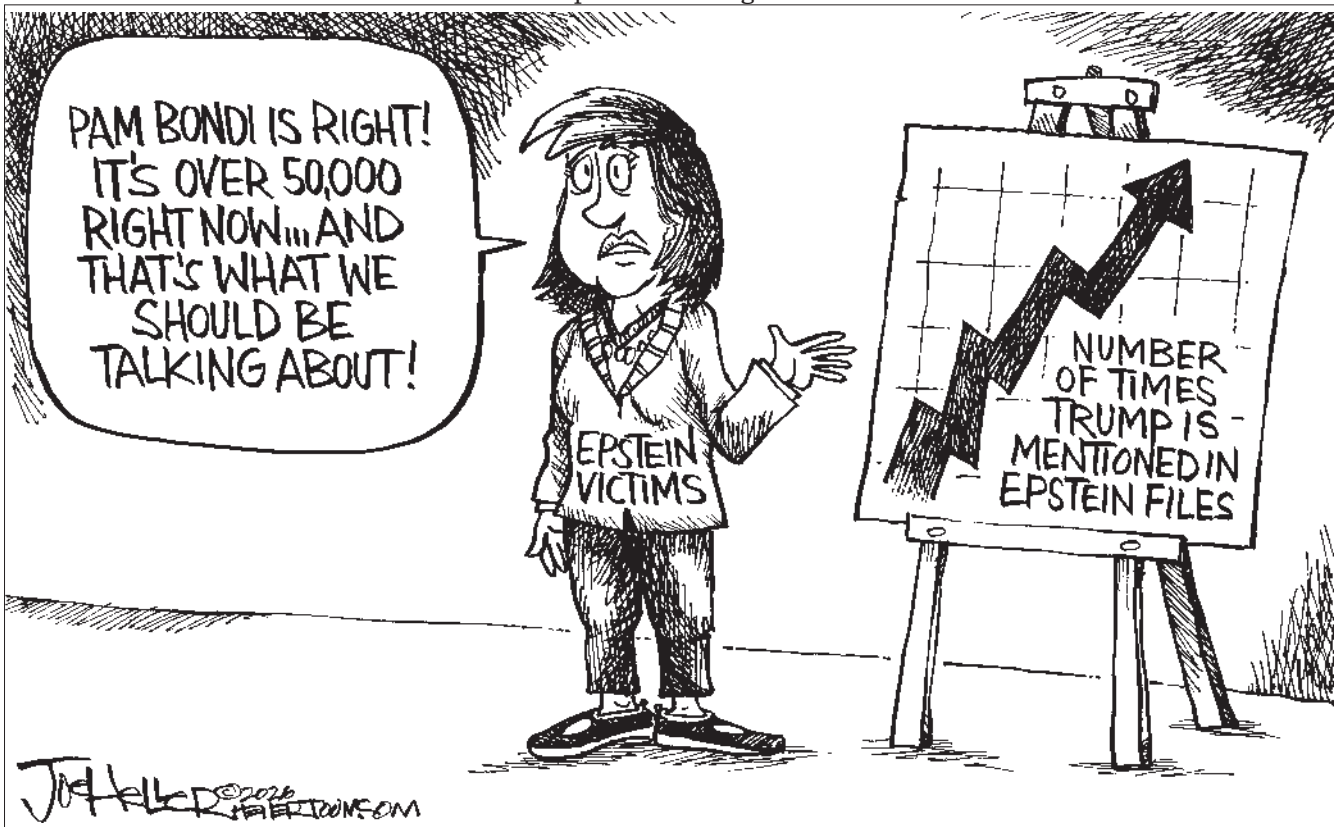
employees' months, and yelling for no apparent reason.

Upon further research, I've found that Europe has had a different version of this idea in place for centuries. In Italy, workers break up the workday by having a long lunch, where they consume much wine, then take a nap. This schedule has done wonders for their prosperity, as they've risen from the dark days of the Roman Empire to their current state.

In Spain, which also may or may not be in Europe (I'll check the Google machine later), they also take a mid-day slumber – which they call a "siesta." So as not to confuse my American brethren, we'll simply call ours the "Len Robbins Mid-Day American Workers Nap."

A chicken in every pot, and a cot in every workplace.

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## Lt. Col. Robert S. Phillips

"One Man - Three Wars" might be a better column title. That would pay homage to Lt. Col. Robert S. Phillips' heroic service in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam.

A mutual friend arranged a visit to his Lake Blackshear home. David Hinson and I arrived at ten a.m. on a Wednesday in November. Gay McInvale, a beloved assistant to the Colonel, invited us to the breakfast table.

She served pound cake with whipping cream and fresh strawberries. "He likes strawberries," said Gay, coyly acknowledging generous servings. Mid-morning desserts must agree with the Colonel. Pictures from his 100th birthday party in August show his vintage Air Force dress uniform fits perfectly.

As I looked through a photo album of the celebration, our jovial host pointed to a man with a saxophone. "He played for my 99th birthday party too." "Is he coming back next year?" I asked. "Probably," he said with a chuckle. "He's really good and I love the saxophone." A photo of him dancing offers tender evidence.

Thursday's plans were to scatter acorns in the woods to attract deer. He and Randy Powell, another valued assistant, would return Friday and Saturday to hunt. Last

year he harvested a nice buck, and almost called one in with a trophy rack.

"How long have you been hunting deer?" I asked. "About 85 years," he answered. "I started hunting them in Pennsylvania when I was 15."

After his 1942 high school graduation, he joined the U. S. Air Force and became a navigator. B-24s carried him on 52 missions to Germany, Austria, and elsewhere. He kept the aircraft on course until their targets were reached, then directed them home after their bombs were dropped. One of many harrowing moments came when their plane had to land without power. "Just after dropping the bombs, the number one engine got hit and we lost a lot of fuel. We were the lead ship. We broke formation and headed to a secondary airstrip in Yugoslavia."

"They shut down that engine then another, leaving one operating on each side of the plane for balance." He calculated it would take 20 minutes to go 76 miles across the Adriatic Sea. The engineer soberly advised they might have enough fuel.

"Only one engine was running when we reached the coastline. Swede Olson, from Atlanta, was our pilot. He put it in a dive from 2000 feet and shut off the engine. The

## Neil Joiner

COLUMNIST

gnejoiner@gmail.com



only sound we heard was air going through bullet holes. Swede made a perfect landing."

That was late in 1944. A twin-engine C-47 transport plane took them to France. He was with the 98th Bomb Group at the time, but finished his tour with another outfit. In the spring of 1945 he returned home to Tyrone, Pennsylvania, and took a three year break. He fished, hunted, and went to Penn State for a year. He also met Jenny Colitto and fell in love.

After three months of marriage, he went to Okinawa in 1949 with the Strategic Air Command. Jenny was about to join him when the Korean War started and dependents were no longer allowed. In Korea he was the navigator for sixty B-29 missions.

On a New Year's Eve flight in 1951, his good friend and pilot, Joe Davis, said, "You guys get your gear on." An engine was on fire. Davis put the plane in a dive from 25,000 feet to 12,000 and extinguished the flames. "Bob," he said, 'get us home."

With lost fuel and unknown structural

damage, they made it out of Siberia and landed in Japan. The base commander and his wife hosted them for a splendid dinner on New Year's Day.

In Vietnam the Colonel switched from bombing missions to reconnaissance. Their responsibility was to locate the enemy's ground positions and relay those positions to fighter pilots.

He held two acorns in his outstretched palm as we were leaving. "Deer love these," he said. "I've picked up about 15 gallons. They're in rut now. I'll rattle my horns and make like a young buck to draw them in."

The Colonel has survived three wars, buried two wives, and seen 100 birthdays, yet he's optimistically planning tomorrows. There's no way to condense his remarkable life into 750 words, so if you get an opportunity to hear the stories of a humble hero firsthand, don't miss out. And if by chance you play the saxophone well, you may want to audition for next year's party.

Neil Joiner is a syndicated newspaper columnist from Dooly County.