Holiday Closings–p.9, Holly Pond Climbs in ASWA Rankings–p.5

Series 2, Issue 52 Monday, December 24, 2012

Cullman's Monday Newspaper

CULLMANSENSE

$0.50 Community Matters $0.50

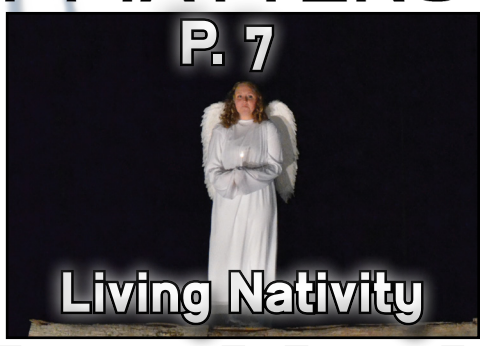
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Away for the Holiday

By: Noah Chandler
noahchandler@cullmansense.com



CULLMAN – With the traditional holiday of Christmas comes many family rituals which help to bind parents with their children and siblings with one another. This holiday season will be a bit more difficult for one area family who has to celebrate the festivities from a far.

Rv2 Cole Eliot Kelley, 19, is the son of Donna Shikle and Bobby Kelley and is currently stationed in Fort Bliss, El Paso, Texas where he is a K-9 MP in the Army. This is Cole's first time away from his family on Christmas, a fact his younger sister knows all too well.

Madison Shikle is a 4th grade student at East Elementary, the younger sister of Cole. Though 10 years separates the siblings in age, the two have a close bond which is being tested this holiday season.

"Well he won't be home for Christmas," said Madison. "I told him 'Bubby, I'll miss you at Christmas' and he told me 'I'm going to miss you too'."

Donna, said her son's first stint away from home came in April, a deployment which lasted up until Thanksgiving. The thought of not having Cole home for Christmas is hard not just for her, but everyone in the family.

"He left in April then came back the past couple weeks before having to go back out," said Donna. "That was the longest he had ever been away from home. It's something that's hard on us

See Holiday, Page 12

Interact Club completes service projects

By: Joyce Nix
Contributor

CULLMAN – Each year, St. Bernard Interact Club completes at least two community service projects, one of which furthers international understanding and goodwill. Through these efforts, students develop a network of friendships with local and overseas clubs and learn the importance of developing leadership skills and personal integrity; demonstrating helpfulness and respect for others; and understanding the value of individual responsibility and hard work.

Faculty moderator for the Interact Club, Bill Nuss said his students have been very involved in several activities. "Earlier we sent our troops in Afghanistan care packages full of razors, shaving cream, gum, baby wipes, and writing cards," said Nuss.

This project was done in cooperation with a recent graduate, Richard Neese, who completed a tour in Afghanistan.

Students bought toys to be donated to local charities for Christmas, as well as collected diabetic socks with no skid bottoms for recipients at the local nursing homes.

Interact President, Nathan Cline said he was proud of the clubs accomplishments and looks forward to working with the Rotary Club on a joint project next spring.

With a shining smile, Cline said, "It's a great feeling to see our school community come together to support our troops as well as those who are struggling and who are confined to nursing homes. St. Bernard is blessed with helping hands and kind hearts."

The "Chayse" is on!

By: Josh McBrayer
joshmcbrayer@cullmansense.com

For anyone who follows Cullman County or UAH basketball, they know the name Chayse Elliott. He has been a staple of Cold Springs basketball for several years. If you follow county basketball, you also know of the unfortunate accident that occurred when Cold Springs hosted Vinemont on November 26th. For those who do not know, Elliott was on a break-away heading to the basket for a dunk. As he went up he was fouled and landed awkwardly on his left wrist. The impact from the landing broke his wrist in two different places and required surgery. Ever the "baller," Elliott was on the court within days of the surgery working on his game and preparing for his return.

"I was back on the court shooting two days after my surgery," Elliot said in an interview with CullmanSense. "I was going through some dribbling drills and shooting."

Elliott is a big part of the Cold Springs offense with his prowess in scoring, rebounding, and assists and is looking forward to returning to the court. He is working hard to get back into the swing of things for his return to the hardwood.

"I go to therapy 2 days a week to get the range of motion and strength back in my arm. I also do the stretching drills at home every night," Elliott said.

When asked when he would be able to return to competitive action, Elliott said, "I go back to the doctor on January 3rd and I expect to be released then. It will be a decision made by the doctor. If he releases me on January 3rd, we have a game at Sulligent on the 4th. That should be my first game back. I don't know if I will be 100% or not, but when the doctor releases me I will be

See The "Chayse", Page 12

HOOPS Holiday Basketball Tournament–p. 4

PRINTED LOCALLY @ PRINTING Alabama Web Press

In Brief

Energy companies future becoming brighter with signing of H.R. 6582

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Just a little more than two weeks since the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 6582, President Barack Obama signed the bill into legislation. The bill is slated to approve appliance energy efficiency standards, which will in essence amend the 2007 measure of the Energy Independence and Security Act.

The bill passed through the House with a vote of 398-2 before being unanimously approved by the Senate on Dec. 6. Rep. Robert Aderholt, who sponsored the bill, was pleased with bi-partisan work which went into the working of the bill.

"If we want to see economic growth in this country, it is critical that our nation's policy and laws create a regulatory environment that fosters innovation and job creation. Due to an increase in overreaching, burdensome, and unnecessary regulations over the past few years, too many small businesses have had to layoff employees, reduce production, or even shut their doors," said Aderholt.

"This is precisely what happened to HH Technologies, an innovative manufacturing company in Cullman County, Alabama. The federal government's embrace of outdated technology prohibited a new and innovative solution to improved energy efficiency."

"Through House Republicans continued efforts to streamline and eliminate bureaucratic red-tape in Washington, like the legislation passed today, we can begin to jumpstart our nation's economic growth and reinvigorate job creation. I thank my colleagues for supporting H.R. 6582 and look forward to seeing the bill become law," concluded Aderholt.

The aim of H.R. 6582 is to increase domestic competitiveness of appliance manufacturers by making them more energy efficient and innovative.

For more information on H.R. 6582, including the full text of the legislation, please visit: www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-112hr6582ih/pdf/BILLS-112hr6582ih.pdf.

Information provided from the desks of Rep. Robert Aderholt and President Barack Obama

Visiting Angels of Cullman

By: Erika Mead

Chamber of Commerce Contributor

CULLMAN – The Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce recently held a ribbon cutting for Visiting Angels of Cullman on December 7th. Visiting Angels Senior Care and In Home Assisted Living Services can assist elderly people located in Cullman, Marshall, Blount, Winston and Northern Jefferson Counties.

Because they are a non-medical agency and not a nursing agency, they do not dictate to you what your schedule is to be. It is their job to assist people in this area by adjusting their schedule and to keep your loved one comfortable in their homes. For more information, visit them at 206 3rd Street SE, Cullman, AL 35055 or call them at 256-734-6600.



Front Row (Left to Right): Kathy McLeroy, The Cullman Times; Marlene Fine, Visiting Angels of Cullman; Greg Donnelly, Owner; Randall Shedd, Cullman County Commission on Aging; Kaye Donnelly, Owner; Joyce Hardeman, Comfort Care Hospice.

2013 Bus. Licenses Pink for Breast Cancer Awareness

By: Leanne West

Contributor

CULLMAN – Annual business license renewals begin in January 2013 for all businesses operating in the City of Cullman. This year, the business licenses will be printed on bright pink paper to help increase awareness of breast cancer.

Cancer has touched the lives of many in our community, and across our nation. It is estimated that more than 200,000 women in the U.S. will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year. The City of Cullman honors those who have dealt with breast cancer, and wants to encourage our citizens to find out more about this disease, what the risk factors are, and what they can do to ensure that it is detected in its early stages when it can be most effectively treated.

"The City of Cullman wants to reach out and help increase awareness of breast cancer and encourage women in our community to talk to their health care providers to find out what they can do to minimize their risks of developing breast cancer or to detect it in its early stages," said Cullman Mayor Max A. Townson. "We also encourage everyone to support organizations that are searching for a cure for this terrible disease."

The City of Cullman business license office has mailed out reminder notices to businesses regarding license renewals. Businesses have the entire month of January to renew their city business licenses without penalty. After February 1, 2013, a 15% penalty will be added.

"We know that businesses display their business licenses prominently in their establishments," said Mayor Townson. "We hope that each time someone looks at the bright pink 2013 City of Cullman business licenses on the walls of our local businesses, they will be reminded to do whatever they can do to try to prevent this deadly disease from affecting their lives or the lives of their loved ones."

For questions concerning 2013 business license renewals call 256-775-7106 or 256-775-7109 during regular office hours or email cityhall@cullmancity.org. Business license forms can also be downloaded from the City of Cullman web site at www.cullmancity.org.

AG Strange: Tobacco settlement a good deal for Ala.

By: Joy Patterson

Contributor

MONTGOMERY – Attorney General Luther Strange today announced a multi-state agreement with the major tobacco companies that settles a 10-year dispute regarding payments under the 1998 Master Settlement Agreement (MSA). Today's agreement ensures the stability of continued payments in the future.

"This settlement is important for Alabama and essential to the future of our public health funding from the Alabama 21st Century Fund," said Strange. "The Legislature has utilized the state's MSA funds by funding incentives for economic development and supporting health care programs for children and seniors. Our office is focused on maintaining the integrity of that fund. Under the terms of the settlement, we avoid the significant uncertainty of costly litigation and the potential loss of one or more entire annual MSA payments."

In 1998, the major tobacco companies agreed to pay states more than $200 billion over 25 years to settle lawsuits over the health care costs related to smoking. For the past ten years, there has been a dispute between the tobacco companies and the states over portions of the payments.

Since 2003, Alabama has received nearly $1 billion from the MSA. For each of those years, no less than $14 million in payments would be at risk by continued arbitration.

On December 17, 2012, the settlement was agreed upon by 17 states including Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Georgia, Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wyoming. The states were joined by the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

Bentley awards $33.2 million to low-income families

By: Josh Carples

Contributor

MONTGOMERY – Gov. Robert Bentley has awarded more than $33.2 million to assist elderly, disabled and low-income families in Alabama with home energy bills, including those living in Cullman County.

The grants will enable 22 community service agencies throughout the state to help families heat their homes this winter. Community Action Partnership of North Alabama Inc., which covers Cullman, Lawrence, and Morgan County, received a total of $1,438,429.

Eligibility requirements are based on income, family size and available resources. Residents apply locally through the community service agencies; if applications are approved, payments are made directly to the utility companies on behalf of residents.

The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs is administering the grants as part of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program. The funding was made available by the U.S. Department of Health and Humans Services.

Community Action Partnership of North Alabama Inc. (Cullman, Lawrence, Morgan) - $1,438,429.



Alabama procedures change for children adopted in other countries by U.S. citizens

By: Cathy Molchan Donald

Alabama Department of Health

MONTGOMERY – Alabama residents who are U.S. citizens and in the process of adopting or have just adopted a child born in a foreign country may no longer need to re-adopt the child in an Alabama court to obtain a Certificate of Foreign Birth.

Effective Jan. 1, 2013, a new state law gives the State Registrar of Vital Statistics authority to issue a Certificate of Foreign Birth without re-adoption in an Alabama court if certain criteria are satisfied.

Gov. Robert Bentley signed Act 2012-179 into law on April 10, 2012, which facilitates intercountry adoptions. The Alabama Department of Public Health has notified probate judges and adoption agencies in the state about the new law, supporting documents needed and fees required.

The "Application to Prepare a Certificate of Foreign Birth" requires the following documentation:

- The child's Certificate of Citizenship
- A certified copy of the child's foreign birth certificate and certified English translation
- The original documents related to the foreign adoption certified by the U.S. Embassy abroad and certified English translation
- The Social Security card of the child
- A valid government-issued picture identification of parent or parents, such as a passport, driver's license, or military identification
- Proof of current residency of the parent or parents in Alabama

Parents must send copies of all of the documents listed in order for the birth certificate to be prepared without judicial proceedings. If the parents are unable to provide the required documents to the Center for Health Statistics, an adoption through an Alabama court will still be required.

If the child was born in another country to a U.S. citizen, the parents will need to contact the U.S. State Department at (202) 955-0307 or visit the website: www.travel.state.gov.

For more information, request to speak with an adoption specialist at 334-206-2644 or 334-206-3060 or visit www.adph.org/vitalrecords/. Requests for application forms should be sent to Vital Records—Adoptions Section, P.O. Box 5625, Montgomery, Ala. 36103-5625.

Disaster Preparedness Expert's Doomsday Lesson

By: Dr. Arthur Bradley

Contributed

YORKTOWN, Va., – December 21st finally arrived, and fortunately, the five-thousand-year-old Mayan prediction that the world would end in cataclysmic doom didn't come to pass. Numerous possible scenarios were cited including a massive solar storm, the sudden reversal of the Earth's magnetic field, a supervolcano eruption, or the collision with an unseen planetary body (a.k.a. Planet X). While scientists and scholars alike were right to scoff at such prophecies, it does provide an opportunity to ask, "What if the Mayans were right?" What if our world had experienced a serious and far-reaching disaster? How would we as a species have fared? Perhaps more important, how well would your own family have survived?

Dr. Arthur Bradley, author of the bestselling, "Handbook to Practical Disaster Preparedness for the Family" and the "Prepper's Instruction Manual," claims that in all but the worst-case scenarios, mankind would likely survive. He says, "We possess the intelligence, technologies, and medicines to help us adapt and survive under all but the most adverse conditions. People would die, civilizations might fall, and life would certainly be disrupted, but with careful preparations, and perhaps a bit of luck, some would live to rebuild."

What steps can be taken to ensure your place as one of the survivors? The Federal Emergency Management Agency suggests that people start with a simple set of supplies to help meet their needs for three days (see Ready.gov). Dr. Bradley agrees that this minimal preparation is a good place to start but points out that it falls far short of meeting an individual's or family's needs for an extended crisis. He suggests drafting a plan designed to carefully document how your family will address each of their 14 needs, which include: food, water, shelter, light, heating, air, sleep, hygiene and sanitation, medicine, communication, electricity, financial security, transportation, and protection (see Disasterpreparer.com). Addressing these needs requires setting up micro-infrastructures capable of supporting your family for an extended period of time. Dr. Bradley states that a reasonable first goal is to be self-sufficient for 30 days. This requires setting up a small food cache, ensuring access to clean water other than from your tap, having supplies to keep warm under the most adverse conditions, and being capable of generating a modest level of electricity using generators or inverters.

He goes on to say that most people are ill prepared for even mundane interruptions in the nation's most critical infrastructures (i.e., electricity, food and water distribution, emergency services). "People have become far too dependent on our nation's support systems. Like many events before it, Hurricane Sandy left millions of Americans scrambling to meet their most basic needs." He believes that generations before ours were far better prepared. "Not only did they feel the sacrifices required by world wars, they also experienced the hardships of a long-lasting depression. Food lines, gas shortages, and devastating unemployment were all very real threats."

"We should all be thankful that 2012 will be remembered for the catastrophe that it didn't bring. What shouldn't be forgotten, however, are the countless disasters that did occur, including Hurricane Sandy, the worst drought in our nation's history, and the numerous earthquakes, floods, typhoons, and wildfires experienced all around the globe. There is no doubt that disasters, both natural and man-made, will continue to challenge mankind. Whether it's an influenza pandemic, a deadly tsunami, or a radiological accident, the human race is constantly reminded not to become too complacent. Despite yet another failed doomsday prophecy, perhaps today's lesson is that now really is the time to get better prepared," concluded Dr. Bradley.

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Alabama Unemployment Rate Drops to 7.5%; Cullman County at 5.8%

From the Office of

Governor Bentley

MONTGOMERY – Governor Robert Bentley on Friday announced that Alabama's preliminary November unemployment rate is 7.5%, down from October's rate of 8.1% and below the November 2011 rate of 8.3%.

Alabama's November 2012 unemployment rate is also below the national rate of 7.7%. The state's November rate represents 162,182 unemployed persons, compared to 174,867 in October and 180,003 in November 2011.

"We're going to continue on the same path of working hard every day to recruit and attract more jobs for this state," Governor Bentley said.

"The unemployment rate can fluctuate given the time of year. We are encouraged that the overall trend shows a decreasing unemployment rate, and I will continue my efforts to create more jobs until everyone who wants a job is able to find one."

"November's rate indicates that Alabama's employers are expecting a strong holiday season," said Alabama Department of Labor Commissioner Tom Surtees. "The increase in retail hiring means that many people have jobs this Christmas that may otherwise have not.

Even if some of the jobs are temporary, that still means that thousands of Alabamians will be able to provide for their families during the holiday season."

Retail trade employment increased by 3,700 in November, with the bulk of that increase coming from hiring in general merchandise and department stores.

"We also continue to see positive indicators in other areas," Surtees added.

"We are consistently seeing initial claims and benefits payments at pre-recession levels, and record numbers of active job orders on www.joblink.alabama.gov. Sixty-six of 67 counties experienced a drop in their unemployment rate this month."

The counties with the lowest unemployment rates are: Shelby County at 4.6%, Lee County and Madison County at 5.6%, and St. Clair County, Coffee County, Blount County, and Limestone County at 5.7%. The counties with the highest unemployment rates are: Wilcox County at 15.9%, Bullock County at 14.1%, and Dallas County at 13.2%.

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CullmanSense is a weekly print publication based out of Cullman, Alabama. The online site, CullmanSense.com, is a six-day a week publication, which includes arrest and incident reports from Cullman City Police and the Cullman County Sheriff's Office, Obituaries, and other timely information. The site is completely free and does include stories not found in our print edition.

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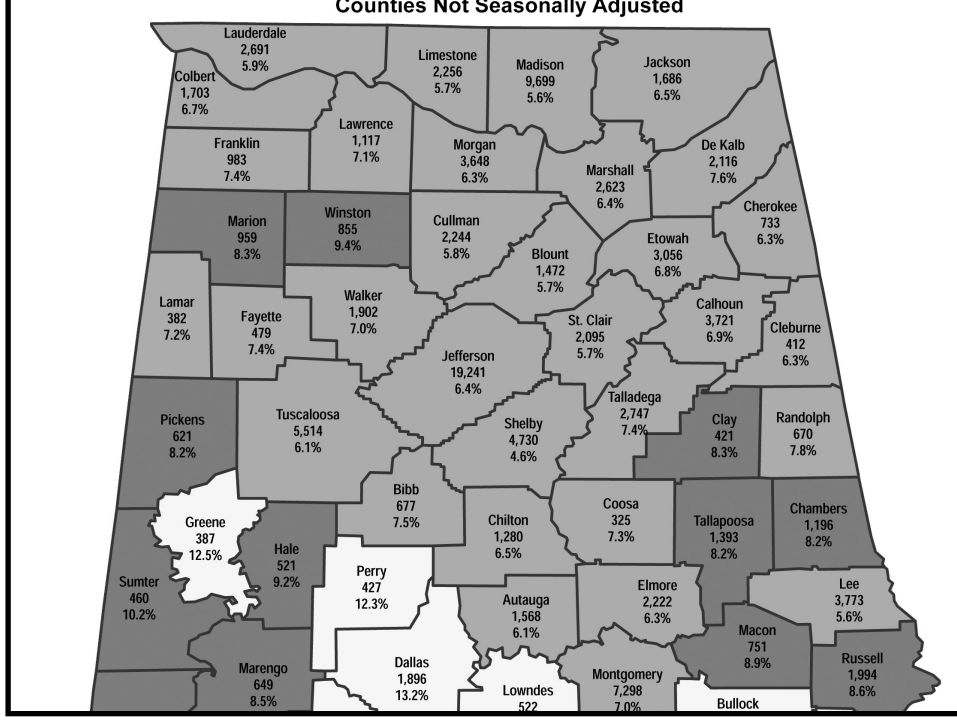


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SPORTS

Holiday Hoops Tournament Action

By: Josh McBrayer
joshmcbrayer@cullmansense.com

It's that time of year again. The presents will have been opened and the bellies will be full, but the holiday is not complete without the two annual Christmas tournaments that take place in Cullman County each year. Starting on December 26th, area teams will be playing for the chance to be called champion and pick up momentum heading into the second half of the season.

The 2012 West Point Christmas Tournament

The annual West Point Christmas Tournament tips off on Wednesday, December 26th and will consist of 10 teams, four being from Cullman County, in a round robin format.

There will be a first place trophy awarded in both the Freshman and Junior Varsity divisions.

Two first place trophies will be handed out in the varsity division. One for the team from Cullman County with the best record and one for the non-county team with the best record. Here is how the games are set:

Wednesday, December 26th
2:00 p.m. Good Hope vs. Lawrence County
3:15 p.m. Clements vs. Priceville
4:30 p.m. Cold Springs vs. Danville
5:45 p.m. West Point vs. Brewer
7:00 p.m. Fairview vs. West Morgan

Thursday, December 27th
2:00 p.m. Brewer vs. Clements
3:15 p.m. Lawrence County vs. Cod Springs
4:30 p.m. West Morgan vs. Good Hope
5:45 p.m. Danville vs. West Point
7:00 p.m. Priceville vs. Fairview

Friday, December 28th
2:00 p.m. Good Hope vs. Brewer
3:15 p.m. Lawrence County vs. Cold Springs
4:30 p.m. Fairview vs. Lawrence County
5:45 p.m. West Point vs. Priceville
7:00 p.m. Cold Springs vs. West Morgan

NOTE: Teams listed first will be home team and will wear white

2012 Mitch Smith Chevrolet Yule Tide Classic

The Yule Tide Classic will be held at Wallace State Community College starting on Thursday, December 28th and will consist of bracket style play and will feature 16 teams, eight boys and eight girls. Cullman will be represented by The Cullman Bearcats, Cullman Lady Bearcats and Holly Pond Lady Broncos. It will be a double elimination tournament with a total of 24 games alternating between boys and girls. Here is a breakdown day one games.

Thursday, December 27th
9:30 a.m. Girls Holly Pond vs. Walker
11:00 a.m. Boys Tanner vs. Gardendale
12:30 p.m. Girls Athens vs. Gardendale
2:00 p.m. Boys Athens vs. Walker
3:30 p.m. Girls Hartselle vs. Hazel Green
5:00 p.m. Boys Dallas County vs. Newton (GA)
6:30 p.m. Girls Cullman vs. Northridge
8:00 p.m. Boys Cullman vs. Ravenwood (TN)

NOTE: Games on December 28th and December 29th will be determined by the results from December 27th.

After enjoying your holiday meal and traditions with your family on Christmas, come hang out courtside with the CullmanSense family to watch some great basketball action.

CullmanSense's Weekly Basketball Wrap-Up

By: Josh McBrayer
joshmcbrayer@cullmansense.com

School's out and Christmas tournaments are right around the corner. Area Cullman County teams will take a break from regular season action to participate in Christmas tournaments, but local teams made the most of their games before the break. Here is a rundown of the last regular season games before the New Year.

Monday, December 17th

Cullman vs. Hartselle
By: Josh McBrayer

Cullman Lady Bearcats 33 vs. Hartselle Lady Tigers 30

Hartselle scored the first four points of the second quarter to take the lead for the first time since the opening tip but Baylee Smith of Cullman answered by nailing a three and giving the lead right back to the Lady Bearcats. Cullman was able to add two more to their lead and carry a 16-11 lead to the half in a low scoring first half.

The third quarter mirrored the first two, with offense hard to come by. Each team worked the ball around the perimeter looking for the inside pass or the open jumper. Out of a Lady Tiger time-out, 1,000 point scorer Morgan Smith scored two buckets in seven seconds to give Cullman an eight point lead.

Smith scored the first six points of the fourth form the Lady Bearcats, giving them their first double digit lead of the night. Hartselle fought until the final buzzer but was unable to overcome the methodical offense of the Lady Bearcats. Cullman took the win 33-30.

Leading the Lady Bearcats in scoring was Morgan Smith with 17. Baylee Johnson had nine and Blair Nall dropped in seven.

Hartselle was led by Riley Terry with seven. Sara Horner and Allie Roden had five each.

Cullman Bearcats 66 vs. Hartselle Tigers 49

Cullman and Hartselle both came out strong in the first quarter with each squad scoring 14. Timbo Slaton was a force inside for Hartselle scoring nine of the Tigers 14 first quarter points.

The 'Cats came roaring in the second burying two three's to open the quarter but Hartselle answered with two transition baskets to keep the game to within two.

However, Hartselle would score just two more points in the quarter. Cullman frustrated the Tigers with a stingy 3-2 defense that worked to perfection. The Bearcats outscored Hartselle 19-6 to take a commanding 33-20 lead to the locker room.

Cullman extended the lead to 20 in a blink of an eye. Keaton Dean, Lane Donaldson, and Lawson Schaffer each stripped a three-point basket early in the first.

Following this, Deacon Aldridge of Hartselle let his emotions get the best of him and, after a foul, chest bumped Schaffer and was hit with a technical foul. Schaffer converted the free throws to points. Hartselle finished the quarter strong but still trailed by 22.

Prestyn Wallace hit two trifectas for Hartselle to open the final frame and helped cut the Cullman lead to 16, but as hard as they fought, they could not overcome the big third quarter by Cullman. The Bearcats went on to win 66-49.

Cullman was led by Lane Donaldson. He dropped in 19 and was red-hot from three point land. Troy Forrest followed with 16. Lawson Schaffer was also in double figures with 10.

Timbo Slaton led the Tigers with 17 and was followed by Prestyn Wallace with 12.

Other scores:
Lynn Lady Bears 38 vs. Good Hope Lady Raiders 42
Lynn Bears 43 vs. Good Hope Raiders 47
Oakman Lady Wildcats 17 vs. Cold Springs Lady Eagles 66
Oakman Wildcats 56 vs. Cold Springs Eagles 40

Tuesday, December 18th

Holly Pond vs. Vinemont
By: Zeke McBrayer

Holly Pond Lady Broncos 63 vs. Vinemont Lady Eagles 9

The varsity girls were the first to take the floor and the Lady Broncos controlled the game from the opening tip-off. Holly Pond opened the game on a 14-0 run that put Vinemont in a hole that they were unable to climb out of.

The Lady Eagles played hard from the opening tip to the final horn but were unable to overcome the great play on both sides of the ball by Holly Pond. The final score was 63-9 in favor of the Lady Broncos.

The Holly Pond Lady Broncos were led by Taylor Terry and Natasha Holcombe who both had 14 points. Rachel Finley added in 11 and Lexy Malone chipped in 10.

Jordan Melton led the Lady Eagles with five. Katie Fuller scored four.

Holly Pond 72 vs. Vinemont 48

The varsity boys were next on the schedule and Vinemont looked to pickup a big road win against the ninth ranked Holly Pond Broncos. Holly Pond however had different plans and used a big third quarter to pick up the win.

The first period was evenly matched, with both sides making good defensive plays. The period ended with Vinemont ahead by just one. This had the looks of a great ballgame.

The second period was a mirror match with each team playing solid defense, keeping their opponent from getting any momentum.

Holly Pond did manage to get a flurry of offense late in the second, ending the quarter on a 9-0 run and taking a four point advantage to the locker room.

Whatever was said by Holly Pond coach Mitch Morris at halftime fired up his team. The Broncos led off the third by hitting four straight three point buckets. Using the three point shot, Holly Pond scored 21 straight before a lay-up from Vinemont's Garrett Sipe.

The Eagles played the Broncos close in the fourth but could not overcome the third period and fell to the Broncos, 72-48.

The Broncos were led by Colby Adams who had 17 points on the night, all of them coming in the second half. Gunter Morris chipped in 15 and Austin Smith had 10.

The Eagles were led by Garrett Sipe who had 19 points on the night. Lance Stanley had 12 and Ty Jones added on 11.

Hanceville vs. Curry
By: Josh McBrayer

Hanceville Lady Bulldogs 14 vs. Curry Lady Yellow Jackets 37

Kaylee Horton was on fire for the Lady Yellow Jackets of Curry, scoring seven of Curry's 14 first quarter points in Tuesday night's contest against Hanceville. Curry outscored the Lady Bulldogs 14-0 in the first to build a large lead that they took to the second.

Hanceville scored their first bucket of the game 90 seconds into quarter number two



CullmanSense's Weekly Basketball Wrap-Up (Continued)

when Mariah Twitty hit a jumper from just inside three point range. Taylor Hollingsworth took over for Hanceville scoring the next seven for the Lady Bulldogs. Hanceville was able to chip away at the lead but still trailed 22-11 at the half.

The Lady Bulldogs cut the Curry lead to nine early in the third but Curry finished the quarter on a 9-1 run extend their advantage to 17, putting themselves in a great position heading to the final quarter.

Hanceville and Curry combined for just eight points in the final frame. Although the Lady Bulldogs fought the entire game, they were unable to recover from the first quarter and fell to Curry, 37-18.

All but one Lady Yellow Jacket scored for Curry. Kaylee Horton led the way with nine. Mary Beth Scott and Logan Black followed her with five apiece. Ashley Swindle, Taylor Black, and Makenzie Hicks had four each. Emily Aaron, Olivia Smith, and Taylor Rowe all contributed two.

Hanceville had four ladies score. Taylor Hollingsworth led the Lady Bulldogs with nine. Karrah Johnson followed with four. Masee Hollis had three and Mariah Twitty scored two.

Hanceville Bulldogs 55 vs. Curry Yellow Jackets 46

Hanceville felt the "sting" of the Yellow Jackets early in the first when they were on the short end of a 7-0 run from Curry that forced a Bulldog time-out. Keith Twitty got Hanceville on the board five minutes into the quarter on a free throw.

He would score again next time down the floor but Curry answered with four points of their own, extending the run to 11-3 and forcing another Hanceville time-out.

The break is just what Hanceville needed. The Bulldogs ended the first on a 5-0 run, all by Brontae Harris, making the score 11-8 in favor of Curry.

The momentum stayed with Hanceville in the second. They were able to flip the scoreboard and turn a three point deficit into a 10 point lead. They outscored Curry 27-14 thanks in part to Chris Smith who had a huge 18 point quarter.

The third quarter was a battle of attrition that was won by Curry. Both teams shot well but Curry took advantage of some costly turnovers by Hanceville. They were able to shave six points off the Bulldog lead and trailed by just four heading to the final stanza.

An early 6-2 run by Hanceville doubled their lead and gave them some breathing room early in the fourth. This was just what the Bulldogs needed to put Curry away as they won by a final score of 55-46.

Leading the Bulldogs in scoring was Chris Smith with 25. Next was Brontae Harris, he had 18. Tyler Tankersly scored six. Dant'e Reese and Keith Twitty each had three. Matt Barnes rounded out the Hanceville scoring with two.

Out in front for the Yellow Jackets was Jaxon Aaron with 11. Wesley Key followed with nine. Jarrod Owens and Alex Oden scored eight. Spencer Fikes added three and Dexter Freeman finished with two.

Good Hope vs. Fairview
By: Johnny Thornton

Good Hope Lady Raiders 57 vs. Fairview Lady Aggies 26

Good Hope coach Michael Oldacre sees his Lady Raiders starting to hit a peak before the holidays arrive.

They won their fourth straight Tuesday night, keyed by a 13-2 run in the final 4:00 of the first half to get control of the contest. That spurt enabled the Lady Raiders to end the half with a 29-13 cushion.

Shooting guard Kayla Tillman and guard Kacy Thomas combined for 14 points in the second period after Fairview had closed the deficit to 16-11 approaching the 4:00 mark.

Tillman then delivered 11 in the third period to lead a 17-6 run and allow the Lady Raiders to extend the lead to 46-19.

Tillman topped the scoring with 24 points, Savanna Fendley and Thomas scored seven, Darcie Wilson five, Kaitlyn Bishop and Kayla Scott four, and Cara Goodwin, Kami Calvert, and Alana Henke two each.

Marlana Johnson topped the Fairview scorers with 10 points, Sarah Harper five, Alley Raper and Julia Creel three, and Alli Harris and Makenna Butts two.

Good Hope Raiders 31 vs. Fairview Aggies 59

Fairview's shooting during the first quarter set the tone for the Aggies to take care of the Good Hope Raiders 59-31 Tuesday night at D.E. Ryan Gymnasium.

The Aggies knocked down eight field goals in the first quarter, sprinting out to a 22-2 lead. Point guard Peter Kessler and forward Blake Parker were the spark for coach Greg Boatright with five field goals between the two in the 8:00 span.

The fast start by the Aggies held up the rest of the way. Fairview led 35-14 at halftime and 40-23 going into the fourth period.

It was a 9-0 start for the Aggies before Good Hope's lone basket in the first period came from point guard Eli Marty. The Raiders had good looks from the offensive side, but couldn't deliver when needed, getting behind by a 20-point margin.

Coach Michael Jones' Raiders stayed with it in producing five second quarter baskets as Andrew Cofer and Alex Cofer landed field goals and three-pointers.

Kessler finished the first half with five field goals, 13 points as Parker worked inside the paint getting 10 to score by the time the game reached intermission.

Fairview slowed down scoring wise in the third with only a trey by Kessler and a shot in the paint by left-hander Tyler Yearwood.

But in the final period, the Aggie shooting once again caught fire with seven field goals, three from guard Andy Hendrix, two of them coming from downtown.

Kessler finished the game with 16 points, Parker scored 13, Hendrix tossed in 10, Yearwood had eight, Luke Bailey six, and Elijah Garrison, Chris Green and Marco Rodriguez two each.

Andrew Cofer was the lone Raider to reach double digits with 11 points, Alex Cofer had seven, Jonathan Grigsby had four, Tyler Stringer three, and Marty and Chris Raper two.

Other Scores:
Hayden Lady Wildcats 45 vs. West Point Lady Warriors 60
Hayden Wildcats 41 vs. West Point Warriors 60
Friday, December 21

Good Hope vs. Danville
By: Johnny Thornton

Danville Lady Hawks 36 vs. Good Hope Lady Raiders 38

Kayla Tillman knows when to make a good decision in a critical moment of a basketball game. Good Hope's top scorer did just that Friday night when she delivered a pass to an open Savanna Fendley who hit a field goal with 1.8 seconds left, giving the Lady Raiders a thrilling 38-36 victory over Danville and the 3A, Area 13 regular season title.

With the score tied, Good Hope called time out with 44 seconds left in the game, setting up the opportunity to go for the victory. The Lady Raiders got the ball into the hands of Tillman with 15 seconds left who drove the right baseline and moved toward the basket.

As a Danville defender attempted to cut off her penetration, Tillman saw Fendley open in the middle of the lane. The pass was perfect with Fendley taking the ball and shooting a short range jumper jumper off the glass.

Good Hope survived a challenge by Danville, needing to upset the Lady Raiders that would have created a tie for first place in the area standings.

Now Michael Oldacre's ball club can move forward with the Area 13 Tournament to be held on the Good Hope campus beginning February 7.

Good Hope will celebrate Christmas with a 5-game winning streak, an overall record of 9-9 and momentum going to Blount County next week when they play in the Hayden Christmas Tournament.

This game started as bad as it could for the Lady Raiders. Good Hope did not hit a shot for the first 6:30 of the contest, falling behind 8-1. Then Tillman scored a couple of buckets and Fendley found her way open in the paint to give Good Hope momentum, trailing at the end of the period 10-7.

Good Hope went ahead 15-12 before Danville answered with an 8-4 run late in the second and surged into the lead at the half, 20-19.

The Lady Hawks were able to keep the advantage at the end of the third period at 27-26 and led 34-32 late in the game when the Lady Raiders rose to the challenge.

Kaitlyn Bishop produced two critical field goals in the fourth to go with an important three-pointer by Tillman.

Danville tied the score at 36-36 with less than a minute left when Syndi Shelton beat her defender on a backdoor play to the basket. After that, it was the poise of the Lady Raiders. They shook off a tough night in which they were only three of nine from the line for 33 percent.

Tillman led the team with 15 points, Bishop scored 14, Fendley added six, and Cara Goodwin scored a three-pointer.

Tabetha Hutto hit 11 to lead Danville who fell to 10-6 and lost its third straight. The Lady Hawks fell to 2-2 in the area. Taza Tuck scored 10 and Jesse Oliver netted seven.

Good Hope played good defense all night, Danville never went to the foul line. No one for either side got into foul trouble with the one-and-one situation never coming into play in either half.

The Lady Raiders will meet Cordova in the first round of the Hayden Tournament Thursday at 5:30 p.m. They are in the top part of the bracket with Mortimer Jordan and Homewood. Good Hope has won the title the past two years.

Danville Hawks 45 vs. Good Hope Raiders 41

Good Hope was about to give Hanceville a Christmas gift if the Raiders upset the Hawks. Danville came into the game tied for the area lead with Hanceville at 2-1.

The Raiders led throughout the contest, but could never stay in front.

Danville took the lead for good in the closing moments of the fourth quarter on a three-pointer by Justin Morgan, making the score 38-37.

It came down to the final minute with the Hawks hitting their last four free throw attempts. Danville was six of eight at the line in the final period with Good Hope making three of four.

Morgan extended the Danville lead to 45-41 with 17 seconds remaining as the Raiders were unable to get off another shot. Danville knocked the ball into backcourt with the final seconds running off and the Hawks improving to 9-5, 3-1 in the area.

They grab a half game advantage over Hanceville who will face the Hawks at Wallace State's Tom Drake Coliseum Jan. 11. Danville beat Hanceville 37-35 earlier this month.

Morgan was the top scorer for the Hawks with 16.

Leading the Good Hope scoring was Tyler Stringer with 15, Eli Marty and Alex Cofer 10, and Andrew Cofer six.

Good Hope was ahead 11-9 after the first, 21-17 at the half and 31-27 at the end of the third period. The Raiders took a nine-point lead in the third, their largest of the night, but were unable to slow down the Danville momentum that finished the game with a 25-12 run.

Other Scores:
East Limestone Lady Indians 51 vs. West Point Lady Warriors 65
East Limestone Indians 70 vs. West Point Warriors 43.

Holly Pond continues to move up in the latest ASWA rankings

By: Josh McBrayer
joshmcbrayer@cullmansense.com

Holly Pond can once again claim bragging rights for the second week in a row as both their boys and girls squads are ranked in the top ten of the ASWA's basketball rankings. Cold Spring's girls also hold fast in the top 10.

Cold Springs Lady Eagles (11-3) #5 Class 2A

The Cold Springs Lady Eagles drop an anchor at #5 in Class 2A for the second week. The Lady Eagles keep momentum on their side heading into the Christmas break by blowing out Oakman 66-17 on Monday, December 17th.

Holly Pond Lady Broncos (13-2) #6 Class 3A

The Holly Pond Lady Broncos moved up one spot from #6 last week to #5 this week in the latest ASWA rankings. The rise in the rankings is due to three more wins that the Lady Broncos secured over the past week. In the three wins Holly Pond outscored their opponents by 100+ points. 63-36 over Brindlee Mountain, 60-37 over Locust Fork, and 63-9 over Vinemont. The Lady Broncos will be in action next in the 2012 Mitch Smith Yule Tide Classic at Tom Drake Coliseum on the campus of Wallace State Community College, starting on December 27th. They will play at 9:30 a.m. vs Walker.

Holly Pond Broncos (12-2) #6 Class 3A

The Holly Pond Broncos vaulted from #9 to #6 this week. Like their female counterparts, they picked up three wins over the last week. 78-45 over Brindlee Mountain, 64-62 over Locust Fork, and 72-48 over Vinemont. Holly Pond is in action again on December 27th vs Ashville in the WQSB Christmas Tournament in Albertville. They will play at 8:30 p.m.

After the festivities with friends and family over the holidays, come join the CullmanSense family at West Point or WSCC and enjoy some amazing county basketball.

Community Matters

Cullman Elementary Chorus brings out holiday spirit at both East & West Elementary

By: Noah Chandler
noahchandler@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – The traditional sound of jingling bells could be heard down the halls of East Elementary on Thursday as the Cullman Elementary Chorus joined together to usher in the Christmas season for friends, family, and fellow classmates. The chorus, which is comprised of 6th grade students from both West and East Elementary, sang classics such as *Jingle Bells*, although done in a rather peculiar manner. The group of youngsters somehow packed 30 classic Christmas tunes into a song which lasted a mere three minutes. "I am very proud of them," said Tim Clemmons, East and West Elementary Music Teacher. "I gave them some challenging songs and I feel they did them very well."

Clemmons has been teaching students inside the city for the past 31 years. You know Mr. Clemmons…*The Frog Song*! Anyway, Mr. Clemmons has been working with both schools and has been able to merge the talents from each of the schools to give Cullman residents, the Cullman Elementary Chorus.

"It is an elective. Boys and girls from the 6th grade elect to come to my class," said Clemmons following the performance. "All the students from East are bused over to West Elementary where we practice our music. We do performances throughout the year at events such as Oktoberfest and again in the spring."

One of the benefits to merging the two schools is that students have an early start at making new friends. Clemmons said the joining of the two choirs was a great decision. "It's the best thing possible," he said. "They (students) make bonds with others students that they would in middle school, but they're able to do so a bit earlier with chorus."

Madison Bray, EES student, was happy with the performance of the unified chorus. After performing four times on Thursday, including two live performances and two rehearsals, Madison said the group had the routine down.

"It was fun. We performed four times today, so we knew it pretty well," said Madison. "I like singing in German, but singing in French is better because I don't understand the words, so I can just sing along."

In fact Madison does sing in both French and German, something her mother Misty Bray has been getting accustomed to this school year. She said the performance today was a "wonderful experience" and one she was glad to have attended.

"She sings in the car all the time but she sings them in German, so I was a bit worried at first that they wouldn't be singing in English," said Misty jokingly. "They all did a great job."



Therapeutic Rec. Christmas Party a Success

By: Noah Chandler
noahchandler@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Recently the Therapeutic Recreation department held its first annual Christmas Party at the Cullman Civic Center. The event was attended by well over 100 of Cullman County special needs residents which had volunteers scrambling to keep up with the fun. Waid Harbison, Marketing Director for Cullman City Parks & Recreation, said he was pleased with the outpouring of support from the community since the program's inception earlier in the year. Since that first February day, those involved in the program have been busy with all sorts of fun activities.

"This is the first ever Therapeutic Recreation Christmas Party and it's been a really, really big success. Our first event was Valentine's Day, which had about 45-50 people, so that was a great turnout to kick off the special needs program," said Harbison. "Since then we've had many more events, such as an Easter egg hunt, they went bowling, and even had a pageant. The pageant was for all age groups, so we had contestants from 6 to 65 on stage. So it's safe to say that the program is working."

One parent who recently discovered the program is Beth Herring. Herring's son Stuart, 8, battles with autism. She said the Christmas Party allowed them both to enjoy a night out together. "We saw that Santa would be here, along with the horse drawn carriage rides, and I figured it would be a good time for him," said Herring. "It was fun. He got to play a bit, see Santa, and just have fun."

Santa Claus, or better known as Jerry Nelms by day, came out to spread some holiday cheer to all in attendance. Claus said the event was one he had been looking forward to for some time. "Events such as this one are what Santa is about," said Claus. "The smile you see on everyone's face is worth it, hands down."

Harbison said the success of the program can be found by just looking around any of the towns or cities inside of Cullman County. Many of those participants in the program now have a way to participate in activities not afforded to them in the past. Volunteer work, donations by local businesses, and a general interest of the community has helped bring the program along in its first year. "This is the biggest event we've had. At least 200 people have attended tonight, so it was great. Stonebridge Farms donated the decorations; and Domino's Pizza stepped up by providing the pizza everyone enjoyed," said Harbison. "We are building this group one event at a time because we are reaching people in our community who need to be reached."

Therapeutic Recreation uses recreational activities, leisure, and play to enhance the quality of life for individuals with physical, mental, social, or emotional limitation or abilities. The program targets more than play and uses the power of recreation and leisure activities to support the rehabilitation process and promote overall wellness. Activities are targeted at educating, teaching, playing, and participating in a number of meaningful experiences. For more information on Therapeutic Recreation contact Hollie Gutierrez, Therapeutic Recreation Coordinator, at 256-734-9157 ext. 13 or by e-mail at hgutierrez@cullmanrecreation.org.





Merry Christmas from the City of Cullman!

MAYOR
Max A. Townson

CITY COUNCIL
Garlan E. Gudger, Jr.
Andy Page
John W. Cook
Clint Hollingsworth
Jenny Folsom

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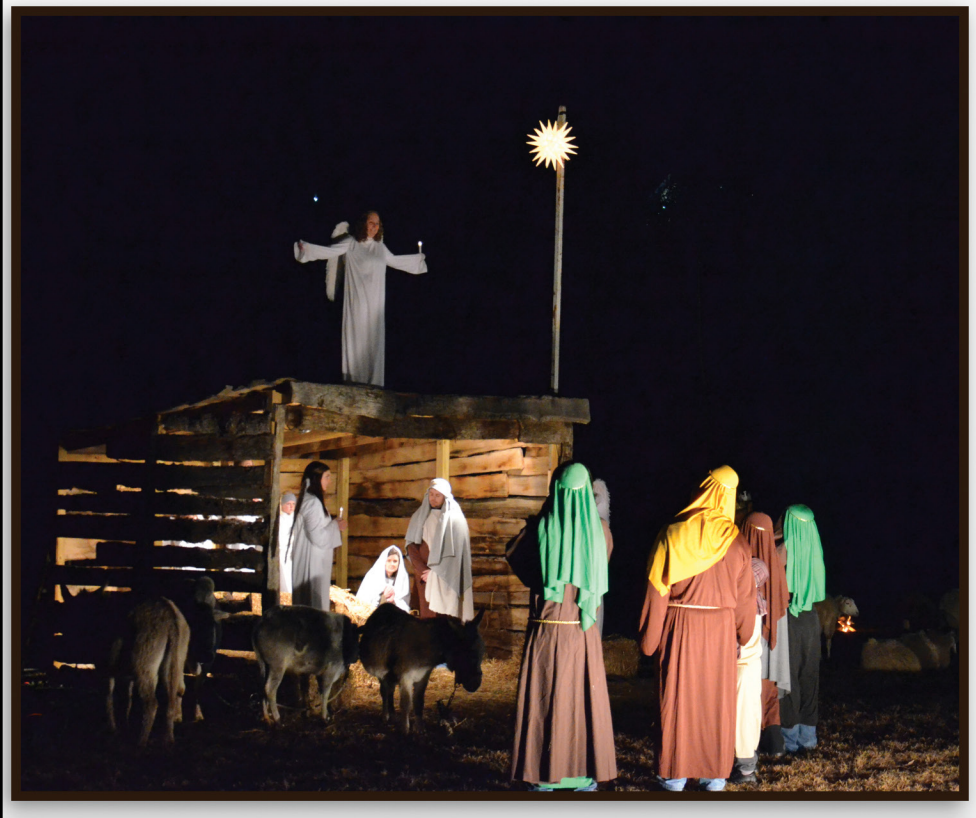
Office: 256-737-9272
Cell: 256-338-2242

Community Matters

Living Nativity – A Moving Experience for Those In Attendance

DODGE CITY – City on a Hill Church recently held a Live Nativity at the Town of Dodge City's park to mark the birth of Jesus Christ.

The depiction of the birth of Christ was complete with a large replica of a stable, fully featured with llamas, cows, and sheep, a large cast, and a slow burning fire in the distance. A narrative overlaid with gentle music guided the audience through the biblical story.





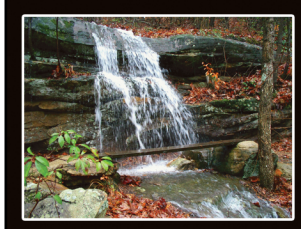


Photos by Noah Chandler



Hurricane Creek Park

Rock Climbing • Hiking • Mountain Biking • Bird Watching









1st Time Rock Climbing & Survival Classes Available

Hours
Friday: 12:00 p.m. - sunset
Saturday: 9:00 a.m. - sunset
Sunday: 9:00 a.m. - sunset

For more information
Call 256-734-2125

Community Matters

Facts for Features: 2012 Holiday Season

The holiday season is a time for gathering and celebrating with friends and family, gifts giving, reflection, and thanks. To commemorate this time of year, the U.S. Census Bureau presents the following holiday-related facts and figures from its collection of statistics.

Rush to the Stores

$27 billion

Retail sales by the nation's department stores (including leased departments) in December 2011. This represented a 45 percent jump from the previous month (when retail sales, many holiday-related, registered 18.6 billion). No other month-to-month increase in department store sales last year was as large.

Other U.S. retailers with sizable jumps in sales between November and December 2011 were bookstores (76 percent); clothing stores (38 percent); jewelry stores (129 percent); radio, TV, and other electronics stores (40 percent); and sporting goods stores (55 percent). Source: *U.S. Census Bureau, Business and Industry*

Note: Leased departments are separately owned businesses operated as departments or concessions of other service establishments or of retail businesses, such as a separately owned shoeshine parlor in a barber shop, or a beauty shop in a department store.

Also, retail sales and inventory estimates have not been adjusted to account for seasonal or pricing variations.

14.3%

The percentage of total 2011 sales for department stores (including leased departments) in December. For jewelry stores, the percentage was 19.3 percent. Source: *U.S. Census Bureau, Business and Industry*

22%

The growth in inventories by our nation's department stores (excluding leased departments) from Aug. 31 to Nov. 30, 2011. Thanks to the holiday crowds, inventories plummeted by 21 percent in December. Source: *U.S. Census Bureau, Business and Industry*

$38 Billion

Value of retail sales by electronic shopping and mail-order houses in December 2011 the highest total for any month last year. Source: *U.S. Census Bureau, Business and Industry*

22,534

The number of electronic shopping and mail-order houses in business in 2010. These businesses, which employed 311,792 workers, are a popular source of holiday gifts (NAICS code 45411). Source: *U.S. Census Bureau, American FactFinder, Table CB1000A1*

If you're not sure where to do your shopping, choices of retail establishments abound: In 2010, there were 147,614 clothing and clothing accessories stores (NAICS code 448); 26,899 gift, novelty and souvenir shops (NAICS code 45322); 23,739 jewelry stores (NAICS code 44831); 21,418 sporting goods stores (NAICS code 45111); 8,876 bookstores (NAICS code 451211) 8,779 hobby, toy, and game shops (NAICS code 45112); and 8,626 department stores (NAICS code 4521); across the nation.

The figures shown are for locations with paid employees and do not include nonemployer firms (i.e. firms with no paid employees). NAICS - North American Industry Classification System Source: *U.S. Census Bureau, County Business Patterns*,

Christmas Trees and Decorations

$1.03 billion

The value of U.S. imports of Christmas tree ornaments from China between January and September 2012. China was the leading country of origin for such items.

Similarly, China was the leading foreign source of artificial Christmas trees shipped to the United States ($139.9 million worth) during the same period. Source: *U.S. Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Statistics*

Where the Toys are Made

73

Number of establishments around the country that primarily manufactured dolls and stuffed toys in 2010. California led the nation with 10 locations. Source: *U.S. Census Bureau, County Business Patterns, NAICS code 339931*

525

The number of locations that primarily produced games, toys, and children's vehicles in 2010; they employed 7,374 workers. California led the nation with 85 establishments. Source: *U.S. Census Bureau, County Business Patterns, NAICS code 339932*

$9.6 billion

The value of U.S. toy imports, including stuffed toys (such as dolls), puzzles, and electric trains from China, between January and September 2012.

China was the leading country of origin for stuffed toys coming into this country, as well as for a number of other popular holiday gifts. These include sports footwear ($227.7 million), basketballs ($41.0 million), and roller skates ($31.8 million).

China led Thailand as the leading supplier of ice skates ($10.7 million versus $9.5 million), with Canada ranked third ($3.6 million). Source: *U.S. Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Statistics*

Holiday Names

Place names associated with the holiday season consist of a dozen places named Holly including Mount Holly, N.C. (population 13,719) and Holly Springs, Miss. (7,638). There is Snowflake, Ariz. (5,587), Santa Claus, Ind. (2,484), North Pole, Alaska (2,154), Noel, Mo. (1,822), and -- if you know about reindeer --Dasher, Ga. (934) and the village of Rudolph, Wis. (440). There is also Santa Claus, Ga. (166). Source: *U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates*

Hanukkah and Kwanzaa

58%

Proportion of the nation's spuds produced in Idaho and Washington during the fall of 2011. Potato latkes are always a crowd pleaser during Hanukkah. Source: *National Agriculture Statistics Service, Crop Production, Page 14*

$1.38 billion

The value of product shipments of candles in 2011 by the nation's manufacturers. Many of these candles are lit during Hanukkah (Dec. 8 to 16) and Kwanzaa (Dec. 26 to Jan. 1) celebrations. Source: *U.S. Census Bureau, Annual Survey of Manufacturers*

New Year's Eve and Day

More than 315 million

The nation's projected population as we ring in the New Year. Source: *U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates*

This Week in History Dec. 24 - Dec. 30

December 24th

- 1818 – "Silent Night" composed by Franz Joseph Gruber; first sung next day
- 1912 – Irving Fisher patents archiving system with index cards
- 1956 – "I Love Lucy" Christmas show airs but is never put in syndication
- 1992 – President Bush pardons Caspar Weinberger in Iran-contra affair

December 25th

- 1621 – Governor William Bradford of Plymouth forbids game playing on Christmas
- 1908 – Jack Johnson KO Tommy Burns and becomes first black heavyweight champ
- 1957 – Ed Gein found insane of murder
- 1991 – Mikhail Gorbachev formally resigned as President of U.S.S.R.

December 26th

- 1865 – James H Mason (Mass) patents first U.S. coffee percolator
- 1968 – Led Zeppelin's concert debut in Boston as opener for Vanilla Fudge
- 2004 – Earthquake, greatest in over 40 years, strikes the Pacific Ocean near Sumatra, triggering a massive Indian Ocean tsunami, killing as many as 266,000 in coastal regions of Asia and Africa

December 27th

- 1871 – World's first cat show held at Crystal Palace, London
- 1926 – Latkin Square in Bronx named for first U.S. Jewish soldier to die in WW I
- 1992 – Harry Connick, Jr. is caught with 9mm gun in New York's JFK airport
- 2011 – Consumers spend over $30 billion on online holiday shopping in the U.S., a 15 percent increase from 2010

December 28th

- 1832 – John Calhoun becomes first Vice President to resign over differences with President Jackson
- 1895 – World's first movie theater opens in Paris
- 2010 – Remains of a human that lived 400,000 years ago are discovered in Israel, challenging the theory that humans originated in Africa

December 29th

- 1845 – Texas admitted as 28th state
- 1890 – U.S. 7th Cavalry massacre about 300 captive Sioux at Wounded Knee, South Dakota
- 1982 – Coach Paul "Bear" Bryant ends his career with Alabama (323 wins)
- 2010 – In Beijing, the minimum wage is raised by 20%, the second time in six months

December 30th

- 1877 – Johannes Brahms' 2nd Symphony in D, premieres in Vienna
- 1918 – John E Hoover decides to be called J Edgar Hoover
- 1967 – Beatles' "Hello Goodbye," single goes #1 and stays #1 for 3 weeks
- 2006 – Saddam Hussein is hanged in Baghdad



Local Events Calendar

Send your Events to: calendar@cullmansense.com

City of Cullman Holiday Closings

Christmas
Monday, December 24, 2012 (Christmas Eve)
Tuesday, December 25, 2012 (Christmas Day)

New Year's Day
Tuesday, January 1, 2012

City of Cullman Sanitation Department
Residential sanitation will run as normal on Monday, December 24th. But there will be no sanitation service on Christmas Day/Tuesday the 25th. Both Tuesday's and Wednesday's sanitation route will be collected on Wednesday, December 26th.

Cullman County Municipalities

Christmas:
Monday, December 24, 2012 (Christmas Eve)
Tuesday, December 25, 2012 (Christmas Day)

New Year's Day
Tuesday, January 1, 2012

Monday, December 24th
Christmas Eve

Christmas Mass at the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament
Join us in celebrating Christmas Mass at the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament in Hanceville. The Shrine opens at 10:00 p.m. Christmas Eve. The Nuns will sing Christmas Carols at 11:25 p.m. and Mass will begin at Midnight. Everything is done very beautifully. If you want to spend Christmas in a special way, please feel free to join us!

Christmas Eve Midnight Mass at Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church
You are invited to attend the special Christmas Eve Midnight Mass at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church. The Church's choir will begin singing at 11 p.m., with the Mass starting at 12 midnight. Come early and enjoy the peaceful hymns of the season while awaiting the commemoration of the birth of the Baby Jesus on this special night!

Tuesday, December 25th
Christmas Day

Merry Christmas!

Wednesday, December 26th

Government Openings
All departments with Cullman County and the City of Cullman will resume normal operations.

Thursday, December 27th

CRMC Community Blood Drive
Come take part in the Community Blood Drive at Cullman Regional Medical Center from 7 a.m. until 4 p.m. at the main entrance of the building. All types of blood are needed. For more info, please contact the LifeSouth Donor Office at 256-736-1594 or check lifesouth.org

Friday, December 28th

Friday Night Dance at the VFW
Cullman's VFW Post 2214 invites everyone to come to their weekly Friday night dances at the VFW Hall from 7 p.m. until 10 p.m. The cost is $5.00 per person and music by the Golden Oldies and Country with the Midnight Highway Band will be filling the air. Funds raised go toward the building rental. Get your dancing shoes on and come out for a great evening of fun and entertainment tonight!

Saturday, December 29th

VFW Saturday Night Dance
The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 2214 invites everyone to their weekly Saturday night dances which begin at 7 p.m. and last until 10 p.m. The Boogie Night Band provides music on Saturday nights. Entrance fee is $5.00 for each individual. Come on out and bring your dancing shoes and enjoy an evening of great music, fun and fellowship!

Monday, December 31st

VFW New Year's Eve Dance
Ring in the New Year with the Cullman VFW Post 2214. We will have live music by Cullman's famous Boogie Nights Band, refreshments, and the New Year Countdown. Price at the door is $15, so come out and join us for the best New Year's party/dance that Cullman has to offer. Dance and festivities will end at 12:30 a.m. on New Year's morning.

New Year's Eve 'Ball Drop' at Life Church
Everyone is invited to come to Dodge City from 10:30 p.m. until 12:30 a.m. for Life Church's New Year's Eve 'Ball Drop'! The end of the 'old year' and the beginning of the 'new year' event will feature music bands, inflatables for the kids, as well as a Kids' Zone activities space, free foods, fireworks, and fun for all! The giant ball which will be dropped at midnight is 8 feet wide, made of bright LED lights, and will bring in the New Year in style. So come on out to Dodge City tonight and be among those who start the New Year off right!

Cullman Kiwanis Club
The Cullman Kiwanis Club invites all local men and women who are interested in taking part in community service along with great fellowship, fun, networking, and learning to attend their weekly luncheon meeting at 12 noon each Monday in the All Steak's third floor banquet room. Come see what Kiwanis is all about and enjoy a great luncheon meal as well.

Making Choices - BODYWORKS
A series of FREE sessions on healthy living will be offered. Sessions to include mindful eating to 'reading' a food. Teens to adults are welcome. There are morning classes from 10 until 11:30 a.m. and evening classes from 4 until 5:30 p.m. for your convenience. For further information please call Donna Shanklin at the County Extension Office at 256-737-9386. Classes are scheduled for each Monday at this time. Please attend first meeting or call to pre-register if you are interested in this program.

Overeaters Anonymous Gather at Grace Episcopal
Members of Overeaters Anonymous meet every Monday, at 9:30 a.m. at Grace Episcopal Church in the Carriage House located on Church premises. Further information is available at 256-747-6218 or 256-352-1143. Everyone is invited to attend these gatherings.

GED Classes at Desperation Church
GED learning classes are held each Monday night from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Desperation Church. For additional information please contact Ed Oaks at 256-737-9564 or 256-735-6811. These classes are open to the public and everyone who wants to obtain their GED is welcome to participate.

Cornerstone Revival Ladies Prayer Meeting
A Ladies Prayer meeting is conducted each Monday night at 7 p.m. at Cornerstone Revival Center. For additional information call 256-796-2899. All interested women are invited to attend.

Aqua Zumba Classes at CWAC
Everyone is invited to take part in the Aqua Zumba classes that are offered each Monday at Cullman Wellness & Aquatic Center beginning at 7 p.m. in the center's indoor pool. Please call 256-775-7946 for additional information!

Looking Ahead

Pilot Club Pecan Sale for Charity
Pilot members through November and December are selling Alabama Priester Pecans. This year's crop and fresh selections available include, pecan halves, pecan pieces, chocolate covered pecan halves, honey glazed pecan halves, and cinnamon-sugar pecan halves. $12 for 1-pound bag.

For more information call Peggy Day, 256-734-6049. Proceeds will benefit local pilot club projects and activities focused on brain related disorders.

North Alabama Agriplex Upcoming Events
January 5 - Farm Kid's Club: Terrariums - 9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

January 8 & 10 - Hand Quilting with Raydonna - 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

For more information call 256- 297-1044 or e-mail cullmanag@gmail.com.



Community Matters

Passion for the Kitchen

Send your recipes to recipes@cullmansense.com

By: Annette Harris
annetteharris@cullmansense.com

Christmas Long Ago

I think everyone has memories of Christmas as a child. It's probably the one thing we can all relate to having. They are all probably different, but we have memories.

The memories that stand out in my mind are plentiful. We weren't rich, but as a kid we never wanted for anything. I remember my parents always saying, "now don't expect much this year because we don't have a lot of money." We were never disappointed.

I used to sneak under the tree and carefully take off the tape…just enough to see what the gift was. One gift in particular I remember was a Snow White watch that my aunt "Jenner" gave me.

I didn't ask for it, but she always knew exactly what to get me. I couldn't wait to open it on Christmas day and wear it. She always mailed her gifts to us and sometimes she came, sometimes not. I guess my mom figured out that we peeked because the best gifts were what Santa brought and were never under the tree until Christmas morning.

We weren't allowed to go see what Santa brought until we woke up my mom. My dad sometimes got up too, but mostly she did. I know why. We do the same thing with our kids. We want to see their happy faces. There was always the "most wanted" gift hidden somewhere. After all the gifts had been opened, the thing we wanted most wasn't there and my dad would say, "Hey, what's that over in the corner? Under the desk." We would scramble to get it. It was always a happy time. Santa always had totally different wrapping paper from what my mom and dad had, so we knew it was just from him.

I remember every Christmas Eve, my brother and I wanted to sleep in the same room so we could talk about it together. We had such a hard time trying to get to sleep. We could hardly contain our excitement. We would head to bed right after supper…like at 6:30 p.m., thinking that if we went to bed, morning would come sooner. Then we would lay there for hours, awake. One night we thought we heard reindeer clomping on the roof.

Another night we thought we heard Santa rustling paper and could have sworn we heard jingle bells and maybe even a Ho, Ho, Ho!

Christmas morning was all about eating every piece of chocolate we could find in our stocking, ignoring the orange, tangerine, and nuts, and sitting in a heap of wrapping paper, boxes, and bows.

But I always knew the real reason for Christmas was sitting in that nativity scene my mom put out every year and I paused to look at it, knowing if it weren't for baby Jesus, we wouldn't be celebrating such a great holiday. I always loved hearing the Christmas story in church and singing Christmas carols. I knew what it was all about.

My grandmother gave me a record player and I wore that thing out playing all the music I could. I didn't care what kind of music it was, but around Christmastime, it was all about the Christmas carols.

This Christmas I'm going to pause from our excitement, like I do every Christmas, and remember why we do this. Our family lights the Advent wreath and takes turns reading why each one happens, and then we light the Christ candle and everyone knows why its such a special time. It makes us realize the real reason we celebrate Christmas.



Beef Stew

Ingredients:

- 3-1/4 pounds beef stew meat, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1/3 cup and 1 tablespoon and 1 teaspoon all-purpose flour
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1-3/4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1-3/4 bay leaf
- 1-3/4 teaspoons paprika
- 1-3/4 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1-3/4 onion, chopped
- 2-1/2 cups beef broth
- 5 potatoes, peeled and diced
- 6- carrots, peeled & sliced
- 1-2 stalks celery, chopped

Instructions:

1. Place meat in slow cooker. In a small bowl mix together the flour, salt, and pepper; pour over meat, and stir to coat meat with flour mixture. Stir in the garlic, bay leaf, paprika, Worcestershire sauce, onion, beef broth, potatoes, carrots, and celery.
2. Cover, and cook on Low setting for 10 to 12 hours, or on High setting for 4 to 6 hours.

Serves 6

White & Black by St. Edo - st.edo@cullmansense.com



Video Game Review – *Mortal Kombat: Komplete Edition*

By: Josh McBrayer
joshmcbrayer@cullmansense.com

Ah, *Mortal Kombat*. I remember the first time I encountered this uber violent game, which led to the creation of the ESRB, the rating of a video game much like the ratings on movies.

Warehouse Groceries on Highway 157 had an old *Mortal Kombat* "cabinet" and I used to feed that thing quarters like a grandma feeds a slot machine. It was the greatest fighting game I had ever played so you can imagine how excited I was when Midway, the makers of *Mortal Kombat*, ported it for the Super Nintendo and Sega Genesis home systems.

No more feeding quarters to a machine in a grocery store. Now I could execute the special moves and controversial fatalities (a selling point for the games) from the comfort of my own house.

Fast forward 20 years, 18 games, and two movies later and we arrive at this week's game destination, *Mortal Kombat: Komplete Edition*. *Mortal Kombat* is a re-telling of the first three games in which dozens of new fighters were introduced.

The original *Mortal Kombat* that was released in 1992 featured just seven fighters: Johnny Cage, Kano, Sub-Zero, Sonya Blade, Raiden, Lui Kang, and Scorpion. *Mortal Kombat 2* featured all of the fighters from *MK 1*, save for Soyna Blade.

The new fighters that appeared were Kung Lao, Reptile (who was a hidden boss fight in *MK 1*), Shang Tsung (who was the boss fight from *MK 1*), Baraka, Jax, and Meliena. *MK 3* added Cyrax, Kabal, Nightwolf, Sektor, Sindel, Sheeva, and Stryker.

Through the story mode on *Mortal Kombat: Komplete Edition* you uncover the origins of most of the fighters as you progress through the story. For instance, you find out how Cyrax and Sektor went from being human to being cyborgs through their part in the narrative.

The story is dozens of chapters deep and is well done. It is a fun feature to play through and it gives some insight into the world of the combatants.

The next new feature that has been added is the challenge tower, a collection of 300 hundred challenges that range from breaking boards to fighting back-to-back-to-back bosses with no healing. It can be frustrating at times, but once you beat it, you feel like you have conquered *Mortal Kombat*.

Now, with all of that being said it is time to get to the meat and potatoes of *Mortal Kombat*, the fight ladder.

This is where you can choose any difficulty from beginner to expert and fight your way to the ultimate showdown with Shao Khan and save Earthrelm from merging with Outworld.

In the game you have 27 characters to choose from, 28 if you have a Playstation 3 because of the addition of PS3 exclusive character Kratos from the *God of War* series.

To me, the most fun you can have in a fighting game is completing the game with EVERY fighter and uncovering their "ending" which tells what happened after their victory. This is why I love *Mortal Kombat* and will be a sucker for any game that hits the market.

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The Fitness Chronicles of Norrell

By: Jessica Norrell
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If you have ever wanted to improve your health with exercise and proper nutrition you may find figuring out all of the details to be a bit difficult. Everything from counting calories, knowing the right foods to eat, and how many times to eat them a week, as well as deciding on the ideal personal exercise regime, can be overwhelming enough to almost make you abandon the notion all together…well, if you are like me anyway.

I am a new mom of a beautiful six-month-old baby boy, and have found new challenges which come along with motherhood. Finding time to workout and concentrate on my own well-being has been quite a task to say the least. I decided to set off on my own, on a mission to get in shape, and have experienced firsthand the challenges of making the best health decisions…other than the ones that are as obvious as cutting back on the sweets, which is my vice.

Fortunately, I will have help in developing this lifestyle change and making it into a routine. I am in no way fitness or health professional and I am not trying to give advice.

Rather, just a mother who will be chronicling her progress over the next three months to see what works for me as I consult with professionals. Everyone is different though so I suggest you check with your doctor and fitness expert to discover the right plans for you. I just hope to inspire people, by letting them follow my progress, that it is worth sticking with, and that achieving fitness goals is plausible!

I would like to stress that my primary goal is not just to rock those skinny jeans, though that may have crossed my mind, but also to make a healthy diet and exercise routine a part of my lifestyle.

Another major reason is that I now have a dependent that will be watching what I do and I want to be a good example so that he can develop healthy habits as well.

I am not trying any fad or crash diets or going to workout two hours a day only to cease completely in a few months. This will become my way of life, not just to look better, but also to feel better and be a healthy person in general as well as to age gracefully! There are numerous benefits.

Another thing I will be stressing is the importance of taking precautions to avoid injury. After all, the point is to improve health and feel better, not do permanent damage to those knees and/or back!

A major part of that is learning the proper technique to perform exercises and feeling what your body can do. Don't be a hero and try and impress people looking in your direction by lifting more weight than you can take. Been there, had to recover from that.

I will be working out at the Cullman Wellness & Aquatics Center, using their facilities and getting advice from trainers and nutritionists. Every week I will give a basic rundown of my workouts, nutrition suggestions, recipes, and what is working for me.

I will highlight the classes or nutrition tips that are most beneficial. Not only that, but I will also publish my progress every week. That is a major incentive to actually stick to my routine!

I really hope that by doing this I can inspire others to know that they can achieve the same thing and that by starting to make healthy decisions now they can change their life for the better in numerous ways as well as a get a confidence boost. The gym is a major help but if it isn't in the budget right now, don't stress! I will make the tips and workouts as accessible and easy to follow as possible for whatever you have to work with.

I am very appreciative that the officials at the Cullman Wellness and Aquatics Center are giving me access to their facilities and experts for three months! I will do my best to make this a success story while encouraging readers to follow suit. Wish me luck and if you see me in town buying a delicious, fattening pastry, feel free to call me out on it.

The CullmanSense Movie Review – Presented by Blockbuster: *Expendables 2*

By: Josh McBrayer
joshmcbrayer@cullmansense.com

What do you get when you take Rocky Balboa, John McClain, and Conan the Barbarian and put them together in one movie? Some great laughs and possibly the greatest action movie of all time. I am, of course, talking about the *Expendables 2*.

For anyone who has seen the *Expendables*, you know it was chocked full of the who's who of action stars. Sylvester Stallone (*Rocky*, *Rambo*), Jason Statham (*Transporter*, *Crank*), Jet-Li (*The One*), Steve Austin (6x *WWE* Champion), and Randy Couture (6x *UFC* Champion) are just a few of the mega-starts that were in *Expendables* with cameos by then-governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and Bruce Willis.

If you think that is a line up, check out *Expendables 2*. Everyone is back, except for Austin, but Schwarzenegger and Willis have action rolls and there is even a cameo by the "World's Greatest Action Hero" Chuck Norris.

The plot centers on a group that calls themselves the Sangs. They are led by Jean Vilain, played by Jean Claude Van Damm, who will stop at nothing to get his hands on a cache of plutonium that has been hidden on a Russian cave since the "Cold War" ended.

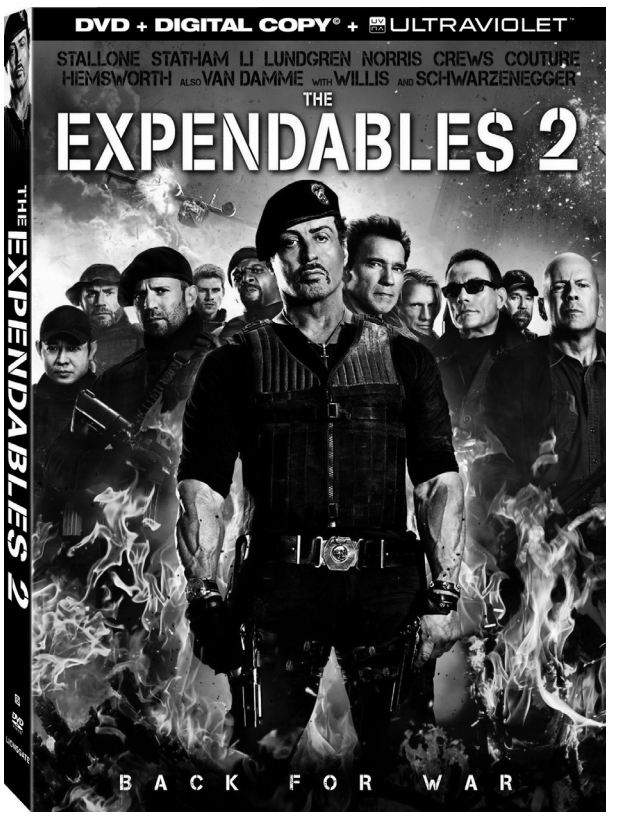
The mercenary group, the *Expendables*, are led by Barney Ross played by Stallone. They are forced into a mission by CIA operative Mr. Church (Bruce Willis) to recover a black box from a safe that is aboard a plane that has crash landed in Albania. After retrieving the box, the Expendables run into Vilain and the Sangs who have captured the Expendables' sniper, Billy the Kid (Liam Hemsworth). Vilain demands the box in exchange for Billy's life and when Ross hands over the box, Vilain kicks a knife into the heart of Billy the Kid and hops on a chopper with the box.

Ross demands to know what is in the box, what his comrade died for, from CIA operative Maggie Chang (Yu Nan) who has been sent along by Church.

Chang reveals that the black box holds a blueprint of where the plutonium is located that the Sangs are after. The Expendables bury Billy on the cliff where he was killed and Ross is asked "what now?" He responds sternly, "We track him, we find him, we KILL him!"

The rest of the film follows the Expendables as they track down the Sangs and culminates in the ultimate showdown with Vilain.

The movie is not for children. Although there is no nudity in the film, the gun fights and hand-to-hand sequences are very violent and bloody.



The language is very mild for a Rated R movie. The *Expendables 2* carries the "R" rating due to the violence and gore.

I have to say this is one of the best action movies I have seen. It is non-stop from the opening scenes. If you are a fan of action flicks, you HAVE to see *Expendables 2*.

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Community Matters

Away for the Holiday (Continued from Front)

all."

One person having a difficult time coping with the holiday absence is Cole's younger sister. Donna said this has been an exceptionally hard year but with the support of family, friends, and Madison's classmates it has been easier to cope.

"She is having a hard time with him not being here. She thought it (making the cards) would make him feel better," said Donna.

Kristi Jackson, Madison's 4th grade teacher at EES, was happy to have Cole visit her class back in November. The visit was one which sparked a lot of interest in her students. Enough interest that this small group of 4th graders adopted the young Army K-9 MP.

"At Thanksgiving, Madison's brother came in to talk to our class. He told us a little bit about what he does and our class just sort of adopted him," said Jackson. "He came dressed in full uniform. They were very interested with his role with the dogs, but they were also taken in by him."

Madison's classmate Nic Glass was impressed by Cole's demeanor when he first paid a visit to the class. Quick, detailed answers gave Glass a better perspective on what Cole does in the Army.

"We asked him a lot of questions and he knew practically all the answers," said Glass. "He wasn't real fizzy, he knew exactly what to say. Some of the answers were shocking, but not many of them."

Knowing that Madison, Cole, and the rest of siblings' family would be having a tough time this Christmas, Glass said he, along with fellow classmates, wanted to do something to show Cole and his entire family that they weren't all alone this holiday. The classmates joined in with Madison, as each of the students made a personalized Christmas card for the 19-year-old soldier.

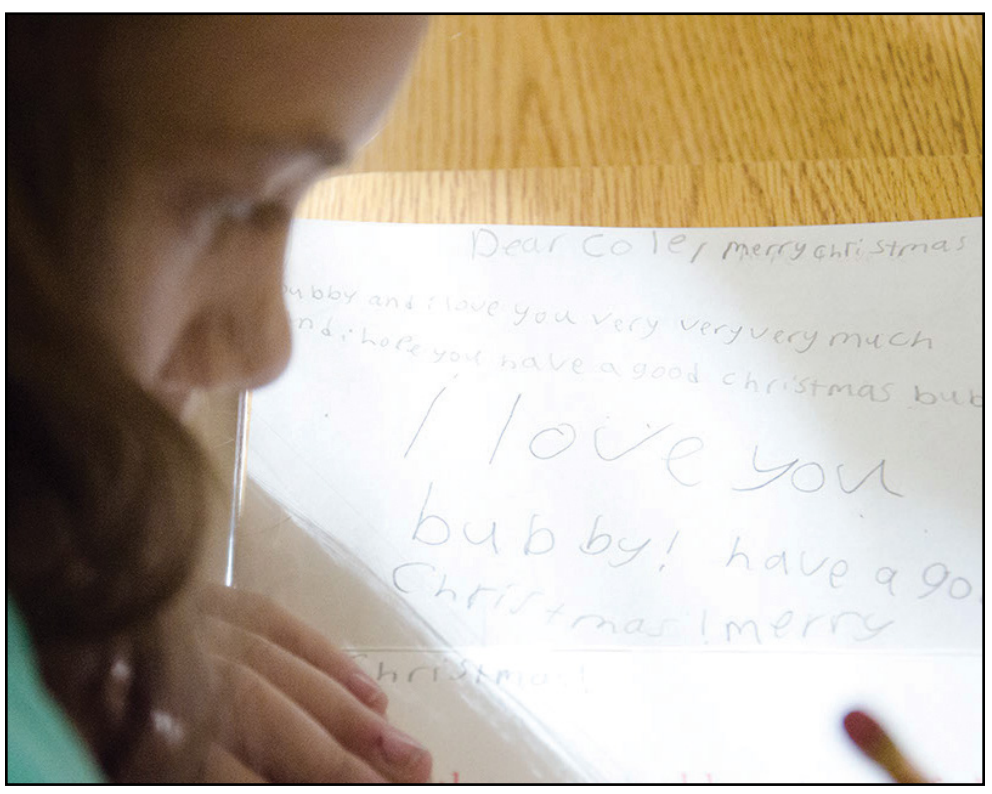
"[We did it] Just because it will make him feel better," said Glass. "It won't feel like Christmas to them because they won't have a full family. They'll have each other and he'll have his friends he's met there, but they'll have us too."

The family is already looking ahead to future visits in Cole's new Texas home, a notion which brought out a big, bright smile from Madison.

"He is stationed at Ft. Bliss and will be there for the next two years," said Donna. "We're looking at taking a road trip out to Texas around Spring Break. It's a trip that can't come soon enough."







Madison Shikle

The "Chayse" is on! (Continued from Front)

ready to play."

Chayse Elliott has missed five games to to this point and looks to miss at least three more due to the 2012 West Point Christmas Tournament.

Cold Springs has gone 1-4 in the five games without Elliott and the Eagles were undefeated until Elliott went down.

Although Elliott is unable to play, he is still with his team cheering them on. Cold Springs has fought hard in the absence of Elliott and players such as Layne Rice have stepped up to lead the team, but there is no doubt everyone is looking forward to Elliott's return to action.

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