Hobby Lobby CEO Sets Record Straight, End Child Hunger in Alabama–p.3

SERIES 3, ISSUE 1 MONDAY, JANUARY 7, 2013

CULLMAN'S MONDAY NEWSPAPER

CULLMANSENSE

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Creating an Ecosystem

By: Noah Chandler
noahchandler@cullmansense.com



CULLMAN – Children, parents, and visitors alike enjoyed a day of creating their own ecosystem at the 2013 kickoff for Farm Kid's Club at the North Alabama Agriplex on Saturday.

"This is part of our Farm Kid's Club; kind of our kickoff for the 2013 year," said Rachel Dawsey, Coordinator for the North Alabama Agriplex. "Every month we do a different program. It is a parent-child program designed for elementary age children to do with their parents or grandparents and it is usually agriculture related."

Beth O'Lare brought her children out to the agriplex while the family was in town visiting family from Wisconsin. Her two sons Liam and Flynn made the trip to Farm Kid's Club with their cousins Hannah and Will, all of which were obviously having a good time.

"This is awesome! The boys are very excited about it," said O'Lare. "I wish we had something similar to this at home."

Each child received a terrarium vessel, three tropical plants, soil, rocks, and three pieces of treasure, which ranged from shiny stones to plastic dinosaurs and birds, along with coloring sheets. The group of 16 children was all smiles as they took their turn digging into the dirt.

"Today our terrariums are perfect for January because they are self-contained ecosystems," said Dawsey. "These are perfect examples of the wa-

See Ecosystem, Page 12

City Water and Sewer Rates on the Rise

By: Noah Chandler
noahchandler@cullmansense.com

Minimum costs combine for $2.60 per month increase

CULLMAN – Beginning last Tuesday the roughly 13,000 residents living within Cullman City limits began paying a slight increase on water and sewer services. Cullman City Clerk Wes Moore said the increase in minimum billing is smaller than in previous years.

"Both of those (water and sewer) were lower than the increases in previous years. Previous years we had larger increases but we're trying to bring it down to make it easier on everyone," said Moore. "We are just trying to make it fair on everyone."

Sewer rates for those using minimum services will notice an additional $1.25 to their bill. Moore said this increase, while small to some, could be an additional burden to those on fixed incomes, a fact that Moore said he and others considered when making the changes.

"Basically we needed a 4.5 percent increase in rates to cover the overall expenses, whether it be replacing lines, the different programs we have in place, and the employees. We increased the minimum sewer bill, which is what most people get, but the minimum is a 3.8 percent increase," he said.

"We tried to make it as low as we could for the low users, the individuals who are retired and those that are on fixed income, we typically try to make the increases as low as possible."

See Rates, Page 12

Lady Broncos, Broncos on the move

By: Josh McBrayer
joshmcbrayer@cullmansense.com

Holly Pond gaining ground in MaxPreps latest rankings

The Holly Pond Broncos, both boys and girls, continue to move up in every poll they are in. The latest, MaxPreps.com, has the Holly Pond Broncos ranked #6 and the Lady Broncos at #4 while another county team, the Cold Springs Lady Eagles come in at #3 in 2A.

Holly Pond Broncos #6 Class 3A

The Holly Pond Broncos have been "mowing" down the competition as of late. Good outside shooting from the Broncos' guards and strong inside play have been their trademark this season. Holly Pond started the second half of the season by downing the West Point Warriors by a score of 61-55.

They look to carry this momentum throughout the rest of the season and all the way to a Class 3A State Championship.

Holly Pond Lady Broncos #4 Class 3A

There is not much you can say about the Holly Pond Lady Broncos that has not been said already. They just know how to win. They have dominated their opponents this year in every facet of the game while overcoming obstacles that have popped up along the way, though it seems their biggest hurdle on the way to a county, area and state title is still to come.

The Lady Broncos have lost a key element in their offense when Lexi Malone went down with a ACL/MCL of her right knee.

Unfortunately, this is not a foreign problem to the Lady Broncos as their star forward tore the ACL in her left knee just a year ago. If any team knows how to overcome, it is Holly Pond.

See On the Move, Page 12

BASKETS Teams Back On Court Following Holiday–P.4

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In Brief

Tens of Millions in Additional Savings Identified: Update on Road to a Billion Dollars in Savings, Pending Legislation

By: Jennifer Ardis

Contributor

MONTGOMERY – Governor Robert Bentley recently provided an end-of-the-year update on the Road to a Billion Dollars in Savings, the state's long-term effort to identify greater efficiencies and cost savings in government.

More than $750 million in current and projected annual savings have now been identified, up from $674 million in savings that had been identified when the plan was first announced in July.

The additional savings come through measures such as bond refinancings, contract renegotiations, and workforce right-sizing.

"I am committed to an efficient state government, and we're making great progress in saving taxpayers a billion dollars a year," Governor Bentley said. "The people of Alabama deserve a government that makes wise use of taxpayer dollars, and that's what we're giving them. I am confident we will reach our goal of identifying a billion dollars in average annual savings by the end of this term."

The additional savings, along with additional state employee retirements in recent months, are reducing the immediate need for a proposed voluntary retirement incentive program. Governor Bentley is asking legislative sponsors of the voluntary retirement incentive program to withhold introduction of the legislation until further notice.

"One of our goals is to right-size the state government's workforce while saving taxpayer dollars. We are already accomplishing that goal as more people have chosen to go ahead and retire before the incentive could be discussed in the Legislature," Governor Bentley said.

"That means we are getting the right-sizing accomplished without having to pay the cash bonuses called for in the retirement incentive legislation. If attrition continues at recent levels, we can achieve significant savings without the need for the legislation."

"While I am asking legislative leaders to delay introducing the voluntary retirement incentive plan for now, we could consider such a plan as an additional option if needed for future savings," Governor Bentley added. "However, at this point, it appears we will be able to reach our savings goals through regular attrition and other cost-saving measures."

The current and projected savings from the Road to a Billion Dollars in Savings will benefit both the Education Trust Fund and the General Fund budgets.

Agency staff prepared to implement ACA provider payment "bump"

Contributed by:

Alabama Medicaid Agency

MONTGOMRY – Even though Alabama is not planning to expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act, Agency employees are prepared to comply with another major provision of the health care reform law that requires state Medicaid programs to increase or "bump" up in payments to certain physicians for specified primary care services beginning January 1, 2013.

The fee increase was a major provision of the Affordable Care Act and was originally designed to attract new physicians to Medicaid to meet the health care needs of an expanded pool of Medicaid eligibles.

Eligible physicians include board-certified family medicine, pediatric medicine, general internal medicine and related specialties, or eligible physicians who can verify that 60 percent or more of the Medicaid codes they billed in the previous year were primary care codes and certain codes associated with vaccine administration listed in ACA. Health departments, federally-qualified health centers (FQHCs), and rural health clinics are not eligible for the fee increase.

The increased payments – projected to be $39.6 million per year in Alabama – are funded entirely by the federal government for 2013 and 2014. However, the responsibility of maintaining the higher fees will fall to the state in 2015.

To prepare for the change, Alabama Medicaid staff began work in May 2012 when the proposed rule was first issued. In order to administer the fee increase, the Agency had to create a system to pay and track different rates for more than 125 different primary care codes, contract with a vendor to provide the necessary system to verify board certification, establish a new process to register and verify providers and to make significant updates to the Agency's claims processing system.

According to Sharon Moore-Grimes, Associate Director, Medical Services, one of the biggest challenges was the need to plan and prepare for the fee increase before the final rules were released by the federal government on November 1. "The final rule helped clarify many details but prior to that time we had to prepare for several potential scenarios," she said.

Next, the Agency will file the required State Plan Amendment with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services in January and also determine the rate that will be paid to providers. Any reduction in Medicare rates could change the amount of the increase because ACA requires states to pay 100% of the Medicare rate for 2013 and 2014, or if higher, the Medicare rate for primary codes using the Calendar Year 2009 Medicare conversion factor.

Commission to recommend Medicaid transformation ideas to Governor

Contributed by:

Alabama Medicaid Agency

MONTGOMERY – While there is no clear consensus on the best way to reform Alabama's Medicaid program, members of the newly appointed Alabama Medicaid Advisory Commission agree that transforming the state's health care program is needed to ensure the financial viability and affordability of the program that currently provides health care benefits to more than 1 million Alabama citizens each year.

Governor Robert Bentley created the commission by executive order in October, tasking the group with evaluating the financial structure of the Alabama Medicaid Agency and identifying ways to increase efficiency while also helping ensure the long-term sustainability of the agency.

The Commission is to make recommendations to Governor Bentley prior to the 2013 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature.

Since the Commission's first meeting on November 1, commission members have met several times to hear presentations from other state Medicaid programs, commercial managed care organizations and Alabama Medicaid's Patient Care Networks and to review cost and other data.

The commission is comprised of 32 individuals representing health care providers, legislative leaders, state health and human service agency officials, consumers, and insurers appointed by the Governor.

State Health Officer Dr. Don Williamson, who is also serving as Chair of the Medicaid Transition Task Force, was named as the Commission's chair.

Governor Bentley also named business and health policy expert Dr. Nancy Dunlap as Special Advisor to the Commission.

Dr. Dunlap, who is currently completing a Robert Wood Johnson Health Policy Fellowship in Washington, D.C., is a professor of medicine and business at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and former chief of staff and chief operating officer for the Kirklin Clinic in Birmingham.

"This is the next step in the transformation of Medicaid," Dr. Williamson said. "This represents an opportunity to fundamentally change the funding and delivery system for the better."

Information on the Commission, including meeting minutes, presentations and membership, is available on the Medicaid website at http://www.medicaid.alabama.gov/CONTENT/2.0_newsroom/2.2.1_Med_Adv_Commission.aspx



CRMC to Host Seminar on GERD (Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease)

By: Lindsey Dossey

CRMC Contributor

CULLMAN — Cullman Regional Medical Center's WomenFirst & SeniorChoice Programs are pleased to offer seminar on What You Need to Know About GERD (Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease) on Thursday, January 17 in CRMC's Col. Cullman Room in the Community Education Center in Professional Office Building 2, located at 1912 AL Highway 157, POB 2, Cullman, AL 35058. Almost everyone has occasional heartburn, but did you know that more than 25 million Americans suffer daily from severe, chronic heartburn?

Join Greg Windham, MD, of Surgical Arts, P.C., as he educates on GERD (Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease) signs, symptoms and possible treatment including new surgical procedures available to eliminate GERD in your life.

The event will begin with a Coffee & Social time at 10:30 a.m. with lunch and presentation beginning at 11:30 a.m. until 1 p.m.

Cost of the lunch and learn program is $5 for WomenFirst & SeniorChoice members and $8 for others. Reserve your spot online at www.crmchospital.com or call (256) 737-2600.

CRMC to Host "The Truth About Immunizations" Seminar

By: Lindsey Dossey

CRMC Contributor

CULLMAN — Cullman Regional Medical Center's WomenFirst & SeniorChoice Programs are pleased to offer seminar on "The Truth About Immunizations" on Tuesday, January 22 in CRMC's Col. Cullman Room in the Community Education Center in Professional Office Building 2, located at 1912 AL Highway 157, POB 2, Cullman, AL 35058.

More than two centuries have passed since the first successful vaccine for smallpox was developed.

We've come a long way since.

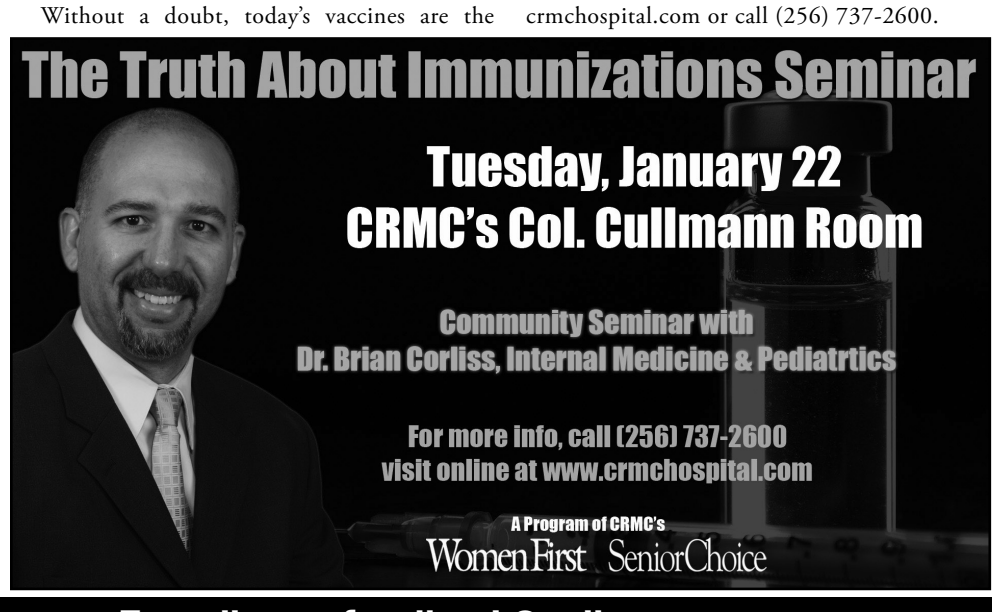
Without a doubt, today's vaccines are the 21st century's most important, successful, and cost-effective public health tools for preventing disease and death.

Join Dr. Brian Corliss of Internal Medicine & Pediatrics of Cullman as he discusses the importance of immunizations and dispels many myths surrounding them.

The event begins at 10:30 a.m. with Coffee & Social Time, followed by lunch and the seminar from 11:30 a.m. until 1 p.m.

Cost of the lunch and learn program is $5 for WomenFirst & SeniorChoice members and $8 for others.

Reserve your spot online at www.crmchospital.com or call (256) 737-2600.



In His Own Words: Hobby Lobby CEO Sets Record Straight

By: David Green

CEO and Founder of Hobby Lobby

When my family and I started our company 40 years ago, we were working out of a garage on a $600 bank loan, assembling miniature picture frames.

Our first retail store wasn't much bigger than most people's living rooms, but we had faith that we would succeed if we lived and worked according to God's word.

From there, Hobby Lobby has become one of the nation's largest arts and crafts retailers, with more than 500 locations in 41 states. Our children grew up into fine business leaders, and today we run Hobby Lobby together, as a family.

We're Christians, and we run our business on Christian principles. I've always said that the first two goals of our business are (1) to run our business in harmony with God's laws, and (2) to focus on people more than money.

And that's what we've tried to do. We close early so our employees can see their families at night.

We keep our stores closed on Sundays, one of the week's biggest shopping days, so that our workers and their families can enjoy a day of rest. We believe that it is by God's grace that Hobby Lobby has endured, and he has blessed us and our employees.

We've not only added jobs in a weak economy, we've raised wages for the past four years in a row. Our full-time employees start at 80% above minimum wage.

But now, our government threatens to change all of that. A new government health care mandate says that our family business MUST provide what I believe are abortion-causing drugs as part of our health insurance.

Being Christians, we don't pay for drugs that might cause abortions, which means that we don't cover emergency contraception, the morning-after pill or the week-after pill. We believe doing so might end a life after the moment of conception, something that is contrary to our most important beliefs.

It goes against the Biblical principles on which we have run this company since day one. If we refuse to comply, we could face $1.3 million PER DAY in government fines. Our government threatens to fine job creators in a bad economy. Our government threatens to fine a company that's raised wages four years running. Our government threatens to fine a family for running its business according to its beliefs. It's not right.

I know people will say we ought to follow the rules; that it's the same for everybody. But that's not true. The government has exempted thousands of companies from this mandate, for reasons of convenience or cost. But it won't exempt them for reasons of religious belief.

So, Hobby Lobby – and my family – are forced to make a choice. With great reluctance, we filed a lawsuit, represented by the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, asking a federal court to stop this mandate before it hurts our business. We don't like to go running into court, but we no longer have a choice. We believe people are more important than the bottom line and that honoring God is more important than turning a profit.

My family has lived the American dream. We want to continue growing our company and providing great jobs for thousands of employees, but the government is going to make that much more difficult. The government is forcing us to choose between following our faith and following the law. I say that's a choice no American – and no American business – should have to make.

The government cannot force you to follow laws that go against your fundamental religious belief. They have exempted thousands of companies but will not except Christian organizations including the Catholic church.

Since you will not see this covered in any of the liberal media, pass this on to all your contacts.

Sincerely,
David Green, CEO and Founder of Hobby Lobby Stores, Inc.

In Her Own Words: End Child Hunger in Alabama

By: Kay Ivey

Lt. Governor

Many people, particularly children, who we may interact with on a daily basis, are hungry and may not know where their next nutritious meal will come from, or if they will get one. I'd like to tell you about a program that's helping to remedy this problem. The newly established Auburn University Hunger Solutions Institute is preparing to launch a statewide campaign; End Child Hunger in Alabama. I was invited to serve as the spokesperson for this critically important initiative that is impacting children and families in every corner of our state, as well as our entire nation. I wholeheartedly accepted, and am committed. I don't intend to cite all the statistics that magnify this issue in Alabama, but several facts standout and are overwhelming.

More than 16 million children in America experience some degree of food insecurity, meaning they lack access to enough nutritious food to ensure proper development and a healthy lifestyle. Of the 1 million or so children who live in Alabama, nearly one-third live in families that experience food hardships. Unfortunately, the number of hungry children and families is rising since the recent deadly tornadoes that devastated parts of Alabama. In fact, 36% of Alabamians are now enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

According to my friend, State Superintendent Dr. Tommy Bice, more than 50% of our children now participate in the free/reduced school lunch program. Child hunger is a problem for now, and without sustainable solutions, it is a problem for the future. Child hunger is proven to be associated with stunted growth and more illnesses and hospitalizations. It is an education problem affecting brain growth and development, school achievement, and social and behavioral problems. Child hunger leads to a workforce and job readiness problem associated with a less competitive pool of workers who have lower levels of skill and education, greater absenteeism, and more turn over. This is all totally preventable if we take the right actions.

In the coming months, the Auburn University Hunger Solutions Institute will be laying out a comprehensive plan for its first major initiative; End Child Hunger in Alabama. This will take commitment and participation on the part of state and local government, universities, school systems, childcare networks, health care providers, faith-based and non-profits groups, the business sector, and, of course, parents.

In Alabama, we have a rich history and high expectations of athletic excellence. Alabama colleges and high schools have successfully competed at the highest levels winning national championships, producing high school and college All-American athletes. When we do not perform at the level of expectations - we are not satisfied.

We make changes and put in place people who can lead us to be winners. We don't even tolerate losing coaches at the junior high level. We should apply those same standards and expectations when challenges keep Alabama children, schools, and communities from performing at the highest levels – we should be keeping score and doing everything possible to improve. I hope you will join me in this effort to ensure that all of Alabama's children have access to the nutritious food they need to live, learn, and grow. Thank you for the honor and privilege to serve as your Lieutenant Governor.

About Us - Call us Anytime at 256-297-1847

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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SPORTS

Area Teams Back On Court Following Holiday

By: Josh McBrayer
joshmcbrayer@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – With the Christmas and New Year's holiday celebrations out of the way, area student-athletes returned to the hardwood. Cold Springs' Chayse Elliott returned to action, garnering 27 points in his return from a broken wrist, however the Eagles were clipped falling just one point shy from a hard fought road win. Let's get to the action!

Cullman sweeps rival Muscle Shoals
By Josh McBrayer

CULLMAN – In the first regular season action for teams around the county, the Cullman Bearcats welcomed the Muscle Shoals Trojans to town. Here is a breakdown of all of the action from courtside.

Cullman Lady Bearcats 45 vs. Muscle Shoals Lady Trojans 29

After a sluggish start in their first regular season game since the Christmas break, the Lady Bearcats showed Muscle Shoals why they are one of the best girl's teams around.

Cullman ended a slow first quarter with an 11-0 run and a 20-9 lead, but the Lady Trojans found a way to slow down the shooting of Cullman via the full court press. They found themselves down eight at halftime.

The instruction from head coach Jonathan Hayes at halftime seemed to do the trick. The Lady Bearcats started to break the Lady Trojans press with ease and pushed their lead to 15 with a 9-2 run to control quarter number three.

Down but not out, the Muscle Shoals Lady Trojans clamped down on defense and kept Cullman out of the paint for the majority of the final quarter while hitting their open shots and cutting the Cullman lead to nine. The Lady Trojans' effort was non-stop but it came a little too late. Cullman went on to win the contest 45-29.

Morgan Smith led all scorers with 18. Baylee Johnson followed her with 10. Emily Tucker dropped in seven. Blair Nall dropped in three, Christina Skinner, Hayden Short, and Oakleigh White each added two.

Shana Sherrod was the only Lady Trojan in double digits. She had 10. DaNesha Byrd had five, Alex Hillman and McKenzie Rue four. Keana Reed and Marianna Shearer rounded out the scoring with two each.

Cullman Bearcats 56 vs. Muscle Shoals Trojans 39

Cold shooting and turnovers galore plagued both teams in the opening quarter of the Cullman Muscle Shoals boys varsity match-up. Both teams struggled to establish any sustained offense and a single point, in the favor of Cullman, separated the teams after one.

Cullman settled down and started to get the ball to their big men, Troy Forrest and Houston Turner. The duo combined for nine of Cullman's 12 second quarter points and helped the Bearcats to a 23-14 advantage heading to the half.

Turner continued his hot shooting, scoring six quick points in the third and Cullman finally hit a pair of three's to put the pressure on the Trojans. Muscle Shoals was able to answer with some good inside play of their own but still trailed 35-22 heading to the fourth.

Cullman continued to stay frigid from long range but stayed hot in the paint and looked to put Muscle Shoals away. Just as it looked like they were in position to do so, the Trojans came roaring back to cut the lead to eight. Cullman again moved the lead back to double figures and, again, Muscle Shoals answered. However, as hard as the visitors played, they never got closer than eight and fell to the run and gun transition play of the Bearcats. The final score stood at 56-39 in favor of the 'Cats.

Troy Forrest led the way for all scorers with 15. After a score-less first half, Lawson Schaffer poured in 10 points in the fourth and had 13 points for the game. Houston Turner was also in double figures with 11. Lane Donaldson added eight, Seth Swalve four, Lukas McDonlad three, and Auston Neal two.

Leading Muscle Shoals was Debo Reeder with eight. Next was Blake Goodwin with seven. LeDamian Stanford added six, Jake Wood five, Trey Bailey four, Calvin Bak three, and Jalan Ricks along with Kendell Johnson each added two.

Holly Pond Wins on the Road against West Point
By Grant Smith

WEST POINT – Despite playing without head coach Mitch Morris, the Holly Pond Broncos used an 18 point second quarter to erase a four-point first quarter deficit and defeat the West Point Warriors 66-51 Friday night.

Holly Pond moved to 6-1 in county play and 14-4 overall with the win. West Point shot out to a 17-13 lead after the first eight minutes behind a pair of threes from Jordan McKenzie while Kris Keller added five.

The Broncos' Colby Adams scored a quick seven points in the opening quarter. Holly Pond received a scoring boost with ten second quarter points from Gunter Morris to claim a 35-27 lead at the halftime break.

The Broncos extended their lead to 14, 49-35 after three quarters with six points coming from Austin Smith while the Warriors stayed close behind Keller's six points and four from Wesley Smith.

Jacob Cahoon scored eight of his nine points in the final quarter while West Point got five points from Nick Nuss with Keller and Tristan Dubberly pitching in four a piece.

Adams and Smith led the way for Holly Pond with 14 points each while Morris added 12 and Cahoon nine.

Keller led all scorers with 17 points while Smith added 12. Holly Pond travels to Good Hope on Monday while West Point will entertain Fairview.

West Point girls 44, Holly Pond 35:

West Point Lady Warriors pulled off an upset of the Holly Pond Lady Broncos 44-35, less than a week after Holly Pond made a strong showing in the Cullman Yule Tide Classic.

The loss was critical to Holly Pond, dropping out of a first place tie in the county regular season standings with Cold Springs. The Lady Broncos are now 5-2 with Cold Springs heading into Wednesday's pairings at 7-1 and the No. 1 seed.

Holly Pond will try to hold on to the 2nd seed if they can avoid a loss at Good Hope on Monday.

West Point could climb up in the standings. They are third at 4-2 and with a win against Fairview Tuesday and a Holly Pond loss to Good Hope, Regina Jones' squad would go into second at the time of the drawing.

West Point jumped out to a 13-2 lead after eight minutes behind the play of Kari Williams, who netted seven points.

Both teams displayed great defense throughout the game but especially in the second quarter as the teams combined for 16 points. Despite this the Lady Warriors led 20-11 at halftime.

Madison Rusk provided a spark for West Point in the third quarter by tossing in seven points while Holly Pond got five points from Taylor Terry as West Point led 31-26 headed into the final quarter.

Terry kept the Lady Broncos close by scoring nine points during the final quarter while Rusk led West Point with six.

Rusk led West Point with 17 points while Williams added 11, Rachel Persall added five, and Alex Baggett added four.

Terry led all scorers with 20 points while Meg Gambrill added eight and Natasha Holcombe added four.

Holly Pond fell to 15-4 on the year and while West Point moved 7-9 on the season.

Fairview Stays In Contention for 4A, Area 13 Championship
By Johnny Thornton

FAIRVIEW – In a must win situation for the Class 4A, Area 13 regular season title, Fairview did what it needed to Friday, defeating Oneonta 50-38 at Joe Shults Gymnasium.

With the game being televised by Birmingham station WABM as its "Friday Night Nets" feature, the Aggies fought back the Redskins to go 2-2 in area play and improve the overall record to 12-5.

Fairview knocked Oneonta out of first place in the area standings with the Redskins losing for the first time in three area decisions.

A 15-point lead by the Aggies in the first half was reduced to nine points at the break with Oneonta keeping momentum on its side early in the third period.

The Redskins cut the margin to 29-25, finishing off an 11-0 run after falling behind by the score of 29-14 in the middle of the second quarter.

After having a slight pause in the offensive game plan, the Aggies went back to work. Fairview only scored three field goals, but it was enough as Peter Kessler knocked down a pair of treys and Elijah Garrison scored from close range to send them into the fourth period with momentum and a 37-27 advantage.

The momentum never left the Aggies. Luke Bailey tossed in a pair of critical free goals during crunch time for Coach Greg Boatright. He was held in check with one field goal through the first three quarters and also had to spend some time on the bench after getting into foul trouble.

Balanced scoring was displayed in the final period with five Aggies scoring from the floor and getting points at the foul line. Oneonta surrendered with a minute remaining, trailing by a dozen, and not fouling that would have sent the Aggies back to the charity stripe.

Andy Hendrix delivered 15 for the winners. He knocked down three long range field goals and was four of five from the line. Kessler and Blake Parker added 10, Garrison finished with nine, and Bailey scored six.

For Oneonta, Stedmon Bothwell fired in 11, Forrest McDonald and Hunter Gibbs netted eight, and Aaron Martin four.

Fairview goes back to county play Tuesday with a game at West Point. The Aggies are currently second in the county standings at 5-1, trailing Holly Pond who is on top with a 6-1 county record.

Oneonta girls 70, Fairview 17:

Top ranked Oneonta was off to the races with a 16-0 lead after the first three minutes. The Lady Redskins led 28-3 after the first and 36-11 at halftime.

Oneonta has won 12 straight, improving to 14-2 and 3-0 in Area 13 play. The only losses for the Lady Aggies have been to 6A programs, Bob Jones and Austin, when they played in the Danville Thanksgiving Tournament.



Community Matters

Area Teams Back On Court Following Holiday (Continued)

The bright spot for Fairview was Marlana Johnson with four long range baskets for 12 points. Alley Raper scored a three-pointer and Kennedy Trimble tossed in a field goal.

Oneonta got 17 points from guard Abby Blackwood and 14 by forward Desteny Elliott.

Fairview fell to 0-3 in the area standings.

Cold Springs girls coast; Boys fall one point short

By Josh McBrayer

SULLIGENT – Friday night was a special night for the Cold Springs Eagles. Not because it was the first regular season game of the second half or because the Lady Eagles have been on a tear and have been making some noise in the 2A state rankings.

No, it was special because it was the first game back for stand out player Chayse Elliott who missed 38 days and eight games during his senior season due to a broken wrist suffered during a November 26th match-up with the Vinemont Eagles. Your #1 source for in-person coverage, CullmanSense, was sitting at half court bringing you all the action first-hand.

Sulligent Lady Blue Devils 30 vs. Cold Springs Lady Eagles 46

Free throw shooting was the name of the game, or lack thereof. Sulligent had a plethora of opportunities, 32 to be exact, while hitting just 12. The woes at the free throw line were a big factor in the 17 point loss to the visiting Cold Springs Lady Eagles.

The first quarter of the girls contest was marred with controversy and missed calls. After one of her girls were blatantly shoved in the back, coach Tammy West voiced her displeasure and was hit with a technical foul that was very iffy. Less than 60 seconds later, Chloe Harbison was slapped with a technical for an elbow that happened after the play. 33 seconds after, Sulligent threw the same type elbow during a jump ball with no whistle. The officials called both coaches over after the quarter ended, talking about the rough play. After all was said and done, the Lady Blue Devils were 2-14 from the foul line leading to a 11-8 Cold Springs lead.

The physicality ceased, for the most part, in the second quarter and both teams got back to playing basketball. Cold Springs started to find the range from three point land and turned a three point lead into a 15 point halftime advantage, outscoring their opponents 16-4 in the second.

Despite the shaky first quarter, Cold Springs dominated the rest of the game on both ends of the floor in route to a 46-30 victory.

Cold Springs was led by the stellar play of Caitlin Hall who had a game high 15 points of which eight came in the fourth quarter. Emma Willoughby followed her with nine. Hailey Freeman added seven, Chloe Harbison six before fouling out, Keegan Johnson five, Hayden West three, and Karlee Perdude one.

The Lady Blue Devils had one player in double digits, Laura Ashley (LA) Dean with 13. Malika Bolton followed her with seven.

Precious Bonman scored three. Hannah Hampton and Miracle Bennett each had two. McKenna Clark and Rain Coleman each dropped in one.

Sulligent Blue Devils 74 vs. Cold Springs Eagles 73

Frustration due to the officials seemed to be the theme of the night for Cold Springs. The boys, just like the girls, had to deal with some questionable calls and no calls.

For those who thought Chayse Elliott would be "rusty" in his first game back, he proved them wrong. He scored 10 first quarter points including going 4-4 from the free throw line and grabbing four rebounds, three of them offensive. Sulligent however had an answer, spreading the ball around and going 4-6 from three point range, going up 17-15 at the end of one.

Cold Springs quickly grabbed the lead going on a 13-0 run, seven points by Elliott and a pair of three's from Freshman Tristian Chambers, four minutes into the second but just like the first, Sulligent had an answer. The fast paced offense of the Blue Devils came roaring back thanks in part to the hot shooting of Cordarious Metcalfe who had seven of the Blue Devils 14 second quarter points. Cold Springs carried a slim 32-31 lead to halftime.

The third quarter was a well-played quarter, despite more questionable calls from the men in stripes. The Blue Devils were able to flip the scoreboard and took a 49-48 lead to the fourth.

Benefiting from the frustration of Cold Springs due to officiating, Sulligent opened the fourth quarter on a 7-2 run to go up by six and force an Eagle time-out. Out of the break, Cold Springs closed the gap to one in the blink of an eye with a Josh Freeman three and Brandon Whailey rebound and put back. Sulligent pushed the lead back to nine, with the help of the third technical foul (first in the boys game) called on the Eagles.

Never a team to give up, the Eagles fought back with six unanswered points to pull to within three with 1:39 left in the game. After a Sulligent free throw, Layne Rice hit a huge three to pull the Eagles to within one with 51.6 left in the game. Two missed Blue Devils free throws allowed Elliott to grab the rebound and go "coast to coast" hitting a lay-up to give Cold Springs a 72-71 lead with 25.4 left to play.

Deon Jenkens responded with a lay-up of his own putting Sulligent up one. Elliott was fouled on the ensuing possession and hit one of two to tie the game, but Metcalfe of Sulligent hit one of his free throws to put the Blue Devils back on top 74-73. This would be the final score as Cold Springs missed a game winning shot at the buzzer.

Sulligent was led by Cordarius Metcalfe with 15 and Drae Massey with 14. Janaar Plat and Dean Jenkins were also in double figures with 12 and 11 respectively. Ladadrick Coleman scored nine, Domaique Wallace seven, and Juwaan Metcalfe with six.

In his first game back from injury, Chayse Elliott had a game high 26. Freshman Tristain Chambers followed him with 16 and Layne Rice added 12. Josh Freeman put in nine, Mason Harris seven. Brenden Whaley and Terry Campbell each added two.

Area Athlete Spotlight: Elijah Garrison

By: Josh McBrayer
joshmcbrayer@cullmansense.com

The Spotlight turns its eye to Fairview this week, finding Fairview Aggie, Elijah Garrison. Garrison is a duel threat player on the hardwood for the Aggies, at home in the paint as well as from beyond the three-point line.

The CullmanSense Spotlight caught up with Garrison over the Christmas break and here are his comments:

Josh McBrayer: Tell our readers a little bit about yourself.

Elijah Garrison: My name is Elijah Garrison. My parents are Priscilla Garrison and Derrick Garrison and I have one sister, Lizzie Mae. I love those three to death and don't know what I would do without them. I'm sixteen years old and a junior at Fairview.

I attend Fairview First Baptist. I'm involved in my youth group, FCA, Student Council, Key Club, and National Honor Society.

Something many people do not know is that I enjoy playing guitar and listening to Gospel Bluegrass, *Dailey and Vincent* is my favorite band.

JM: Which sports do you play?

EG: I played all three sports until middle school. I gave up football and baseball to focus on basketball. I play year around with school ball and AAU.

JM: What is your favorite sport to play/watch? Why?

EG: My favorite sport to watch and play is basketball. I am a huge North Carolina and a Heat fan, Lebron (James) is my boy. I like watching because I love the game, and it allows me to see new moves to work on or how to defend better.

JM: Who got you into basketball?

EG: I would have to give that credit to my parents. They started me early with my first shoes being Jordan's and first Christmas present being a goal and ball. I was raised in a gym with my Dad coaching since I was seven months old. We followed his teams all over North Alabama.

JM: Who is your biggest influence on the basketball court?

EG: It sure helps having a dad as a coach, but then again I hate it at times. He always says, "I may not know much about anything, but one thing I can teach you is how to play ball." Whenever I decided to start listening, my game started to improve. He has taught me so much and continues to do so.

JM: Who is your biggest influence off the basketball court?

EG: My biggest influence off the court would be my youth pastor Josh Swindall, but he really is like an older brother to me. As a teen I don't want to always listen to my parents' advice and talk to them about everything but no matter what it is Josh has always been there. He has taught me so much about life in general but more importantly about my walk with Christ. I love that man for sure!

JM: What do you hope to accomplish on the hardwood this year?

EG: To be honest, I could really care less about what I accomplish this year. I am really more concerned about what we as a team accomplish.

We have guys that can play on any given night; we just have to stay humble and hungry. We are about team and as long as we don't worry about who scores or who does this and that then we can put ourselves in a position to contend for County and Area.

Then hopefully we get hot at the right time and will be in Birmingham. I would love to let my guys go out with us making noise.

It is a welcome sight to see a player with the skills of Garrison focused on his team rather than himself. With all the selfish play of many NBA players that this generation of high school ballers look to, it is nice to see a throwback to the ear of team ball like the days of the 80s Celtics or 90s Bulls. If you like pure basketball, you owe it to yourself to make it to a Fairview Aggies basketball game.

If you know a local athlete that you think we should spotlight, let us know. E-mail us at spotlight@cullmansense.com.

Do You Have a News Tip? Story Idea? or Just Want to Voice your Opinion?

We Want To Know!

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Bama Shootout gives High School Teams Chance to Play on "Big Stage"

Contributed

BIRMINGHAM – On January 12, eighteen Alabama High School basketball teams will be playing in the second annual Bama Shootout at the BJCC in Birmingham. This event will give over 250 student-athletes a chance to play sanctioned games at a venue that they might not otherwise have the opportunity to play. Not only is this a great experience for these student-athletes, it is also a fundraising opportunity for each school's athletic department.

"Schools will receive tickets to sell to their fans. The school will keep a percentage of the money raised through those tickets sales," said Yetta Blair, co-Tournament Director of the Bama Shootout. "We started the Bama Shootout with three basic principles in mind; first, we want to offer student-athletes the chance to play on the big stage. Second, we want to create a way to help schools raise money in today's touch economic climate. And third, we want to provide a clean, healthy basketball atmosphere for the coaches and student-athletes."

Cullman High School's varisty squads will be making the trip to Birmingham to take on Briarwood. The girls game begins at 11 a.m. and the boys are slated to hit the court at 12:30 p.m.

Tickets are currently on sale at the BJCC for $14. Tickets may also be purchased through Ticketmaster.

Community Matters

More than Just Recreation

By: Noah Chandler
noahchandler@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Just under a year ago the Cullman City Parks & Recreation began funding a small program which was placed in the hands of a seasoned special needs instructor and new director Hollie Gutierrez. Despite being a newly founded effort, the Therapeutic Recreation program received an overwhelming response for the group's first event.

"I was hired in December (2011) then our first activity was our Valentine's Day dance. It was pretty big; probably 100 people or so came out," said Guiterrez. "It was a great night."

Therapeutic recreation uses recreational activities, leisure, and play to enhance the quality of life for individuals with physical, mental, social, or emotional limitations 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.

"It's a great asset for those will special needs. For those children in school, they are kind of thrown in the classroom and most of the time they struggle," she said. "This is an area where they can be themselves. It is sort of a safe haven because it is okay if they're loud, and it's okay if they are bad to a point because we understand."

One of the benefits of the program is the social interaction for parents and guardians. Guiterrez said these moments of clarity or breaks helps parents/guardians lend support to one another.

"Parents get to socialize with others who are going through the same types of situations they're going through. It's hard as a parent so here you have support, someone they can turn to that they know can relate to them," she said. "When we have extra activities such as the Valentine's Day Dance or Christmas party, we encourage the whole family to come participate."

Currently those attending the program take to the Aquatic Center for swimming every Tuesday night. That all may be changing very soon.

"We will begin going swimming on Mondays and bowling on Tuesdays," she said. "Basketball will begin in February so that covers Saturdays. Plus, we're also working on establishing an exercise program at the Wellness Center."

Before taking the helm as Therapeutic Recreation Director, Guiterrez had worked in special education for 12 years. Whether it was pre-school aged children or a senior in high school, she has worked with a variety of of Cullman County residents.

Instead of reporting to school every day she now spends her time coordinating events, and planning activities for those special needs children and adults who are able to make it to the program each week. She said being on the opposite side of education has given her the freedom to be a stronger advocate for parents, a calling she feels very confident in.

"I really enjoy it because I'm now more on the parent advocate side opposed to the education side," she said. "I think God has placed me in different places because of a need and that's why I'm here. It was a God thing. I was not looking for a job here but there was a need; God placed me here."

One of the challenges Guiterrez saw firsthand in schools was the frustration felt by those children who just couldn't seem to fit in. She said that feeling she saw then does not show up while at the events and special projects put on by the program.

"I feel like in the classroom it is hard for them to feel successful or to feel included sometimes," she said.

"Here everyone is the same so they don't have to worry what others are thinking or saying so it's just fun for them. They don't have to worry about being successful because it's just play. I feel this program builds their self-esteem. I want them to have security and feel good about themselves."

For more information on the program, contact Hollie Gutierrez at 256-734-9157 or by e-mail at hgutierrez@cullmanrecreation.org.

Regularly Held Activities and Yearly Events

- Valentine's Dance
- Farm Days
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Bowling
- Swimming
- Fishing
- Arts & Crafts
- Cooking
- Archery
- Christmas Party
- Pageants
- Annual Autism Conference
- Basketball (Winter)
- Baseball (Spring & Fall)
- Fall Festivals
- Traveling & Trips
- Carnivals

Windsor Powder Coating & Sandblasting
10231 Hwy 31 South
Hanceville, AL 35077
E-mail: windsori@hiwaay.net
Chris Windsor
Kyle Windsor
Patrick Allred
Office: 256-737-9272
Cell: 256-338-2242



Photos contributed by Waid Harbison

High Jumps, Close Calls, Long Falls

By: Noah Chandler
noahchandler@cullmansense.com

This past weekend hundreds of spectators converged at the Cullman Agriculture Center for two nights of racing action as Motocross made its way into the county.

The fast, hardnosed racing action kicked off on Friday and carried through the evening hours Saturday, keeping spectators entertained while keeping drivers on the edge.

If you missed your shot at Motocross madness at the Cullman Agriculture Center don't worry because the high-octane action is slated to return the weekend of January 26.



Community Matters

Soaring High Above

By: Jessica Norrell
jessicanorrell@cullmansense.com





GUNTERSVILLE – Eagle Awareness week is being held from this weekend until mid-February at Guntersville State Park.

If you are looking for a near home get away I highly recommend going to Eagle Awareness week.

I was pleasantly surprised at how interesting the guest speaker from the raptor center was as she showed off a few of their birds of prey while educating the crowd. Seeing these birds was very entertaining but not compared to what I saw next.

The eagles are nesting this time of year and I was able to see my first eagle in the wild. Not just one…a pair at their nest!

It was amazing and something I will never forget!

This event is well worth your time whether you decide to make a day trip or spend the weekend, there is no shortage of things to do.

A few things I recommend are binoculars, a camera with a zoom lens if you have one, warm clothes, and patience! Be sure to ask around the lodge about where you need to go.

I would have been lost if I didn't get social and ask around but I am so glad I did.

From talking to other eagle seekers, it seemed that the best time to go is early in the morning, with the first trip to one of the nests at 5:30 or just before dark. And if you get hungry the lodge is nearby and they have coffee, yes!

Do a little planning and be sure to check the schedule to see what is happening each weekend. This really is a great opportunity to see our nation's majestic symbol in the wild.

Eagle Awareness 2013 - Lake Guntersville State Park Weekend Schedule

Fridays
4:00 p.m. Check-in time at Lodge
7:00 p.m. Eagle Awareness Orientation/Apple Cider Social / Music by The Circle

Saturdays
5:30 a.m. Early Bird Coffee in Lodge Lobby
6:00 a.m. Trip to Town Creek +/- Short Creek
8:00 a.m. Breakfast at the Lodge
9:00 a.m. Field Trips
- High Falls Park (LGSP Ranger)
- Guntersville Dam (Patti/Amanda)
- Cathedral Caverns (CC Staff)

11:00 a.m. Check-out time at Lodge
12:00 p.m. Lunch at Lodge
1:00 p.m. Afternoon Program in the Grandview Ballroom
3:00 p.m. Trip to Town Creek +/- Short Creek
6:00 p.m. Dinner at Lodge
7:00 p.m. Evening Program in the Grandview Ballroom

Sundays
5:30 a.m. Early Bird Coffee in Lodge Lobby
6:00 a.m. Trip to Town Creek +/- Short Creek
8:00 a.m. Breakfast at the Lodge
9:00 a.m. Field Trip to Guntersville Dam
11:00 a.m. Check-out time at Lodge

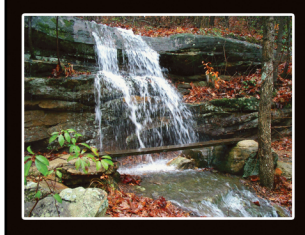
For more detailed information on presenters and events as well as other inquiries go to: https://www.alapark.com/lakeguntersville/EagleAwareness/







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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

Senior Bowl right around the corner

By: Josh McBrayer
joshmcbrayer@cullmansense.com

January 26th is the date that college and pro football fans (including me) have looked forward to all year. Why? Because it is the day that the 63rd Senior Bowl will be played at Ladd-Peebles Stadium in Mobile.

Since the first game was played in 1950 at the Gator Bowl in Jacksonville, FL and Ladd-Peebles every game since, the Senior Bowl has been a place where some of the best senior athletes have come to showcase their talent for pro-scouts and fans the weekend before the Super Bowl.

Huge names in the college world have always been associated with the Senior Bowl and this year is no exception.

The announced players list (so far) reads like a who's who of ESPN's highlight reel. Players like Florida State QB EJ Manuel, Oklahoma QB Landry Jones, Oregon RB Kenjon Barner, and Wisconsin RB Montee Ball.

Still not convinced to come down to Mobile to see the game? Well allow me to introduce you to the players from the talent laden SEC.

ALABAMA
TE – Mike Williams
LS – Carson Tinker
LB – Nico Johnson
S – Robert Lester

AUBURN
TE – Philip Lutzenkirchen

ARKANSAS
QB – Tyler Wilson
WR – Cobi Hamilton

FLORIDA
RB – Mike Gillislee
OT – Xavier Nixon

GEORGIA
WR – Tavarres King
DT – John Jenkins
CB – Sanders Commings
S – Baccari Rambo
S – Shawn Williams

KENTUCKY
OG – Larry Warford

LSU
DE – Lavar Edwards

MISSISIPPI STATE
CB – Johnathan Banks

MISSOURI
LB – Zaviar Gooden

OLE MISS
NO PLAYERS AS OF 1-4-13

SOUTH CAROLINA
S – DJ Swearinger

TENNESSEE
OT – Dallas Thomas

TEXAS A&M
WR – Ryan Swope
LB – Sean Porter

VANDERBILT
NO PLAYERS AS OF 1-4-13

As you can see, the SEC dominates the Senior Bowl roster with Georgia leading with five players and Alabama right behind them with four.

Along with the pageantry of the first pro-game for the players, they are considered professional players at the Senior Bowl, the athletes are coached by NFL coaches.

This year's North squad will be coached by Dennis Allen and his Oakland Raiders staff while the South squad gets to benefit from Jim Schwartz and the Detroit Lions staff.

The tickets range from $10 to $30 and are available through seniorbowl.com.

The Senior Bowl is an affordable way to see the stars of tomorrow and take in some great football. CullmanSense will be there, reporting from the sideline and we hope to see you there!

Chayse Elliott Returns to Cold Springs

By: Josh McBrayer
joshmcbrayer@cullmansense.com

Nine games. 38 days. That is what faced current Cold Springs Eagle and future UAH Charger Chayse Elliott on his road to recovery. Elliott, a main cog in the offensive game plan of the Cold Springs Eagles since he was brought up to the varsity squad, was "chomping at the bit" to get back to live action.

"I was back in the gym two days after (the injury)," Elliott told CullmanSense in a post-game interview after his return.

The injury, a broken wrist, was the result of a foul on Elliott during a dunk attempt versus Vinemont on November 26th. When he was fouled, he came down awkwardly on his non-shooting wrist, causing the break.

From the moment Elliott was led off the court clutching his arm, he knew that he would come back 100%.

"There was never any doubt that I would come and play hard," spoke Elliott. "Although she told me to take it easy," he said with a chuckle while gesturing to his mom.

The Cold Springs Eagles squad is thankful to have their stand-out power forward back as well. The Eagles were on a tear before Elliott went down with his injury, but went 2-7 during a tough stretch of games while Elliott was sidelined.

"It is nice to have (Elliott) back," said head basketball coach Tim Burleson. "Three-point shooting is a big part of our game with guys like Layne (Rice) and Tristian (Chambers) and Chayse helps open up shots. When he drives, he can kick it out to the open man or finish at the rim."

Elliott made his comeback January 4th at Sulligent High School and CullmanSense made the four hour round-trip drive to cover his return. When his name was announced, the Cold Springs faithful who had also made the trip, erupted in cheers.

For anyone who doubted his health, Elliott made it apparent that he was going to leave it all on the court and he did just that. Scoring a game high 26 points, grabbing a slew of boards, and blocking a pair of shots, Elliott was on point.

Even during the one point, heart-breaking, loss the Cold Springs Eagles put the rest of the county on notice. Chayse Elliott, along with Layne Rice and Tristian Chambers, are poised once again to make a run at a 2A State Championship.

Do you recognize this photo?

E-mail us at **history@cullmansense.com** or **call** us at **256-297-1847**.

Reflections of History – Boy Scout Troop



Photo Contributed by Cullman County Museum

This Week in History Jan. 7 - Jan. 13

January 7th
- 1784 – First U.S. seed business established by David Landreth in Philadelphia
- 1914 – First steamboat passes through Panama Canal
- 1965 – France announces it will convert $150 million of its currency to gold
- 1990 – Tower Of Pisa closed to the public after leaning too far

January 8th
- 1790 – George Washington delivers first state of union address
- 1889 – Dr. Herman Hollerith receives first U.S. patent for a tabulating machine – the world's first computer
- 1973 – Secret peace talks between U.S. and North Vietnam resumed near Paris
- 2011 – U.S. Representative Gabrielle Giffords is shot, Judge John Roll killed, in a Tucson, Arizona shooting rampage that killed 6 people and injured 14

January 9th
- 1861 – Mississippi becomes second state to secede
- 1936 – Semi-automatic rifles adopted by U.S. army
- 1951 – Life After Tomorrow, the first film to receive an "X" rating, premieres
- 1988 – U.S. Male Figure Skating championship won by Brian Boitano

January 10th
- 1776 – "Common Sense" by Thomas Paine, published
- 1928 – Soviet Union orders exile of Leon Trotsky
- 1981 – John Severin sets 100-mile unicycle speed record, taking 9 hours 21 minutes
- 1996 – Israel frees hundreds of Palestinian prisoners

January 11th
- 1861 – Alabama becomes 4th state to secede
- 1949 – Snowfall first recorded in Los Angeles
- 1991 – Congress empowers Bush to order attack on Iraq
- 2010 – The theory that Egypt's pyramids were built by free workers, not slaves, is reinforced by the discovery of new tombs near the great pyramids

January 12th
- 1863 – President Davis delivers his "State of Confederacy" address
- 1943 – Frankfurters replaced by Victory Sausages – a mixture of meat and soy meal
- 1971 – Federal grand jury indicts Reverend Philip Berrigan and five others, including a nun and two priests, on charges of plotting to kidnap Henry Kissinger
- 2010 – A 7.0 magnitude earthquake struck Haiti, devastating its capital city, Port-au-Prince, an estimated 150,000 were killed and buried later in mass graves

January 13th
- 1794 – Congress changes U.S. flag to 15 stars and 15 stripes
- 1920 – New York Times editorial (falsely) reports rockets can never fly
- 1980 – Head of narcotic brigade arrested for drug smuggling in Belgium
- 2011 – In South Korea, 1.4 million domestic pigs are buried alive to combat an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease

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Local Events Calendar

Send your Events to: calendar@cullmansense.com

Monday, January 7th

'Senior Spirit'
'Senior Spirit' is a program sponsored by Cullman Parks & Recreation and its many activities take place at the Donald E. Green Senior Center. All activities are FREE. There is a 'Fitness for Life' class year-round centered around stretching and walking to help boost your energy. These classes are offered each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at various times 8 a.m.; 9:15 a.m.; 1:00 p.m.; and 2 p.m. (walking only). Tuesday has two classes, one at 8 a.m. with the stretching and walking; and a 4 p.m. walking only class. Everyone 50 and older is invited to join in the fun, fellowship and fitness!

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!

Bosom Buddies Support Group Meeting
Bosom Buddies Support Group offers support to individuals affected by Breast Cancer. The group will hold its next meeting on Monday, December 17 at 6 p.m. in Cullman Regional Medical Center's Ave Maria Room in the Community Education Center located in Professional Office Building 2 (1912 AL Highway 157, POB 2, Cullman, AL 35058).

Tuesday, January 8th

Genealogy meeting
There is a free Genealogy meeting each Tuesday in the library basement at Wallace State College. This workshop runs from 5 p.m. until 8 p.m. and is to help new researchers and for informal study. Please call Von for additional information at 256-739-2843.

Hand Quilting Seminar
For those interested in making things the 'old-timey' way, there is a hand quilting workshop at the North Alabama Heritage Center starting at 6 p.m. Session ends at 8 p.m. and a second concluding event takes place Thursday night, January 10, from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. as well. Pre-registration is required but call the Extension Agency at 256-737-9386 for further information.

Civitan Club Open Meeting
Anyone interested in meeting and learning more about the Civitan Club are invited to attend their meetings on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month at 6 p.m. at Daily's restaurant. Cullman's Civitan Club joins with other organizations in the local community to support life in Cullman, so everyone is welcome and invited to come see what they have to offer!

Take Off Pounds Sensibly
Anyone interested in ideas for weight loss are invited to attend the TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) group as they meet each Tuesday night at 6 p.m. at Benedictine Manor. Jeanne Latham (256-734-7146) or Ginger McMinn (256-739-3925) will share information concerning their meetings. Everyone is welcome to attend TOPS and receive encouragement from others who are interested in weight loss.

Emotions Anonymous Support Group Meeting
An Emotions Anonymous Support Group meets each Tuesday at noon at Grace Episcopal Church Carriage House. Those interested are invited to attend these group sessions. Further information is available through the Group Director's office at 256-734-3605 or 256-796-8440.

Knit 1, Read 2
The Knit 1, Read 2 group meets every Tuesday at the Cullman County Public Library, Main Branch, at 3 p.m. This group welcomes all newcomers.

Ladies' Auxiliary VFW Dance at Post 2214
The Ladies' Auxiliary of VFW Post 2214 invites the community to their weekly Tuesday night dances at the VFW Post building. The country line dance starts at 7 p.m. each Tuesday night, with admission only $5.00 per person. Concessions are available and all proceeds benefit the Auxiliary's local projects.

North Central Alabama Genealogical Society Meeting
Members of the North Central Alabama Genealogical Society meet every Tuesday in the basement of the Wallace State Community College Library for informal study and to help new researchers. The meeting is from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. and those interested are invited to this free gathering. Come learn about your 'roots!' Call Von at 256-739-2843 for more information.

Wednesday, January 9th

'Senior Spirit'
'Senior Spirit' is a program sponsored by Cullman Parks & Recreation and its many activities take place at the Donald E. Green Senior Center. All activities are FREE. There is a 'Fitness for Life' class year-round centered around stretching and walking to help boost your energy. These classes are offered each Monday, Wednesday and Friday at various times 8 a.m.; 9:15 a.m.; 1:00 p.m.; and 2 p.m. (walking only). Tuesday has two classes, one at 8 a.m. with the stretching and walking; and a 4 p.m. walking only class. Everyone 50 and older is invited to join in the fun, fellowship and fitness!

AARP Driver Safety Class
All senior citizens are invited to avail themselves of a special driver safety class, according to AARP driving regulations, and sponsored by the Martha Burchell Insurance Agency. This two-day seminar runs from 8:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. at the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce. The class will be offered on Wednesday, January 9, and Thursday, January 10. Please call Martha Burchell Insurance Agency to register (256-727-7450) or contact Richard Gurley, 256-739-9883. Fee for this class is $12.00 for AARP members and $14.00 for non-AARP members. Those who have completed this class often find they are eligible for a reduction in their auto insurance fees. Come bring you driving skills and see ways you can improve your driving safety.

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

Thursday, January 10th

AARP Driver Safety Class
All senior citizens are invited to avail themselves of a special driver safety class, according to AARP driving regulations, and sponsored by the Martha Burchell Insurance Agency. This two-day seminar runs from 8:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. at the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce. Please call Martha Burchell Insurance Agency to register (256-727-7450) or contact Richard Gurley, 256-739-9883. Fee for this class is $12.00 for AARP members and $14.00 for non-AARP members. Those who have completed this class often find they are eligible for a reduction in their auto insurance fees. Come bring you driving skills and see ways you can improve your driving safety.

Overeaters Anonymous Meeting
Members of Cullman's Overeaters Anonymous will gather at 4:45 p.m. and they invite others interested to come check out their group. They meet weekly, both on Thursday evenings at 4:45 p.m. and/or on Monday mornings at 9:30 a.m. These meetings are conducted at the Carriage House of Grace Episcopal Church. Folks are invited to attend either one of the group meetings, depending on your free time.

Friday, January 11th

'Senior Spirit'
'Senior Spirit' is a program sponsored by Cullman Parks & Recreation and its many activities take place at the Donald E. Green Senior Center. All activities are FREE. There is a 'Fitness for Life' class year-round centered around stretching and walking to help boost your energy. These classes are offered each Monday, Wednesday and Friday at various times 8 a.m.; 9:15 a.m.; 1:00 p.m.; and 2 p.m. (walking only). Tuesday has two classes, one at 8 a.m. with the stretching and walking; and a 4 p.m. walking only class. Everyone 50 and older is invited to join in the fun, fellowship and fitness!

Honoring Circuit Clerk Robert Bates and Judge Don Hardeman
Everyone is invited to attend a Retirement Reception from 2 p.m. until 4 p.m. honoring Cullman Circuit Clerk Robert Bates and Judge Don Hardeman. This event will be held in the third-floor courtroom in Cullman County Courthouse. Come give your best wishes to these retiring gentlemen.

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, January 12th

4th Annual Frosty 5K and Polar Bear Plunge
The 4th Annual Frosty 5K and Polar Bear Plunge is on tap for those brave enough to take on the cold breezes and frigid waters. Call the Cullman Park and Recreation Department for more details at 256-734-9157.

Girl Scout Cookie Rally
Girls, ages 5 - 17, are invited to participate in a kick-off Skating Party to the 2013 Cookie Sale, to be held at Sport World Skate Center. The cost is $5 for registered Girl Scouts. Non-registered girls are invited to come and register to become a Girl Scout for $12, plus the $5 skating fee. Have fun skating, playing games, learning about salesmanship and customer service, and how to "bling" your booth sale table! Permission form to be signed at the event. Girl Scouting builds girls' courage, confidence, and character that make the world a better place. Time 10 a.m. until 12 noon.

Ms. Senior Cullman County Pageant
The Ms. Senior Cullman County Pageant will be held starting at 2 p.m. in the Betty Leeth Haynes Theater at Wallace State Community College. Everyone is invited to attend and cheer on your favorite contestant.

Fellowship Quartet Presents Gospel Singing
Members of St. John Baptist Church invite everyone to attend a Gospel singing at 5 p.m. as the Fellowship Quartet gathers to sing praise to God.

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!

Sunday, January 13th

Vinemont Historical Society Meeting
The members of the Vinemont Historical Society will meet at 1:30 p.m. in the Elementary School Library. Efforts are being made to obtain information and photos of the Elementary School which was destroyed by fire in May of 1981. The building was 50 years old at the time and everything in the school was destroyed by the fire. Anyone who has pictures from these years is invited and urged to make copies, or bring originals for the organization to make copies, and come to the meeting. Please contact Rodger Walling at 256-734-8235 or Jane Teeter at 256-734-9885 for additional info about this event.

Cullman Shrine Club meeting
Cullman Shrine Club meets each month on the 2nd Sunday at 3 p.m. This is a covered dish event followed by the business portion of the gathering. Please call Carroll at 256-734-8360 for additional information. Shriners are known for their work to help crippled children and those suffering from burns. They welcome new members.

Monday, January 14th

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.

'Senior Spirit'
'Senior Spirit' is a program sponsored by Cullman Parks & Recreation and its many activities take place at the Donald E. Green Senior Center. All activities are FREE. There is a 'Fitness for Life' class year-round centered around stretching and walking to help boost your energy. These classes are offered each Monday, Wednesday and Friday at various times 8 a.m.; 9:15 a.m.; 1:00 p.m.; and 2 p.m. (walking only). Tuesday has two classes, one at 8 a.m. with the stretching and walking; and a 4 p.m. walking only class. Everyone 50 and older is invited to join in the fun, fellowship and fitness!

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!

Bosom Buddies Support Group Meeting
Bosom Buddies Support Group offers support to individuals affected by Breast Cancer. The group will hold its next meeting on Monday, December 17 at 6 p.m. in Cullman Regional Medical Center's Ave Maria Room in the Community Education Center located in Professional Office Building 2 (1912 AL Highway 157, POB 2, Cullman, AL 35058).

Looking Ahead

North Alabama Agriplex Upcoming Events
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

The Fitness Chronicles of Norrell – Week 3

By: Jessica Norrell
jessicanorrell@cullmansense.com

Last week my mission was to cut WAY back on the sweets and unhealthy foods…or to work it off if I strayed from that. All in all I did pretty well. I still need to work on my diet but really made a lot of progress just by paying more attention to serving sizes and my calorie intake. I lost right at an inch on my waist and a pound!

It may not sound like a lot but considering my specific goal by the end of this three months, it is a lot of progress.

I do not have an extreme amount to lose so my measurements and weight may not change drastically from week to week but I hope the results will be visible. It will be easier for me to show results by doing a before and after picture at least every other week….uhh, I better do well!

Also, last week I mentioned that I was keeping a food journal. It is important to keep up with everything you eat (as well as you can). Remember NO CHEATING! This is for you so be honest with yourself. It helped me to see everything I was eating every day, written down… especially after doing a calorie estimate…gasp!

It is easier to remember to add in fruits and vegetables and not thoughtlessly grab a cookie as a snack. A food journal is very easy to do. There is no specific format to follow, just write down what you eat. That was helpful for me and definitely curbed some of my decision making, food-wise. My goal is to see those toned abs I am working on and that won't be accomplished if I don't eat right.

Try keeping track of how many calories you consume when you go out as well. That can be eye opening. If you go out to eat a lot I suggest checking the websites for nutrition information or even download the application on your phone for the restaurant so you can see how many calories your favorite dish contains. You may be surprised! Several of those delicious pasta dishes have over 1000 calories!

This was helpful for me when ordering coffee. I now specify I want non-fat milk, no whip cream, as well as ask for less syrup (or other add ins). This saved me over 100 calories for just a drink! If you can, customize what you order to eat or drink!

Small habit changes like using less cheese, getting your salad dressing on the side and lightly dipping your salad in it, abstaining from whip cream, and choosing grilled instead of fried chicken add up to inches off of your waist! Adjusting what I choose when eating out was something I did this week and I think that was a major component of my progress.

This week I will be adding workouts five days a week to my routine. I will do at least 30 minutes of cardio and alternate arms, abs, and legs every other day. This will be a very easy to follow routine and will improve when I start working with a trainer.

When I do start working with a trainer I will share a basic outline for a workout plan. I highly recommended consulting with your own physician or trainer, if you can get one, to do what is best for you.

My workout will be customized for me but if you are following this column at least do 30 minutes of cardio, five days a week.

Whatever point you are at physically just find time to do something, whether it be going for a walk with your kids and/or dog, running up stairs, or if you have access to a gym, exercising there. Anything helps and making it part of your routine is well worth the time. Even taking baby steps will get you closer to your goal.

The results are worth pushing yourself to get started. It is incredibly difficult (well, it was for me) at first but remember you are working toward a life change that will be rewarding in so many ways…including looking good! You owe it to yourself to reach your potential. I am very excited and hope I can pass on some useful information to help anyone that may be in my position. Don't be discouraged if you don't succeed right away.

I know I am the type of person who expects instant results so I have had to change my frame of mind to stick to this. I am already seeing results and am very excited to continue.

The New Year is a Great Time to Start Your Own Fitness Chronicle! Share your story: health@cullmansense.com

We're here with you.
Across the county or across the street.
CullmanSense – Community Matters

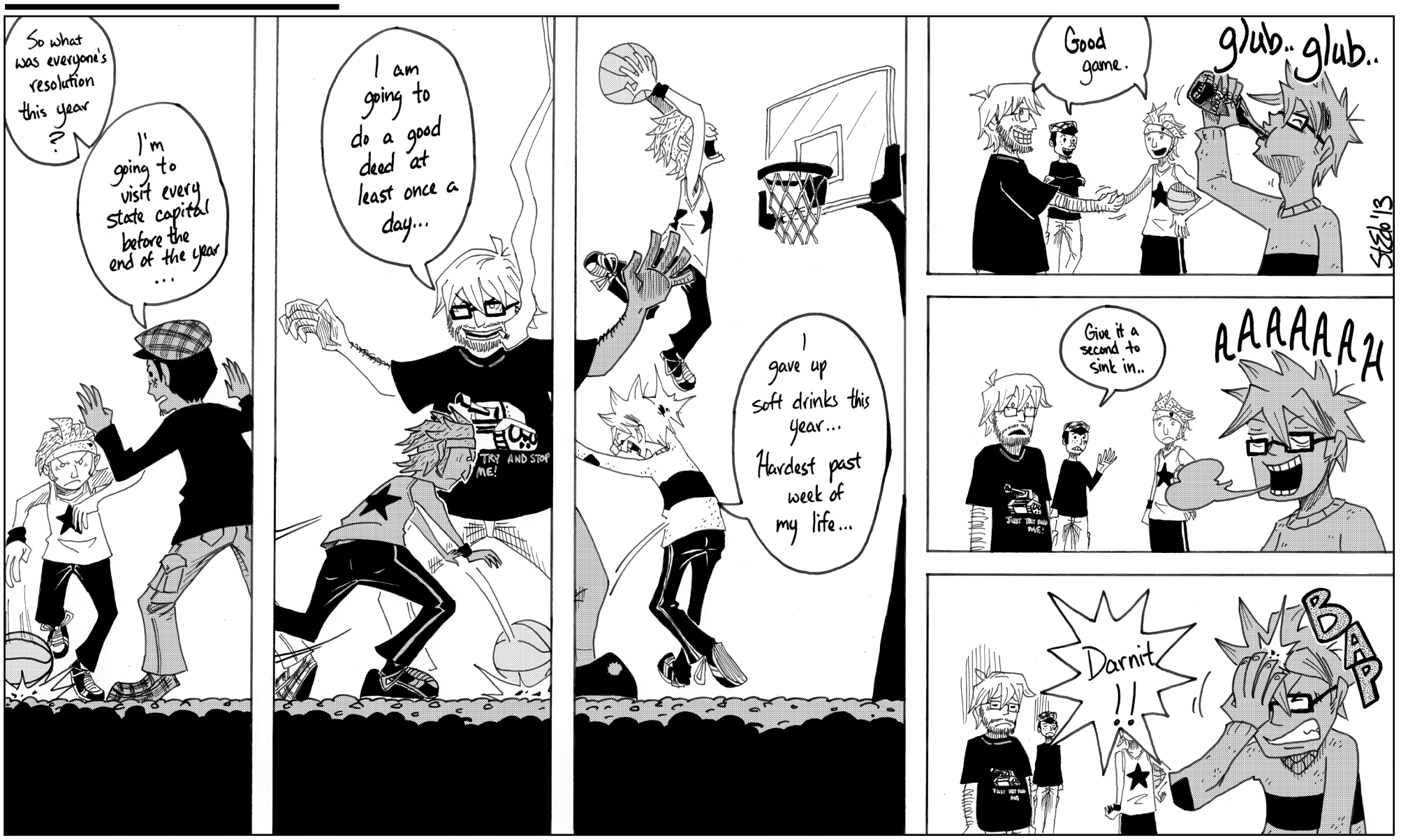
Cullman City Parks & Recreation

What's on deck at Parks and Rec....

www.cullmanrecreation.org
256-734-9157

- **Missoula Children's Theater:** Auditions for the *Wizard of Oz* will be held Monday, January 21 for ages K-12 grade. The show will be performed at 2:00pm and 6:00pm & the public is encouraged to attend on Saturday, January 26. Actors will practice daily after school.
- **Cullman Savings Bank Frosty 5K & Polar Bear Plunge:** Registration is now open for the fourth annual Frosty 5K & Polar Bear Plunge to be held at the Wellness & Aquatic Center January 12, 2013. Registration can be turned in at the Cullman Civic Center or Wellness & Aquatic Center or online at active.com.
- **Miracle League Basketball Registration** Open January 1-January 30 at the Cullman Civic Center. Games will be played in February and March at Ingle Park. Price is $30 which include jersey. For more information call 256-739-9931.
- **Youth Baseball & Softball Registration** January 15-February 15 at the Cullman Civic Center. Cost is $75 and includes hat & jersey. Ages 4-16, boys & girls. For more information, call 256-739-9931.
- **Flag Football Registration**: January 15-February 15, $450 per team. Ages 15 & up may play. Register at Heritage park or call 256-739-9931 for details.
- **Archery Classes Beginning:** Spring archery classes will begin January 14 at the Cullman Civic Center. Classes will also meet at the Cullman Archery Park with instructor Anthony Parker. For more details, call 256-734-9157.

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



Community Matters

A Frosty Dip

By: Noah Chandler
noahchandler@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – As with tradition, men and women from across this great county will gather Saturday at the Cullman Wellness & Aquatic Center to run an early morning 5K in an attempt to warm up before they take the great freezing dip that is the Polar Bear Plunge!

The 4th Annual Cullman Saving's Bank Frosty 5K & Polar Bear Plunge brings a new level of craziness when it comes to early January 5K runs.

Waid Harbison, Cullman City Parks & Recreation Marketing Director, is optimistic that this year's event will draw a large crowd.

"As always the big draw for the event is the Polar Bear Plunge. It makes it a bit unique because the participants jump into the outdoor competition pool and of course it's freezing cold in the middle of January," said Harbison. "This year shouldn't be any different."

With a bit more than $1,300 in cash prizes, and door prizes ranging from 42" TV's to coffee makers, it makes it intriguing to take on the brisk early morning weather.

As part of the traditional plunge into the center's outdoor pool, one person will win a free year's membership to the CWAC.

When the plunge was first adopted into the event, Harbison said the temperature definitely reflected winter.

He said the outside temperature was in single digits the morning of the inaugural plunge but luckily the treated outdoor pool would not freeze over.

"The first year we did the Polar Bear Plunge it was 17 degrees in the pool and it was about 9 degrees outside early that morning," he said. "The outdoor competition pool actually is moving and the chemicals won't allow the water to freeze but it was definitely below freezing."

The event will begin at 8:30 a.m. with the Kid's Fun Run. Shortly after, the Frosty 5K will begin at 9 a.m. Harbison said that once all the competitors have made it back to the center, the Polar Bear Plunge will commence at 10:15 a.m.

This year's race, however, will be a bit different from those in recent memory. With a large amount of competitors the age categories have been condensed by half to help accommodate the award process. Harbison said this new change should make the race a bit more competitive.

"This year's Frosty 5K will be a bit more competitive than the Midnight or Frosty 5K has been before," he said. "We cut down from about 14 age categories to just seven. We have a 12 and under category where we had an 8 and under category and go in four year increments.

Harbison said cash prizes will be awarded to the top finishers and top masters finishers, which total over $1,300 in cash prizes. Medals will be awarded to the top three in each age division. Registration is $20 for the race, or $25 for both the race and plunge.

Registration is available at active.com or at the Cullman Civic Center. Goodie bags and tech-shirts will also be given away.

For more information on the event, please contact Waid Harbison at wharbison@cullmanrecreation.org or call 256-775-7946 for more details.

Age Categories for the 2013 Cullman Saving's Bank Frosty 5K

- 12 and under
- 13-19
- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60 and up

Former Wallace State pitcher Craig Kimbrel appreciative of mental toughness he developed while with Lions, proud of program's tradition

By: Russell Moore
WSCC Contributor

HANCEVILLE – Hunting, working out, and spending time with family are priorities for a lot of 24-year-olds. For Craig Kimbrel, a former Wallace State pitcher and Atlanta Braves closer, those are things he considers components of a relaxing offseason.

"My life is uncomplicated. It is awesome I'm living my dream right now playing for the Braves, but otherwise I'm still the same guy I've always been," said Kimbrel, who stopped by Cullman last week to speak at a baseball camp. "I come home in the offseason and hunt, work out, and spend time with my family. When the season starts up, it's nothing but baseball. That's about it."

That sounds simple enough. Kimbrel has made baseball accomplishments appear effortless as well. In less than three full seasons in the major leagues, the Lee-Huntsville graduate has established himself as one of the game's most dominant closers and is one of the more recognizable players in all of Braves country. Kimbrel, a two-time National League All-Star and unanimous 2011 NL Rookie of the Year, has collected 88 saves during the last two seasons, finishing with 42 saves and a 1.01 ERA in 2012, recording 116 strikeouts in only 62 2/3 innings.

Kimbrel made an appearance last week at Cullman's All Sports Training Performance (ASTP) facility to address baseball camp participants, from ages 6 to 14, and to sign autographs.

He also spared some time to discuss his collegiate career.

"Coach (Randy) Putman does a great job. You may not like at the time how hard he pushes you mentally, but you are very thankful after the fact. It definitely makes you a better ballplayer," said Kimbrel, who set a MLB rookie record with 46 saves in 2011. "To this day, when I dig down mentally and need to find that extra gear, it comes back to the mental toughness I developed here. If you're not having a good week on the mound, you have no choice than to be mentally tough to get through it. You learn those things by experience and being put through certain situations."

At Wallace State, Kimbrel played during the 2007 and 2008 seasons. In 2007, Kimbrel went 8-0 with a 1.99 ERA as a freshman, serving as the team's closer and spot starter, and was drafted by the Braves in the 33rd round of the major league draft. Kimbrel returned to the Lions for his sophomore season and finished 9-3 with a 2.88 ERA, striking out 123 hitters in 81 innings, primarily as a starter. He was drafted again by the Braves in 2008, selected in the third round.

Kimbrel made a speedy climb up the Braves organizational ladder and made his major league debut in 2010, becoming the second of four former Wallace State players to crack the major leagues in consecutive seasons, joining Derek Holland in 2009, Graham Godfrey in 2011, and Jake Elmore last season.

"It is a special feat to have that much success coming from one program. Not many four-year schools can even claim that, so we should take pride in that accomplishment," Kimbrel said. "It's a cool thing to say all of us went to Wallace State close to the same point in our careers, and all made it to where we need to be."

Kimbrel marked a non-baseball milestone in his life last month, marrying Ashley Holt, a former Wallace State cheerleader, whom he met while in college at Hanceville.

"It's been a busy month. All of the wedding planning can be stressful, but we're as happy as can be. Ashley and I met at Wallace State, so it's safe to say Wallace State has been good to me in many, many ways," Kimbrel said.

Kimbrel explained to the camp participants and their parents that once the Braves season is complete each year, he doesn't throw a baseball until the first week of January, giving his arm the adequate rest it needs in the offseason.

Once spring training arrives in February, Kimbrel will begin preparations to play for the United States in the World Baseball Classic, an international baseball tournament held every four years. Japan has won the two previous WBC's since its inception in 2006. Kimbrel will report to Arizona to train for the WBC, while the Braves conduct spring drills in Florida.

"I'm excited about the World Baseball Classic. I hope I can help Team USA can do some good things," Kimbrel said.

Then, during the upcoming 2013 season, Kimbrel and the Braves will enter the post-Chipper Jones era, seeking to improve upon last season's NL wild card postseason berth.

"We have a good team that has played together for a while and a lot of our younger guys came up together through the minor leagues. We mesh well in the clubhouse and have great team morale," Kimbrel said. "We are going to miss Chipper Jones and his experience and presence, but we're still going to be a contending team."

Vote!
Have you already broken your New Year's resolution?
Cast your vote today at cullmansense.com/poll



Community Matters

Creating an Ecosystem (Continued from Front)

ter cycle, so the children can watch as the cycle works while sitting indoors."

Fairview resident and busy mom Holli Quick brought her four children. Jeb, Caleb, Lora, and Liddie took to the terrarium project with great enthusiasm, especially Jeb. Quick said Farm Kid's Club allows her the opportunity to teach her children firsthand, opposed to sticking strictly to bookwork.

"We homeschool so I use the Farm Kid's Day as a field trip. This is the third one we've been to and it's a great opportunity for the children to be hand's on," said Quick. "My little boy loves farming, so when we came last year they learned to shear a sheep and he was excited to hold the freshly sheared wool. It's a great opportunity to spend some time with your children. We're learning science and farming while spending time together."

The unique aspect of the Farm Kid's Club is the simple fact that parents do not have to enroll their children in every event. Dawsey said the freedom to choose which activities would best interest the child make the program rewarding for everyone.

"There is no set roster, so if you would like to come out to our horse event, or to our bee day you can do so. Plus we try to have something for boys and girls alike," she said. "We try to do a variety of hands on activities, from planting to taste testing to a whole lot more. It's really a lot of fun for both the children and parents."

The cost for each Saturday event is $5 per child. A maximum cost of $10 per family is in place to accommodate those larger families who may otherwise not have an opportunity to take their children to events such as Farm Kid's Club.

The North Alabama Agriplex Heritage Center is located at 1714 Talley Ho Street SW in Cullman, just across from the Cullman Bowling Center.

For more information on Farm Kid's Club or if you would like to enroll your child, contact Rachel Dawsey at 256-297-1044 or send an e-mail to cullmanag@gmail.com.

2013 Farm Kid's Club Schedule of Events

- Saturday, February 2nd – Seed Starting
- Saturday, March 2nd – Great Gourds
- Saturday, April 6th – Cattle Farming
- Saturday, May 4th – Storytelling
- Saturday, June 1st – Natural Dyeing and Spinning
- Saturday, July 13th – Bees and Honey
- Saturday, August 3rd – Ice Cream Social with Old Time Games
- Saturday, September 7th – Rodeo with Horses
- Saturday, October 5th – Worm Farming
- Saturday, November 2nd – Apples
- Saturday, December 7th – Holiday Crafts

All programs are from 9 a.m. until 10:30 a.m.

Farm Kid's Club is sponsored by Cullman Fiber Guild, Cullman County Cattleman's Association, Cullman County Farmer's Federation, Cullman County Master Gardeners, and Alabama Gourd Society



CRMC Welcomes First Baby of 2013

By: Lindsey Dossey
CRMC Contributor

CULLMAN — Cullman Regional Medical Center welcomes the first baby of 2013, Evie Jane Lake. The proud parents Mandi and Heath Lake were overjoyed about the delivery along with big brothers Kiah and Bryn, who couldn't wait to hold their little baby sister.

Dr. John Wideman with Cullman Primary Care OB-GYN, PC delivered the baby on January 1 at 2:01 p.m. and baby girl Lake weighed 7 pounds, 3 ounces and is 20 inches long. The CRMC maternity and nursery services healthcare team provided pre- and post-care for the family.

A gift basket was given to the Lake family and numerous donations were provided by local merchants including Sweet Beginnings Boutique, Monograms Plus, For Heaven's Sake Photography, Cindy Boyles, Guardian Angel Gift Shop at CRMC, and the CRMC Foundation Twinkle, Twinkle program.

For more information about CRMC's maternity and nursery services, call 256-737-2600 or access information at www.crmchospital.com/maternity.



L–R: Big Brothers Bryn and Kiah along with new baby Evie Jane Lake and Dr. John Wideman

On the Move (Continued from Front)

Cold Springs Lady Eagles #3 Class 2A

After starting the season at 3-3, the ladies from Cold Springs have been on fire. They have rattled off 10 victories, including nine straight before a loss to Mountain Brook who is ranked #7 in Class 6A. Cold Springs has always been a hotbed for basketball and state titles.

Coach Tammy West looks to have her team ready to bring home yet another title on top of the mountain.

Rates on the Rise (Continued from Front)

Those connected to city water lines will notice an increase of $1.35 each month for those customers using the minimum amount allotted. The Duck River Dam project will be funded partially with some of the increase.

"We needed a 6.5 percent increase to cover our expenses, same type of situation (as sewer). We do have some of the Duck River debt coming on board this time, so that's part of the increase, why it was a little more than the sewer," he said. "We increased the minimum on water 5.8 percent."

2013 CULLMAN SAVINGS BANK
FROSTY 5k
cpr cullman city parks & recreation
& POLAR BEAR PLUNGE
Saturday January 12, 2013 at 9:00am
at the Cullman Wellness and Aquatic Center
Pre-register today at the Civic Center or register online at www.active.com.
The first 250 runners receive a free technical shirt!
Everyone who takes the plunge will be entered into a drawing to win a free 1 Year Membership to the Wellness and Aquatic Center. ($780 value!)
For more info contact the Cullman Civic Center at 256-734-9157
Working for Cullman County Families Since 1887
Cullman Savings Bank