SERIES 3, ISSUE 17 MONDAY, APRIL 29, 2013
CULLMAN'S MONDAY NEWSPAPER
CULLMANSENSE
COMMUNITY MATTERS
$0.50 $0.50

In this Issue:

Local



Blue for Bruising

Child Abuse walk raises awareness, draws crowd of onlookers p6

Celebrate Volunteers During National Volunteer Week

CRMC Volunteers gather to be recognized at Annual Luncheon. p2

State

SBA Disaster Assistance Approved for Cullman & Surrounding Counties

Governor Robert Bentley on Wednesday nnounced that Walker and surrounding counties have now been approved for disaster assistance in the form of low-interest rate loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration." p3

Scale Back Ala. tops 1 million pounds lost

Since the inception of the statewide weight-loss competition, Alabamians have lost more than one million pounds. p3

Sports

WSCC Dedicates Softball field to Pete Harris p4





A Piece at a Time

Searching for a cure to Autism p12

ALDI Opens First Cullman Store May 9

By: Hannah Dewey

Grocer Introduces Shoppers to Big Savings and Better Quality

CULLMAN – On Thursday, May 9, 2013, select assortment discount grocer ALDI will offer shoppers a smarter alternative as it opens its first Cullman store, located at 1831 Cherokee Ave. SW. With more than 1,200 stores in 32 states, ALDI is known for high-quality grocery items at incredibly low prices.

"We are pleased to bring our first store to Cullman to help customers get high-quality products at everyday low prices," said Troy Marshall, Mt. Juliet division vice president for ALDI. "We challenge shoppers to switch from national brands to our high-quality exclusive brands and save up to 50 percent without compromising. As important as price is, the only way to attract and keep shoppers is to have quality products."

To celebrate the new Cullman store, ALDI will host a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 9 a.m. on Thursday, May 9 to which the public is invited to attend, sample ALDI exclusive brand products, tour the store and shop for their favorite grocery items. Additionally, guests can enter an on-site sweepstakes for a chance to win ALDI gift certificates.

Customers can expect to

See Aldi - p2



WSCC Continues an Earth Day Tradition



By: Russell Moore
WSCC Contributor

HANCEVILLE – Wallace State Community College continued its annual tradition of recognizing Earth Day, planting a pair of trees on campus this week. A number of students and employees aided in planting a dogwood on the west side of the Drafting Building and a Shumard oak near the southeast entrance of the Tom Bevill Building.

Wallace State's Anthony Hilliard, the Horticulture/Agricultural Production Department Chair, opened Earth Day activities by explaining to those assembled at the Student Center how to properly plant a tree, including the best times of the year to do so.

See Earth Day - p2

Sports - 4 Calendar - 9 Poll - 10 Comics - 11

PRINTED LOCALLY @ PRINTING Alabama Web Press

Cullman and Blount County high school juniors visit Wallace State's technical programs during second annual "invesTECHgate Day"

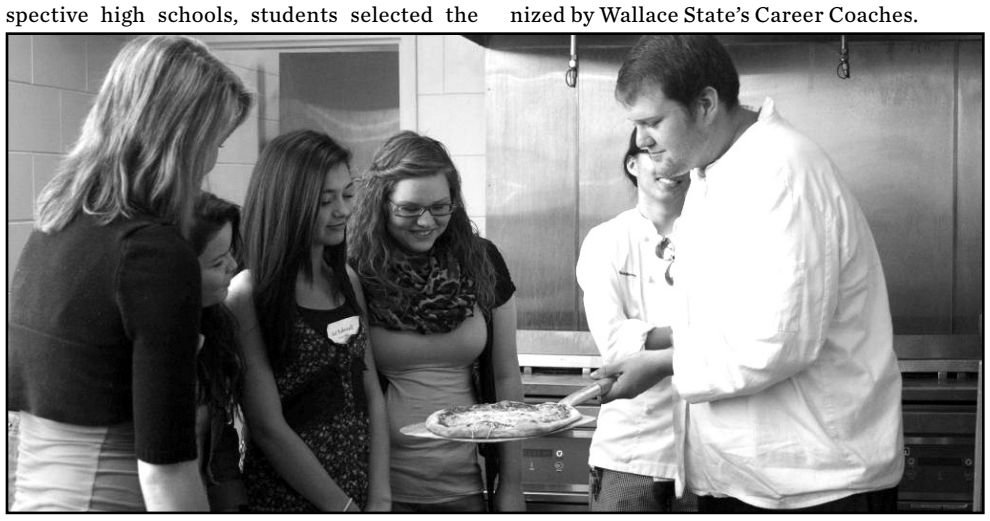
By: Russell Moore
WSCC Contributor

HANCEVILLE – Wallace State Community College hosted more than 300 high school juniors from both Cullman and Blount Counties last week for the second annual "invesTECHgate Day." The event offered high school students a chance to get an in-depth look at technical careers available at the collegiate level.

High schools visiting campus were Vinemont, Hanceville, Cold Springs, J.B. Pennington, Hayden, and Locust Fork.

Through a survey administered at the respective high schools, students selected the technical program they're interested in and spent a couple of hours at Wallace State learning more about the skills and requirements associated with their possible career choice. Students chose among Diesel Mechanics, Welding, Agriculture, Precision Machining, Aviation, Cosmetology, HVAC, Drafting/Design, Auto Manufacturing, Electronics, Culinary Arts, Auto Service, and Collision Repair.

Students were also advised on the college admissions process and financial aid and dual-enrollment opportunities. The event was organized by Wallace State's Career Coaches.



J.B. Pennington juniors, from left, Hallie Nelson, Samantha Bates, Amber Walls, and Heidi Moore observe as Aaron Nichols of the Wallace State Academy of Culinary Arts presents a pizza that had been cooked for "invesTECHgate Day."

RFL: Fun for All

CULLMAN – Volunteers organizing the activities for this year's Relay for Life have issued a schedule of events participants can expect this year at the Cullman County Fairground. RFL is scheduled for Friday, May 5, beginning at 6:45 p.m. with the opening ceremony. Below is a tentative schedule of the night's fundraising madness for the American Cancer Society.

- Survivors Dinner - 5:00 p.m.
- Opening Ceremony - 6:45 p.m.
- Survivors Lap - 7:00 p.m.
- Parade Of Teams / Spirit Sticks and T -Shirts - 7:30 p.m.
- Luminary Ceremony - 9:00 p.m.
- Bra Modeling Competition - 10:00 p.m.
- Entertainment / Minute To Win It - Lasting to Approximately 11:30 p.m.
- Relay Idol - 12:00 a.m.
- Hot Dog Cook -Off - 1:00 a.m.
- Time Filler/ Minute To Win It – Between 1:00 -2:00 a.m.
- Project Runway - 2:00 a.m.
- Mega Relay Scavenger Hunt - 3:30 a.m.
- Obstacle Course - 4:30 a.m.
- Wet T -Shirt Contest - 5:00 a.m.
- Name That Tune - 5:30 a.m.

Themed Laps.

- School/Team Lap - 7:00 p.m. Hour
- Limbo Lap - 8:00 p.m. Hour
- Cardboard Box Lap - 9:00 p.m. Hour
- Southern Pride Lap - 10:00 p.m. Hour
- Super Hero Lap - 11:00 p.m. Hour
- Frat Lap - 12:00 a.m. Hour
- Tacky Lap - 1:00 a.m. Hour
- Character Lap - 2:00 a.m. Hour
- Dance Lap - 3:00 a.m. Hour
- Crazy Hat Lap - 4:00 a.m. Hour
- Purple Lap - 5:00 a.m. Hour

Aldi (Cont.)

find more than 1,400 of the most frequently purchased items sold under ALDI exclusive brands for prices up to 50 percent less than traditional supermarkets. A model of efficiency, ALDI eliminates overhead costs by offering smart practices, such as a cart rental system through which shoppers insert a quarter to release a cart and receive the quarter back upon the cart's return. Other cost-saving practices include a smaller store footprint, open carton displays and encouragement of customers to bring their own shopping bags.

To ensure its exclusive brands meet or exceed the national brands on taste and quality, ALDI conducts rigorous testing on all products. ALDI stands behind this quality with a Double Guarantee: If for any reason a customer is not 100 percent satisfied with a food product, ALDI will gladly replace the product and refund the customer's money.

ALDI also saves shoppers money by keeping stores open during prime shopping times. The newest location will be open from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Saturday and from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Sunday. ALDI accepts cash, debit, and EBT cards.

The Cullman store features high ceilings, natural lighting, and environmentally friendly building materials – such as recycled materials and energy-saving refrigeration and light bulbs – to ensure that customers enjoy a shopping experience that is simple and easy to navigate.

A grocery retailer that has grown without merger or acquisition, ALDI has more than 1,200 U.S. stores located in 32 states. Over the last several years, ALDI has added approximately 50-80 new stores each year, expanding the ability to bring grocery savings to more people every day.

Celebrate Volunteers During National Volunteer Week

By: Amy Linton

CRMC Volunteers gather to be recognized at Annual Luncheon

CULLMAN – Cullman Regional Medical Center hosted an annual Volunteer In-Service and Appreciation Luncheon. The volunteers were recognized for their time, dedication, and service to CRMC and the community. The Volunteers consist of Auxiliary also known as "Pink Ladies", Adult and Hospice Volunteers. During the summer, a Junior Volunteer Program is offered to students who qualify and are seeking ways to give back to their community.

During the program, volunteers were refreshed on hospital standards, codes, policies, and procedures and were treated to a special lunch followed by games and fellowship.

National Volunteer Week is about inspiring, recognizing, and encouraging people to seek out imaginative ways to engage in their communities. It's about demonstrating to the nation that by working together, we have the fortitude to meet our challenges and accomplish our goals.

National Volunteer Week was established in 1974 and has grown exponentially each subsequent year, with literally thousands of volunteer projects and special events scheduled throughout the week. With the fourth year anniversary of the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, the creation of the Volunteer Generation Fund, and the resonant call to serve from the President, this year will be even more energizing and inspiring.

For more information regarding volunteer opportunities at CRMC, call 256-737-2600 or visit www.crmchospital.com/volunteer.



Front row, left to right: Beverly Yeager, Hospice Volunteer; Shirley Lee; Adult Volunteer; Judith Stowe, Adult Volunteer; Charles Howell, Adult Volunteer; Charlotte Howell, Adult Volunteer; Lorene Bailey, Adult Volunteer; Donna Barnett, Adult Volunteer. Back row, l-r: Sarah Hicks, Auxilian President; Linda Morris, Auxilian; Virginia Parker, Auxilian; Ola Quattlebaum, Auxilian; Sharon Hicks; Auxilian; Dot Kendall; Auxilian; Gail Harris, Auxilian; Faye Morris, Auxilian; Margaret Reynolds, Auxilian; Dorothy Harris, Auxilian; Sue Schafers, Auxilian; Odie Ponder, Auxilian; Maxine Tucker, Auxilian; Bobbie Blair, Auxilian.

Earth Day (Cont.)

After planting the new trees, the Earth Day group checked up on the trees planted last year.

Free T-shirts and snacks, including oranges and carrots, were given to students and employees participating in Monday's activities. Earth Day activities are sponsored each year by the Wallace State Green Team.



Wallace State's Dr. Suhana Chikatla of the Advanced Visualization Center/E-Learning Department spreads some mulch on the Shumard oak planted in front of the Tom Bevill Building on Earth Day 2013.

What's Online

HOUSE LOST TO FIRE; RESIDENT LOCATED SAFELY OUT OF STATE

The Cullman Fire Department battled a house fire beginning shortly after 7 p.m. Thursday night at the end of Loch Drive Northeast, located in a subdivision bordering Lake Catoma, preventing damage to any neighboring homes. **qrne.ws/35**



EIGHTH INNING OUTBURST GIVES HARTSELLE PLAYOFF SERIES WIN OVER CULLMAN Extra innings and home field did not serve well for the Cullman Bearcats. The champions of Class 5A, Area 15 were knocked out of the baseball postseason Saturday afternoon when area foe Hartselle scored nine times in the top of the eighth inning to post a 14-5 victory. **qrne.ws/36**

THOMPSON KEEPS THE BEARCATS ALIVE IN THE POSTSEASON Pitching was the superior item Friday for longtime rivals Cullman and Hartselle in a second round Class 5A playoff series. Jackson Smith outdueled Jordan Guthrie in the opener, a 3-0 victory for the Tigers in eighth innings. Smith was able to get out of a bases loaded situation... **qrne.ws/37**

SBA Disaster Assistance Approved for Cullman & Surrounding Counties

By: Jennifer Ardis

MONTGOMERY – Governor Robert Bentley on Wednesday announced that Walker and surrounding counties have now been approved for disaster assistance in the form of low-interest rate loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration. The approval is based on continued damage assessments from a line of severe storms that moved through Alabama on March 18.

"The March 18th storms caused a lot of damage in several communities, and this assistance from the SBA will help more people recover and rebuild," Governor Bentley said.

"The SBA and the Alabama Emergency Management Agency are working closely with affected communities across the state. We will continue to connect people with all available resources."

Walker County is the primary county listed in a new SBA disaster declaration approved Tuesday afternoon. The declaration also covers counties that are contiguous to Walker County. Those counties are Blount, Cullman, Fayette, Jefferson, Marion, Tuscaloosa, and Winston.

Earlier this month, the SBA issued a similar disaster declaration covering DeKalb, Etowah, and surrounding counties in Alabama and Georgia based on damages from the same line of storms.

In Alabama, those surrounding counties are Blount, Calhoun, Cherokee, Jackson, Marshall, and St. Clair.

In all counties covered by these SBA disaster declarations, homeowners, renters, businesses, and nonprofit organizations that qualify will have the following options from the SBA:

Home Disaster Loans:

• Renters and homeowners alike may borrow up to $40,000 to repair or replace clothing, furniture, cars, appliances, etc., damaged or destroyed in the storms.

• Homeowners may apply for up to $200,000 to repair or replace their primary residence to its pre-disaster condition.

Business Physical Disaster Loans:

• Loans of up to $2 million to repair or replace disaster-damaged property owned by the business, including real estate, inventories, supplies, machinery, and equipment.

• Businesses of any size are eligible. Private, nonprofit organizations such as charities, churches, private universities, etc., are also eligible.

Economic Injury Disaster Loans:

• If a small business or private, nonprofit organization has suffered economic injury, regardless of physical damage, and is located in an SBA-declared disaster area, they may be eligible for financial assistance of up to $2 million from the U.S. Small Business Administration.

Those interested in applying for SBA low-interest rate loans can receive more information by calling the SBA's Customer Service Center at 800-659-2955 (or 800-877-8339 for the deaf and hard-of-hearing). Additional information, including SBA disaster loan fact sheets, can be found on the SBA's website at www.sba.gov.

"It is important for families still recovering to know this new declaration reaches beyond county lines and includes the seven counties that are contiguous to Walker County," Alabama EMA Director Art Faulkner said.

Serve Alabama, the Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Volunteer Service, continues to encourage storm survivors in need of assistance to call 211 (or 888-421-1266).

Operators can give callers more information on recovery resources available in various communities.

Scale Back Alabama tops 1 million pounds lost

By: Rosemary Blackmon

MONTGOMERY – Sponsors of Scale Back Alabama announced Friday that since the inception of the statewide weight-loss competition, Alabamians have lost more than one million pounds.

The contest, now in its seventh year, drew more than 27,000 participants in January who worked for 10 weeks to eat less and move more, resulting in a collective weight loss of 129,528 pounds statewide in the 2013 competition.

"We've heard from individuals who lost up to 20 pounds and from others who lost 6, but who are committed to continuing the good habits they've started," said Donald Jones, chairman of Scale Back Alabama and administrator of Marion Regional Medical Center in Hamilton. "Our community looks forward to the contest every year, and we typically have close to 100 people participate in our small area."

Jones' hospital serves as one of the local coordinators and weigh-in sites, along with hundreds of sites across the state including local health departments, hospitals, businesses, schools, gyms, churches, and other organizations. In fact, more than 500 individuals or organizations served as grassroots coordinators during the 2013 contest, with 64 counties represented.

"Scale Back Alabama is a great way to focus attention on an issue that greatly affects the health of our citizens," said Dr. Donald Williamson, state health officer. "Obesity is linked to high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, and the list goes on. Unfortunately about one-third of Alabamians are considered to be obese. If we could get people to adopt healthier diets and exercise habits, we could eliminate or greatly control many of our chronic health issues."

During the broadcast celebrating the close of the seventh annual contest, the following teams were drawn for the grand prizes. They were drawn from a pool of teams in which every team member lost at least 10 pounds.

The first team drawn was the Hungry Hostages of Wetumpka Elementary School, Wetumpka. Each team member won $1,000 for a total of $4,000 for the entire team.

The second team drawn was Dinner for Smucks of Intuitive Research in Huntsville. Each team member won $500 for a total of $2,000 for the four team members.

The third team drawn was 25% Off of the E.S. Robbins Corporation in Muscle Shoals. Team members won $250 each for a total of $1,000 for the team.

In addition, all individuals who lost at least one pound were eligible to win one of 50 achievement prizes of $100 per person.

Participants losing at least one pound of weight were eligible for prizes as well. Five individuals drawn won one of five prizes of $50 per person.

In the Scale Back Alabama Schools competition, three schools won cash prizes of $500 each donated by the Governor's Commission on Physical Fitness and Sports.

Winning schools were Albert Turner Elementary School in Marion, Loveless Academic Magnet Program in Montgomery, and Rosinton School in Robertsdale. Scale Back Alabama is sponsored by the Alabama Hospital Association and the Alabama Department of Public Health, with generous underwriting from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama.

For more information on this year's contest, go to http://www.scalebackalabama.com/.

Statistics from Scale Back Alabama 2013:

- Total number of teams participating – 6,770
- Total number of people participating (4 per team) – 27,080
- Total number of counties participating – 64
- Total number of coordinators – 542
- Teams on which each member lost 10 pounds – 415 (1,660 individuals)
- Number of individuals who lost at least 10 pounds – 6,479
- Pounds lost among the 415 teams – 25,861
- Total pounds lost statewide – 129,528

Alabamians at risk are urged to learn more about viral hepatitis

By: Ronada Anderson

MONTGOMERY – The Alabama Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention urge the public to learn the risk factors of viral hepatitis. May has been designated as Hepatitis Awareness Month.

May 19 is the second national observance of Hepatitis Testing Day.

Viral hepatitis (inflammation of the liver) is caused by viral infections and referred to as hepatitis A, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, hepatitis D, and hepatitis E.

One in every 10 Americans is affected by some form of liver disease.

More than 75 percent of adults with hepatitis C are baby boomers (persons born between 1945 and 1965).

Facts:

- Anyone can get hepatitis B or C, but some populations are disproportionately burdened with these infections, including African Americans; Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders; past and current injection drug users; gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men; and persons born between 1945-1965.
- Hepatitis A virus spreads when a person ingests contaminated food or water, is exposed to contaminated objects, or has been in close contact with an infected person.
- Hepatitis B can be transmitted through exposure to blood or through sex. Hepatitis C is mainly transmitted through exposure of blood to blood contact.
- Hepatitis B and C viruses can cause chronic hepatitis, leading to cirrhosis, liver failure, and liver cancer.
- Hepatitis A and B can be prevented with a safe and effective vaccine. There is currently no vaccine to prevent hepatitis C.
- Treatments are available for both hepatitis B and C. There is no specific treatment for hepatitis A.

Hepatitis D and E are uncommon in the U.S. Hepatitis D can be prevented by hepatitis B vaccination in persons who are not already HBV infected.

Hepatitis E usually results in acute infection.

"As a part of our observance, we join the CDC's Office of HIV/AIDS and Infectious Disease Policy and urge other agencies to implement the Action Plan for the Prevention, Care and Treatment of Viral Hepatitis," said Jane Cheeks, director of the Divisions of HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis Prevention and Control.

April is Alcohol Awareness Month

Contributed By: ABC Board

1. April is observed as "Alcohol Awareness Month". It is a time dedicated to educating the community and raising awareness of underage drinking, alcohol abuse, treatment, and other related issues. What will you do to promote awareness about the dangers of alcohol in the life of you and your family?
2. As a parent, what can you this month for Alcohol Awareness? Talk with your kids, teens and young adult children about alcohol and the consequences of underage consumption.
3. As an adult, what can you do this month for Alcohol Awareness? Avoid over-consumption of alcohol at parties, pubs/clubs, and other social drinking occasions. Be responsible – be aware.
4. As a business owner, what can you do this month for Alcohol Awareness? Get employees who sell/serve alcohol to double check the age to ensure your business is not serving/selling to minors.

For more information, visit http://abcboard.alabama.gov

ADEM Funding Supports Reduction in Diesel Emissions

By: Jerome Hand

MONTGOMERY – The Alabama Department of Environmental Management is partnering with Vulcraft Carrier Corporation in Fort Payne to utilize funding under the Diesel Emission Reduction Act (DERA) to reduce diesel emissions and improve air quality.

ADEM has been awarded funds from the U.S. EPA for the State Clean Diesel Program and has chosen to apply those funds in areas that are exceeding, or are close to exceeding, the National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

Vulcraft utilizes a fleet of diesel vehicles to transport its products and the facility has agreed to install devices on some of those vehicles in order to reduce diesel emissions.

After providing a 50 percent match for the project, Vulcraft will utilize approximately $50,500 of the DERA grant to retrofit 10 of its diesel vehicles with auxiliary power units.

These auxiliary units will assist in reducing air emissions by reducing the amount of time the larger, main engines spend idling.

This project will assist in reducing the emission of particulate matter and nitrogen oxides, both of which have been identified as criteria pollutants. Vulcraft has agreed to have the project completed by August 31, 2013.

Wallace State dedicates softball field at Bobby McCracken Stadium to longtime program supporter Pete Harris

By: Russell Moore
WSCC Contributor

HANCEVILLE – Wallace State Community College dedicated its softball field at Bobby McCracken Stadium to longtime program supporter H.D. "Pete" Harris in between games of its Friday doubleheader against Alabama Southern.

The event occurred almost 10 years to the day since the first game was played on that field on April 24, 2003.

Harris was instrumental in the planning and construction of the Wallace State softball field, donating countless hours of his time as a professional surveyor and expert in field construction. He worked meticulously with contractors to ensure the field was built correctly to NCAA and NJCAA specifications, and ready for play during the 2003 season.

The Wallace State Lady Lions hosted the 2003 NJCAA District Playoff on the new field and went on to qualify for their first NJCAA National Tournament appearance, beginning an era of success for the program that has included seven ACCC Division 1/NJCAA Region 22 Softball Championships, seven NJCAA National Tournament Appearances, one National Championship (2008), and two National Runner-Up finishes (2009, 2010).

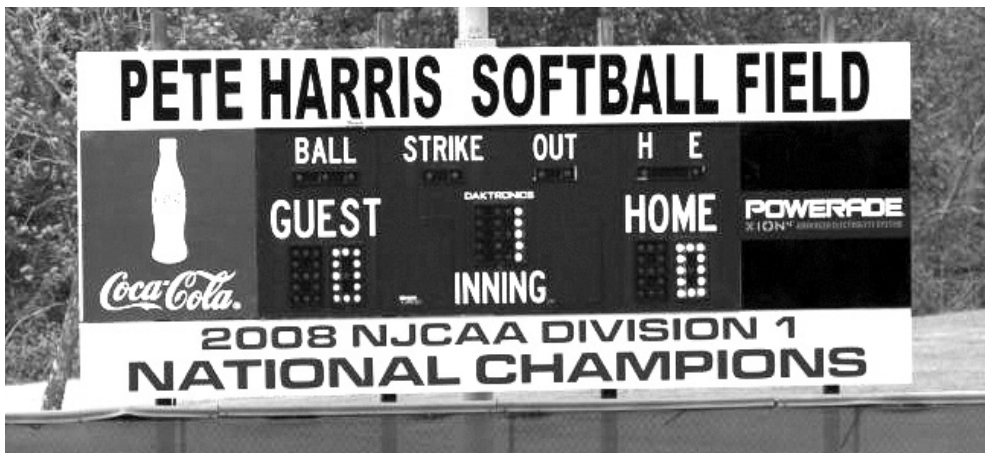
"In getting to know Mr. Harris, I've learned that he is very prideful of Wallace state's softball program, players, and facility," said Wallace State President Vicki Hawsey. "We couldn't do what we do without volunteers, and it means a lot when you have a gentleman to give of himself in ways that he doesn't have to do. He has made a difference in many, many lives, including mine."

Since working on the softball field's construction, Pete Harris has become a fixture with the program as a volunteer who not only knows what needs to be done before it is even asked of him, but who makes it his responsibility to do whatever work is needed. It is rare for him to ever miss a Wallace State home game.

"Pete has donated his time hauling dirt, scrubbing the seats in the stadium, and scrubbing whatever else needing cleaning here. He mows the grass and anything else to help Wallace State athletics. He even did the surveying for the soccer field," Coach Jayne Clem said. "Anything he could do to make a coach's life easier, he's done at Wallace State.

"He has been a friend to our program for many years, and I think it's fitting that we can name the softball field in his honor," Clem said.

Harris is widely respected and admired by athletes, staff, and community members for his servant leadership. His enthusiasm for the Wallace State softball program and influence



in the community has made him an excellent spokesperson for the program.

"It means everything to me, especially since everyone worked so hard to make it happen," said Harris.

"I appreciate and love so much coach Jayne Clem, Dr. Vicki Hawsey, Dr. Tomesa Smith, and all of the people in the athletic department. They are all good friends and have been good to me."

In addition to his service to Wallace State, he has held volunteer leadership positions with the Cullman County Park and Recreation Board of Directors, the Cullman Housing Authority Board of Directors, as league organizer and coach of youth sports teams, and as a community league player himself for many years.

Harris's favorite Wallace State softball memory thus far: "It meant a whole lot to me when we won the national championship (in 2008). All seven of those state championships aren't bad either."

He's looking forward to many more great moments for Wallace State Softball on Pete Harris Field.

The resolution to name the field after Harris was approved this month by the Alabama Community College System Chancellor Dr. Mark Heinrich and the Alabama State Board of Education.

For more information about Wallace State Softball, visit wallacestate.edu.

A "Hall"-mark night

By: Josh McBrayer
joshmcbrayer@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – It is late April and that can only mean one thing on the Cullman County sports world...time for a new class to be inducted into the Cullman County Sports Hall of Fame!

The night started with the presentation of 10 scholarships to athletes around Cullman County.

- **Victoria Rouse Memorial Scholarship** - Hayden West of Cold Springs
- **Cullman County Sports Hall of Fame Scholarship** – Houston Turner of Cullman
- **Charlotte Cummings Memorial Scholarship** – Sadie Gregory of Fairview
- **James and Gussie Shable Memorial Scholarship** – Darcie Wilson of Good Hope
- **Coach Lane Horton and Nancy Horton Scholarship** – Katie Tankersley of Holly Pond
- **Dane Estes Memorial Scholarship** – Tarrent Jordan White of Holly Pond
- **Jacob Harris Memorial Scholarship** – Katlyn Whitehead of Holly Pond
- **Coach Charlie Richard Memorial Scholarship** – Jerrica Crawford of St. Bernard
- **Michael Stewart Memorial Scholarship** - Ty Jones of Vinemont
- **Jimmy Dale Burgess Scholarship** – Josh Looney of West Point

After all of the scholarships were handed out and the dinners (from All Steak) were served, 11 new members joined the 100+ esteemed members already enshrined in the CCSHOF. So without further ado, here is the 2013 class of Cullman County Sports Hall of Fame inductees.

Rev. Bob Kurtz (Golf)

Rev. Bob Kurtz is one of only two inductees that attended school outside of Cullman County and he is the only one from outside the state of Alabama. Rev. Kurtz graduated in '59 from Yankton High School in South Dakota. In his younger days he played basketball and ran track in both high school and college bit he has always been an avid golfer. In fact, Rev. Kurtz has won 50+ golf tournaments and holds six world records in the sport. He has raised money for several Cullman charities by using his skills as a golfer.

Huelee Adams (Vinemont)

Huelee Adams is a graduate of Cullman but he is best known for his time at Vinemont. After winning the Jr. Varsity Cullman County Basketball Championship four times, Adams started the Varsity program for the Eagles. He retired from coaching in 1975 to head into administration and he had a very successful career in that field as well. He served as the principal of Vinemont High School for 14 years.

Nancy Horton (Holly Pond)

Coaching is a stressful job and if you are lucky, you might win a championship. If that is the norm, Nancy Horton is as far from that norm as you can get.

Horton excelled as a cheerleading coach as well as a volleyball coach, winning National and State titles as well as several Cullman County Championships on cheerleading. She is also responsible for founding the Cullman County Volleyball Association.

Along with being an outstanding coach, Horton served as Cullman County Superintendent for four years.

Bo Bolzle (Fairview)

Bo Bolzle was a three-sport athlete as an Aggie, playing baseball,basketball, and running track. He was named All County and All Area in basketball. After graduating in 1968, Bolzle moved on coaching at Hanceville,a position he excelled at for eight years. He officiated basketball, football, and softball for many years. He served as an educator, principal, and athletic director for 30+ years.

Dr. Phillip Freeman (Cullman)

Dr. Phillip Freeman played basketball for Oliver Woodard and Dafford Smith, two of the greatest coaches ever to grace Cullman. As good in the classroom as he was on the court, Dr. Freeman went on to study medicine at Birmingham Southern and the University of Alabama at Birmingham. He has practiced medicine in Cullman for many years.

Donald Drummond (West Point)

After playing baseball and basketball for the Warriors, Donald Drummond went on to star on the St. Bernard College baseball team. When his time was up at St. Bernard, he went on to play on the independent circuit for another 20 years. Both a boys and girls basketball coach, along with coaching baseball, he was won a total of six Cullman County Championships.

Roger Pierce (Good Hope)

When you talk basketball in Cullman County, there is always one name that comes up, Roger Pierce. Whether you are talking about his dead on, albeit strange looking, shot, or the plethora of schools he has coached for, coach Pierce has played and/or coached on every court in the county. He is currently coaching the St. Bernard Lady Saints basketball team.

Jerry Weathersby (Holly Pond)

Jerry Weathersby has been an athlete his entire life. From being a four sport star at Holly Pond to playing baseball at St. Bernard. After his high school and college playing days were over, he went on to the independent circuit to play baseball and softball and spent 12 years in the 40 and over baseball league in Birmingham.

Randy Putman (Wallace)

The list of accomplishments for Randy Putman truly reads like that of a Hall of Famer. Putman has played pro baseball for Kansas City and San Diego.

Trading his playing spikes for coaching spikes, Putman has made a career of winning. Capturing two Florida State titles as well as a National High School title, he moved to Wallace State Community College where he has won a staggering seven JUCO Championships and appeared in six JUCO World Series.

Mickey Campbell (Cold Springs)

Mickey Campbell is a coach in every sense of the word. He has coached Varsity and B-team boys basketball, Varsity girls basketball, Junior High School basketball and football, Varsity baseball, and was named the coach of the 1982 East-West All Star game.

Dr. Ginger Holt (Cullman)

Last but not least is Dr. Ginger Holt. Dr. Holt is the youngest of this year's inductees and one of the most decorated. She was named All State a total of six times (four times in track, two in basketball).

She was also named All-American in basketball and track, was named a Scholastic All-American, and won the Bryant-Jordan Scholar Athlete Award all in 1988.

She went on to play basketball for UAB from '88 to '92. In 1996, she graduated from UAB School of Medicine. Her portrait is the first to be displayed in the Cullman High School basketball gym.

Please join CullmanSense in congratulating the scholarship winners and the Cullman County Sports Hall of Fame Class of 2013.

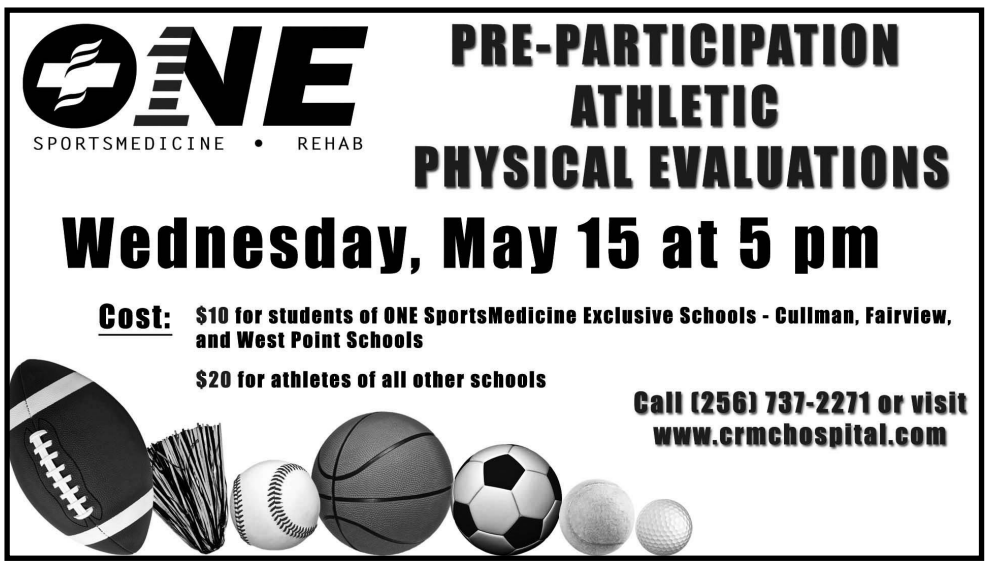
CRMC's ONE SportsMedicine Offers Pre-Participation Athletic Physical Evaluations

By: Lindsey Dossey
CRMC Contributor

CULLMAN — Cullman Regional Medical Center's ONE SportsMedicine & Rehab is offering annual Spring Pre-participation Athletic Physical Evaluations on Wednesday, May 15 at 5 p.m. at the CRMC ONE Rehab Center located in Professional Office Building 1 on the CRMC Campus – 1912 AL Highway 157, POB 1, Cullman, AL 35058. ONE SportsMedicine & Rehab provides athletic healthcare to Cullman County and the surrounding area. Our ultimate goal at ONE SportsMedicine & Rehab is to provide athletes with a speedy and safe return to the game.

The Cost is $10 for ONE SportsMedicine Exclusive Schools' athletes — Cullman, Fairview, and West Point Schools and $20 for athletes from all other schools.

For more information on the Pre-participation Athletic Physical Evaluations or the services of ONE SportsMedicine & Rehab, call Cullman Regional Medical Center's ONE Rehab Center at 256-737-2271.



Area Action Begins!

By: Josh McBrayer
joshmcbrayer@cullmansense.com

Fasten your seatbelts it's gonna be one heck of a ride! Every softball team across the county is gearing up for the area tournament, with one thing in mind, Alabama State Championship.

Cullman Lady Bearcats

The Lady Bearcats have had a solid season in 2013 and look to continue to collect wins when they head down Hwy. 31 to Hartselle to compete in the 5A area 13 tournament.

West Point Lady Warriors

The Lady Warriors, like Cullman, have played well during the 2013 season. They will attempt to extend their season in the area tournament.

Fairview Lady Aggies

Fairview is no stranger to the Lady Redskins and they, once again, have to travel to Oneonta, this time for the area tournament. The Lady Aggies will start their run at the 4A state title on Thursday at 2 p.m.

Good Hope Lady Raiders

The Lady Raiders are the only team in the Cullman County area that have earned the right to host their area tournament by going perfect in area play. Good Hope has played dominating softball this year and have been near the top of the ASWA state rankings for the entire year. The 3A area 12 tournament gets underway at Good Hope on Tuesday.

Vinemont Lady Eagles

Vinemont has had an up and down season. "We seem to play to the level of our competition," said coach Mark Smothers in an interview with CullmanSense earlier in the year. "We play great against a great team and seem to commit errors against an average team."

That has been the story of the Lady Eagles season but they have a chance to put all of that behind them when they start their road to the state title on Tuesday at Good Hope.

Hanceville Lady Bulldogs

It has been a rough road for the Lady Bulldogs this season. Wins were hard to come by but they can turn that all around with a deep run in the area tournament. They get things underway at Good Hope Tuesday at 2 p.m.

Holly Pond Lady Broncos

The Lady Broncos of Holly Pond have had a disappointing season this year by their standards. This can all change when they hit the road and all the way to New Hope to play Tuesday in the 3A Area 13 tournament. The Lady Broncos will start play at 1 p.m.

EQUIPMENT OPERATOR I
Water/Sewer Department

Starting Pay: $11.1487/hourly **Deadline to Apply:** May 2, 2013

SUMMARY
Water/Sewer Department Equipment Operator I is a semi-skilled position, with frequently minor supervisory work, in the operation of trucks and related automotive equipment including attached mechanical equipment. Department Head: Chris Freeman.

MAJOR JOB TASKS

- Driving trucks hauling dirt, sand, gravel, lumber, or other materials to or from work site
- Servicing equipment and making minor field repairs and adjustments; reporting the need for major equipment repairs
- Supervising, as required, and performing manual labor in loading, unloading, or other related work
- Operating small trenching equipment
- Operating video equipment
- Other related tasks as assigned

SCOPE OF WORK
Employees in this class are responsible for the skilled and safe operation of automotive equipment and for the prompt execution of assignments according to established routine or special instructions received from a superior. Employees may also perform manual labor, and the duties frequently include responsibility for supervising employees assigned to trucks as loaders or helpers. Where equipment operation is less difficult or strenuous, there is added responsibility for performance of supervisory or related semi-skilled tasks. Work is reviewed through personal inspection and through observation of compliance with established work or route schedules.

QUALIFICATIONS
- Education: Any combination of training and experience equivalent to the 12th school grade.
- License: Must have a current Class A CDL (commercial driver license)
- Certifications: Must have a current Water Operator I certificate with the State of Alabama, or the ability to pass Operator I certification within one (1) year of employment
- System: Must be the ability to gain knowledge of the system to perform emergency standby after hours within six (6) months of employment
- Knowledge & Skills Required: Skill and knowledge in the operation of various types of standard automotive equipment, as demonstrated by a driving test. Some experience in the operation of trucks and related automotive equipment. Some knowledge of traffic laws, ordinances, and rules involved in the operation of automotive vehicles. Some knowledge of occupational hazards of applicable safety precautions in operating equipment. Some knowledge of the geography of the city including the locations of streets (or the ability to acquire this knowledge quickly). Ability to make minor repairs and adjustments and to service automotive equipment. Ability to understand and follow oral and written instructions.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Ability to maneuver various sized vehicles.
- Eyesight sufficient to pass a standard driving test.
- Ability to lift items of varying weights into and out of a truck or vehicle.
- Ability to enter manholes and work in tight and enclosed areas.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- Willing to work alternating shifts, including weekends, as required.
- Maintain a valid Alabama CDL

Employment is contingent upon successfully passing a drug test, and position is subject to random drug testing. Starting pay $11.1487. Benefits include health, dental, and life insurances, vacation and sick leave, and uniforms.

To apply, download the employment application and turn it into the Human Resources Department by 3:00 p.m. on May 2, 2013.

Be part of Cullman's fastest growing newspaper. Send your résumé to: jobs@cullmansense.com

BURCHELL INSURANCE AGENCY
Martha Burchell, Agent
Nationwide On Your Side
Auto • Home • Life • Commercial
No one will ever perform a better human service to secure the needs of others
200 2nd Ave. SE • Cullman, AL 35055 • Phone: 256-737-7450 • burchem@nationwide.com

$cholar$hip Jump$tart
Elementary ~ Middle School
High School ~ College Transition
"We Make College Cost Less"
256-736-5969 • www.n2college.com

Blue for Bruising

By: Noah Chandler
noahchandler@cullmansense.com



Child Abuse walk raises awareness, draws crowd of onlookers

CULLMAN – For 21 children across the state of Alabama there will be no more bright sunny days such as the ones which greeted advocates at a Child Abuse Awareness Walk on Thursday. Sadly, 21 children lost their lives as a result of abuse or neglect in 2012, a statistic which saddens many, but also a number which motivates many in Cullman County to work diligently to eradicate child abuse.

"We had a memorial service on the front steps of the Cullman County Courthouse for the 21 children who died in 2012 from child abuse or neglect," said Javon Daniel, Cullman Caring For Kids executive director.

While the statistics are only accounting for the cases reported statewide, Daniel said many more are feared to go unreported.

"We don't know how many of those (unreported) there are," he said.

"Child abuse happens every day, here. It happens right here in our hometown, our home county, every single day. Our job is to make people more aware of what is happening and hopefully, hopefully, we can slow down this process of child abuse."

Blake West has been working as a DHR attorney for Cullman County for nearly six years. West said while the outpouring of support is enormous for the walk, he urges residents to report any cases of abuse in order to help prevent further incidents.

"It's important for our community to know that the only forms of child abuse that can be stopped and prosecuted are the cases that are reported," said West. "We can't be neighbors and see children abused or neglected and not report it. It is all of our duty to report child abuse."

Catherine Denard, Cullman County DHR Director, said that the walk is a great way to remind residents of the importance of reporting child abuse.

"April is national Child Abuse Prevention month and we are trying today (Thursday) through our walk to bring awareness that child abuse and neglect happens in every community," said Denard. "We want people to be fully aware that it does happen and to please report it if you see it happening."

Denard said she was thrilled with the outpouring of support during the walk. With the crowd in excess of 100 participants, the group walked from the courthouse steps to Depot Park, passing Cullman City Hall on their short trek.

"It meant a lot today to see Cullman Caring For Kids, Distract Attorney Blaylock, people from the court system, foster parents, police officers, and so many others out participating in this walk for awareness. It takes a team effort to keep these children safe and we all just have to remember that it is our duty to help protect them."

For more on the walk, visit www.cullmansense.com.

Roadside Attractions: Mace Thomas Payne Brindley

By: Noah Chandler
noahchandler@cullmansense.com



FAIRVIEW - Mace Thomas Payne Brindley, 1801-1871 was a pioneer, landowner, Senator, and a banker who's family was considered highly enough respected to have a special marker placed along County Road 747, plotting the last resting place of Brindley and his family.

The gravesite is slightly elevated above the curved county road and if you're not vigilant, the site will go unseen.

Each grave is marked, some with Masonic imagery, but all accompanied by what appeared to be local stones.

The plaque marking the grave site reads:

The first family to settle this area in 1832. Married Nancy Stewart Hanby, daughter of Gabriel Hanby, who was one of the original framers of the Alabama Constitution. They became parents of 11 children: 4 sons served in the Confederate Army.

At one time his land holdings consisted of 1800 acres. Served 12 years as Blount County Clerk; 2 years as State Representative; and 9 years as State Senator. Served as Director of State National Bank of Decatur; at that time, there were only five banks in Alabama.

Brindley name perpetuated geographically by naming Brindley Mountain and Creek in his honor. Home site was located across road some 700 feet northwest of spring that served as water supply.

If you have a Roadside Attraction you'd like featured in CullmanSense, please e-mail your information to news@cullmansense.com, Subject Line: Roadside Attractions

Bent But Not Broken

By: Noah Chandler
noahchandler@cullmansense.com

A tribute to the Citizens of Cullman and Cullman County

CULLMAN – As the two year anniversary of the April 27 tornado elapsed, a symbol of the residents' willingness to pull together during adverse times was erected at Heritage Park. This monument is to mark that faithful dark day in the county's history where the residents chose to bend, but not break in the face of one of nature's brutal forces, a day Cullman Mayor Max A. Townson won't soon forget.

"We thought putting it up would be an inspirational sight," said Mayor Townson. "It is a tribute to the citizens of Cullman and Cullman County for bending, but not breaking, following the EF4 tornado on April 27, 2011."

The monument's, located adjacent to the opening of the baseball fields at Heritage Park, main feature is a beam which came from the southwest corner of the People's Bank building, located on 3rd Ave SE. It is simplistic in design, only containing the steel beam, a bench, flagpole, and plaque. Of course, all of which is enclosed behind a small fence.

"It will be lit and we will have a fence around the monument to prevent anyone from being tempted to climb it," he said with a laugh. "We just don't want any children to try to climb it and get hurt in the process."

Though the tornado destroyed buildings, uprooted trees, and displaced families, Townson said the spirit of the community helped to garner much recognition for its resiliency. Not only were the residents on the country's minds, but longtime businesses elected to dig firmly into the region, announcing major multimillion dollar investments.

"It's almost like the tornado woke up a sleeping giant. Look at all the things that have happened since that tornado," he said. "Topre announces a $110 million expansion. We were selected as the number one city in Alabama to raise to children by Bloomberg, and that's after the tornado. Then, Rehaul announces a $120 million expansion. It's truly amazing."

Townson said though the tornado did its best to disrupt and destroy several communities across the county, the residents all pulled together, showcasing the best the county has to offer. Though times looked bleak leading up to the tornado, with budget concerns, Townson said the area is building back to be better than before.

"In '09 we were battling with the budget, we had that deep recession, then all of a sudden this tornado comes and we think we're devastated," he said. "But hey, we're coming back bigger, better, and stronger than before. We bend but we don't break and that's the character of the community. Best place to live, work, play, and worship."

The plaque titled Bent But Not Broken adorning the single tier monument simply reads:

"A tribute to the citizens of Cullman and Cullman County for Bending, But Not Breaking, following the EF4 tornado on April 27, 2011."

A dedication ceremony for the new monument has not been formally announced at this time, but stay with CullmanSense for more on this story by visiting www.cullmansense.com.



Tree Man

By: Noah Chandler
noahchandler@cullmansense.com

Local man recognized for his love of nature

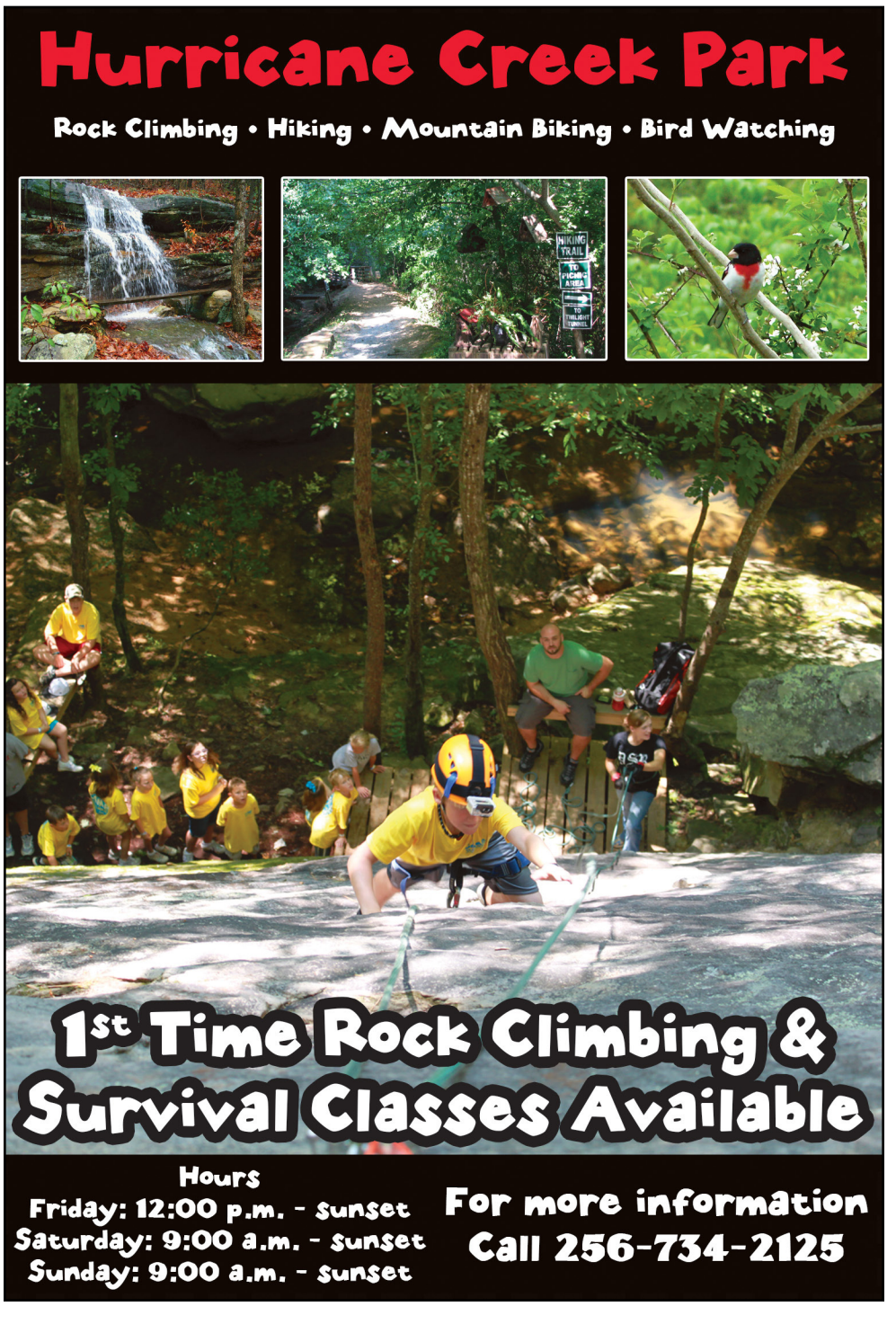
CULLMAN – Recently, the Cullman Forestry Commission acknowledged Roy Gamble for his 25 years of service in the commission but also for his service once leaving. Gamble served as a Cullman County Commissioner from 1988-90, and worked tirelessly over the decades promoting new growth planting.







Front row from left to right are; Cherrie Haney, Roy Gamble, and Albert Mayo. Back row from left to right are; Travis Kress, Athel Wilhite, Deborah Widner, and Darrell Johns.



– Calendar –

Submit your event to
calendar@cullmansense.com

Monday

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

Weekly Jam Session at Senior Center
There is a new 'fun' event added to the ongoing programs at the Donald E. Green Senior Center. From 1 p.m. until 5 p.m., there will be 'Jam Sessions' offered under the guidance of Don and Barbara Whitehead. Everyone is invited to bring your instruments and join in the playing or just sit and relax and enjoy the music. These musical gatherings are FREE so come on down and bring your friends.

Making Choices - BODYWORKS
A series of FREE sessions on healthy living will be offered. Sessions are 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!

Tuesday

Festhalle Farmers' Market
The Festhalle Farmers' Market is once again open for business on Tuesdays through the spring and summer, from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. Come visit your local farmers as they offer their homegrown produce for your dinner table.

Cullman Caring for Kids in Need of Donations
If you are able to contribute to Cullman County's Community Food Band, the 'Caring for Kids' organization, they would be grateful. Non-perishable food items are needed, and of course cash enables them to purchase needed products to fill their empty shelves. Please call 256-739-1111 to see how to help or mail checks or money orders to Cullman Caring for Kids, P. O. Box 698, Cullman, Alabama 35056-0698. Thanks in advance for anything you can do.

Dog Obedience Class
Cullman Parks & Recreation will sponsor a 7 week Dog Obedience class with Barbara Guettner as instructor from March 26 through May 7. Classes for puppies start at 6 p.m. with adult dogs classes at 7 p.m. Please contact the Civic Center for further info at 256-734-9157.

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.

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.

Wednesday

Relay for Life Survivors' Breakfast
Cancer survivors are invited to attend the Relay for Life's annual Survivors' Breakfast beginning at 7 a.m. at Cullman Church of Christ. This annual meal honors those who have fought the battle or are in the throes of their fights and those who walk with them side by side, supporting them with their presence.

'Wii Bowling' at the Donald E. Green Senior Center
The entertainment for senior citizens is 'Wii Bowling' at the Donald E. Green Senior Center starting at 1 p.m. Everyone is invited. Come enjoy some exercise (but not too physical!) and fellowship with friends. They bowl every Wednesday and Friday afternoons at 1 p.m.

Girls & Boys Club at Spirit Life
Spirit Life Church will host a Girls & Boys Club meeting for those 12 and under every Wednesday beginning at 7 p.m. at the church. All are welcome. Please call the church for further info 256-739-3326.

'Divorce Care for Kids'
A 'Divorce Care for Kids' program to help youths from 6 to 12 years of age is available to help youths whose family is going through, or has gone through, divorce. This FREE program takes place each Wednesday night at 7 p.m. at the Church. All workbooks and materials are included and presented to each attendee in class. Additional info is available by calling the Church at 256-737-0800 or check out Daystar Children's Ministry website at www.kidspowercompany.org.

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

Festhalle Farmers' Market
The Festhalle Farmers' Market is once again open for business on Tuesdays through the spring and summer, from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. Come visit your local farmers as they offer their homegrown produce for your dinner table.

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.

New Vision Support Group
There is a New Vision Support Group which will meet at 10 a.m. and everyone interested in this subject is welcome to attend. The program is at Hilltop Community Center. Additional information is available by calling Linda Estes, 256-739-4653.

ROOT Classes at Grace Episcopal Church
All are welcome to attend special ROOT (Radically Overcoming Obstacles Together) classes each Thursday night beginning at 6 p.m. at Grace Episcopal Church. Food and fellowship begin at 6 p.m. followed at 7 p.m. by the meeting. For additional information please check out Facebook (www.facebook.com/pages/TheRoot) or www.agccullman.com. Come to one class just to see if you are interested in this topic and its purpose. You might be surprised how these meetings can affect your life.

Friday

Senior Fishing Day at Veterans' Park
All Cullman County senior citizens are invited to bring their fishing gear, bait and lawn chairs to Hanceville's Veterans' Park beginning at 7 a.m. for the annual event sponsored by Cullman County Commission on Aging. Fishing starts at daylight or whenever you wish to begin your day. Winners will be awarded trophies around lunchtime. Come enjoy one of our special Senior events.

'Wii Bowling' at the Donald E. Green Senior Center
The entertainment for senior citizens is 'Wii Bowling' at the Donald E. Green Senior Center starting at 1 p.m. Everyone is invited. Come enjoy some exercise (but not too physical!) and fellowship with friends. They bowl every Wednesday and Friday afternoons at 1 p.m.

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!

Relay For Life Survivors' Dinner and Walk
Cullman's annual Relay for Life event is scheduled for to kick off at 7 p.m., with the Survivors' dinner at 5 pm in Building #4 at Sportsman Lake Park. The Survivors' Walk will begin at 7 p.m. All are invited to attend this inspiring event.

Saturday

Second Annual commUNITY Fiesta
Everyone is invited to attend the 'Second Annual commUNITY Fiesta' event at Sportsman Lake Park from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. This event is free to everyone and will include rides, activities, food, drinks and fun for all. This activity, spearheaded by Cullman Rotary club among others, is designed to create more fellowship among families from different backgrounds in the local community, including the Anglo and Hispanic communities. There will be both Spanish and Anglo foods during the afternoon, with door prizes and fun for all. The Cullman Rotary Club is being joined in its efforts for this event by several local churches and many individuals who are working hard to provide another great day like last year's, which saw close to 7,000 folks gather at the park. So come on out and have some fun while meeting neighbors who live and work in our local communities! For more information on this event and to volunteer please contact Joe Holmes at 256-739-5286. There will be music from DJ Kozmic Sound during the afternoon and radio station 92 FM-WKUL will be broadcasting live as well.

Festhalle Farmers' Market
The Festhalle Farmers' Market is once again open for business on Saturdays through the spring and summer, from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. Come visit your local farmers as they offer their homegrown produce for your dinner table.

Great Strides at St. Bernard
Great Strides is the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation's largest national fundraising event. More than 250,000 walkers come together each year as one community for one cause to help find a cure for CF. Thank you for your interest in Great Strides. We're looking forward to a great event in 2013. Each year, Great Strides continues to gain momentum, as do our research efforts and progress toward a cure. This is the inaugural Cullman walk, so please join us at Saint Bernard Prep School Football Field beginning at 8:30 a.m.

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!

Next Monday

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

Weekly Jam Session at Senior Center
There is a new 'fun' event added to the ongoing programs at the Donald E. Green Senior Center. From 1 p.m. until 5 p.m., there will be 'Jam Sessions' offered under the guidance of Don and Barbara Whitehead. Everyone is invited to bring your instruments and join in the playing or just sit and relax and enjoy the music. These musical gatherings are FREE so come on down and bring your friends.

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

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

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

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

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

Looking Ahead

May 9-11th 2013
Cullman StrawberryFest 2013
Join us at 211 2nd Ave NE, Cullman for live music, Arts and Crafts Show, Car Show, Antique Tractor Display, Great Food, and Local Produce, located at the Festhalle Market Platz, Depot Park, and the Cullman County Museum. Music Guest: Three on a String, MP4theband, The Hit Men Roy Crawford and the Cullman County Bluegrass, Mean Mary, Street Level, Round 2, and more to be announced. Free Admission. Call 256-739-1258 for more information.

Vote Now!

Are you looking forward to the Rock the South Music Festival?

Last Week's Poll:

Are you going on a Summer Vacation this year?

Yes - 50%
No - 50%

Cast your ballot at cullmansense.com/poll

Reflections of History



Street scene looking west from 1st Ave. - Lyric Theatre Contributed by Cullman County Museum

Do you have an old photo or recognize this one? E-mail us at history@cullmansense.com

STAR TREK (2009) The Future Begins

By: Spike Harville

The franchise of spaceships and monsters was conceived in 1964 as a western in outer space. Inspired by the popular TV western series "Wagon Train" and that's exactly how show creator Gene Roddenberry pitched his idea to TV execs; a "Wagon Train to the Stars". The first episode of Star Trek aired two years later in September 1966. Today millions of people still love Capt. Kirk, Spock, and Beam me up, Scotty.

"STAR TREK - The Future Begins" (2009) directed by J.J. Abrams, was the 11th film based on the TV series which makes "Star Trek (2013) Into the Darkness" the twelfth. The 2009 movie is the first of what has been called the pre-trilogy. This is the who-what-where-when-why-how story of the starship USS Enterprise and her crew.

Each character, in my estimation, is perfectly cast. Without exception each is true to the lore and characters we know and love, while pulling off the almost impossible feat of bringing new traits, twists, and new life to the roles as well.

James Kirk is a kid out of control and with a chip on his shoulder. He joins Starfleet Academy on a dare from Captain Pike who has wonderful things to say about Kirk's dead father, comparing father to son. Kirk excels at the academy while rubbing everyone the wrong way and finds himself very close to being thrown out when Spock accuses him of cheating on a test.

That disciplinary action is halted as the entire cadet class is called into sudden action.

A Romulan Captain, Nero, is jumping his ship through wormholes of time and space chasing an alternate timeline, actually the prime timeline, older Spock, played by Leonard Nimoy, who failed in an attempt to save the planet Romulus. In retribution, Captain Nero wants to destroy the planet Vulcan using Red Matter taken from Spock's own spaceship.

Red matter it seems can implode and cause a black hole and I don't have to tell you how much damage one of those can do.

The Enterprise, which is, as you know, the Flagship of the Federation, is suddenly crewed almost entirely by cadets when Captain Pike is kidnapped by Nero. With no time to head back to regroup with the rest of the Starfleet armada, the Enterprise must pursue the superior ship on her own. The younger alternative reality Spock, who is Captain of the Enterprise, marooons the young James T. Kirk on an ice planet where he is saved from being dinner to a very ugly creature by the older Spock. Both Spocks have very important roles to play and their personal story is pivotal to the plot.

Principal photography took almost five months from the beginning of November, 2007 to the end of March, 2008. The film was shot in various locations around California and Utah.

The director, J.J. Abrams is not a huge fan of green screen and really wanted to use practical sets and real locations as much as possible which is why everything looks so real...it is.

To keep throngs of trekkies and trekkers from pulling a tribble, it was shot under the fake working title Corporate Headquarters. Industrial Light & Magic used digital ships for the film, as opposed to the previous films which used models.

Following the success of the film, its cast members signed on for two sequels, making Star Trek (2009) the first of a planned trilogy with Abrams returning as director.

So how does it rate? I asked ten actor and filmmaker friends to rate the movie on the five star scale. I asked the same of my normal friends and family members.

Actors & filmmakers gave it 5 stars. Normal People and Family gave it 4 stars. I really loved the characters and have no regrets regarding any of the cast and they do the legend justice. I also appreciated the continuity. The movie is the first of the first, the prequel of even the TV show. If you are a follower of the Star Trek myth, you will notice many of the small details that are there for the discerning eye.

What comes to my mind is when Kirk, Sulu, and a third crew member are sent to the planet surface to disable a laser drill. The third member, wearing the red jump suit is killed. Those of you who followed the original series know that more often than not the guy in the red shirt, with no name, was always killed on the planet surface. Galaxy Quest (1999) did a fabulous send up of that fact, if you remember.

The alternate universe/alternate timeline, old Spock, new Spock, and even child Spock revenge story was new and fresh. It's a fabulous film, I give it 4 1/2 stars.

I'm an actor, writer, and filmmaker reviewing movies that maybe you missed on their first time around. My name is Dan Harville but my friends call me Spike. Please visit my blog www.MyFriendsCallMeSpike.com and follow me on twitter @SpikeHarville.

Visit us online at CullmanSense.com

This Week in History Apr. 29 - May 5

April 29th

- 1429 – Joan of Arc leads Orleans, France, to victory over English
- 1905 – 2" rain falls in 10 minutes in Taylor, Texas
- 1961 – ABC's "Wide World of Sports", debuts
- 1991 – Cyclone strikes Bangladesh, 139,000 die/10 million homeless

April 30th

- 1563 – Jews are expelled from France by order of Charles VI
- 1889 – First U.S. national holiday, on centennial of Washington's inauguration
- 1961 – Premier Fidel Castro of Cuba receives Lenin-Peace Prize
- 1997 – Big Ben stops at 12:11 PM for 54 minutes

May 1st

- 1873 – First U.S. postal card issued
- 1940 – The 1940 Olympics are cancelled
- 1963 – First American, James Whittaker, conquers Mount Everest
- 1989 – U.S. Supreme Court rules employees have legal burden to prove non-discriminatory reasons for not hiring or promoting

May 2nd

- 1865 – President Johnson offers $100,000 reward for capture of Jefferson Davis
- 1933 – In Germany, Adolf Hitler bans trade unions
- 1968 – Israeli television begins transmitting
- 2011 – The news of Osama bin Laden's death is received positively by international leaders, including Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari

May 3rd

- 1802 – Washington D.C. incorporates as a city
- 1923 – First nonstop transcontinental flight from New York to San Diego completed
- 1971 – Nixon administration arrests 13,000 anti-war protesters in 3 days
- 2011 – In Yafran, Libya, thousands risk potential death and starvation after Muammar Gaddafi's forces shut off water and block food supplies

May 4th

- 1780 – American Academy of Arts and Science founded
- 1927 – Nicaragua agrees to a U.S. supervised presidential election in 1928
- 1970 – National Guard kills 4 at Kent State in Ohio
- 2011 – U.S. President Barack Obama chooses not release photos of Osama bin Laden following his death; photos taken at the Abbottabad compound are released by Reuters

May 5th

- 1809 – Mary Kies is first woman issued a U.S. patent; weaving straw
- 1936 – Edward Ravenscroft patents screw-on bottle cap with a pour lip
- 1986 – Hall of Fame and Museum announced to be built in Cleveland
- 2012 – The last nuclear reactor in Japan is shut down, leaving the country without nuclear power since 1970

Ole Miss Philosophy Scholar Dr. William F. Lawhead discusses living practical in the real world during Wallace State humanities forum

By: Russell Moore

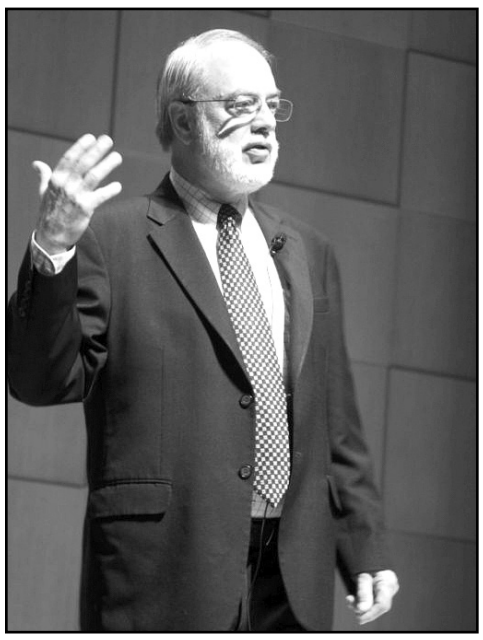
WSCC Contributor

HANCEVILLE – Wallace State Community College welcomed University of Mississippi Philosophy Scholar Dr. William F. Lawhead to campus for a humanities forum during the college's seventh annual Arts in April festivities.

Lawhead is the Philosophy and Religion Department Chair at Ole Miss and the author of an introductory textbook, "The Philosophical Journey: An Interactive Approach," that Wallace State utilizes in its PHL 106 Introduction to Philosophy course.

"To me, Dr. Lawhead is the Michael Jordan of philosophy. His visit was almost like a hero coming to hang out with you for a day. I believe he's written the best intro to philosophy book of all time, and our students really respond to it and responded to him well," said Wallace State Religion and Philosophy Instructor Dr. Lee Walton.

During his presentation at the Burrow Center for the Fine and Performing Arts, Lawhead discussed how individuals apply a practical use to philosophy – philosophy in the real world. Among many details, he explained that being practical means finding an efficient way to achieve a goal and then determining what goals are worthy of being pursued.



Ole Miss Philosophy Scholar Dr. William F. Lawhead discusses his thoughts on living practical in the real world and answers questions during a humanities forum at Wallace State, as part of Arts in April festivities.

He also said that learning how to handle ideas is practical and that words, concepts, thoughts, principles, and character all ultimately lead to our actions.

Lawhead cited many historical philosophers and people during his speech, singling out Plato, Socrates, Epictetus, Thomas Jefferson, Karl Marx, and C.S. Lewis.

He also explained that many philosophy majors eventually enroll in medical or law school or embark on careers dependent on analytical reasoning or solid communication skills.

As department chair at Ole Miss, Lawhead teaches undergraduate courses in logic, history of philosophy and philosophy of religion, and a graduate seminar on the Continental rationalists.

Lawhead received a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Wheaton College in Illinois and his doctorate from the University of Texas-Austin. In addition to writing the introductory philosophy book used by Wallace State students, Lawhead has penned "The Voyage of Discovery: A Historical Introduction to Philosophy," "The Ancient Voyage," "The Medieval Voyage" "The Modern Voyage", and "The Contemporary Voyage."

After his speech, Lawhead visited one of Wallace State's philosophy classes, answering additional questions.

"It meant a lot that Dr. Lawhead stepped into one our classes afterwards. He stayed for more than an hour answering questions. These weren't easy questions. Our students asked questions that people have been struggling about for years," Walton said.

"Our students are top-shelf philosophy students, and Dr. Lawhead commented about that as well."

Wallace State has a newly-formed philosophy club that meets on Thursdays at noon at the Burrow Center.

For more information about the club, contact Walton at 256-352-8398.

Subscribe to CullmanSense @ CullmanSense.com/store

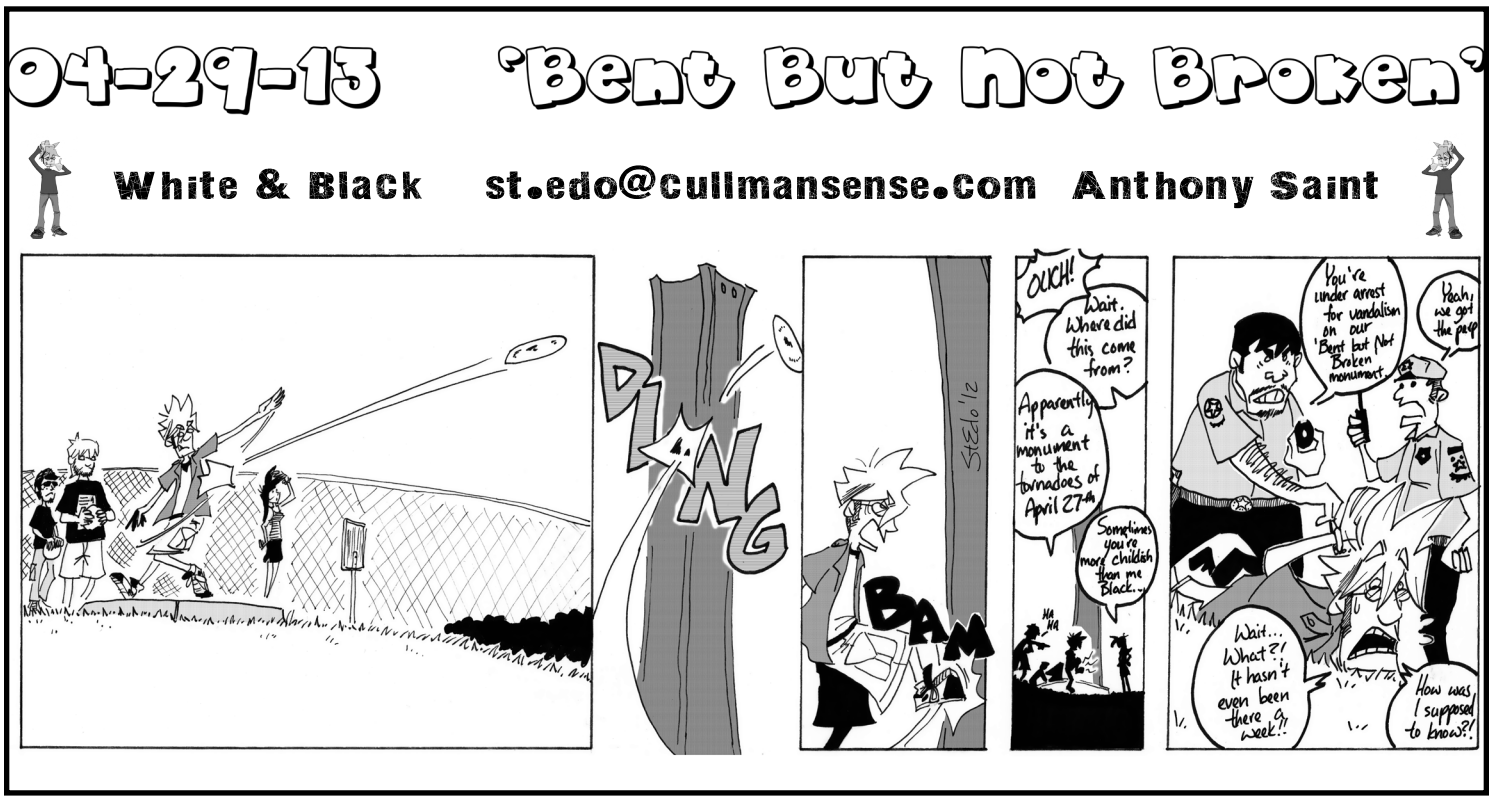
cpr & cullman city parks & recreation

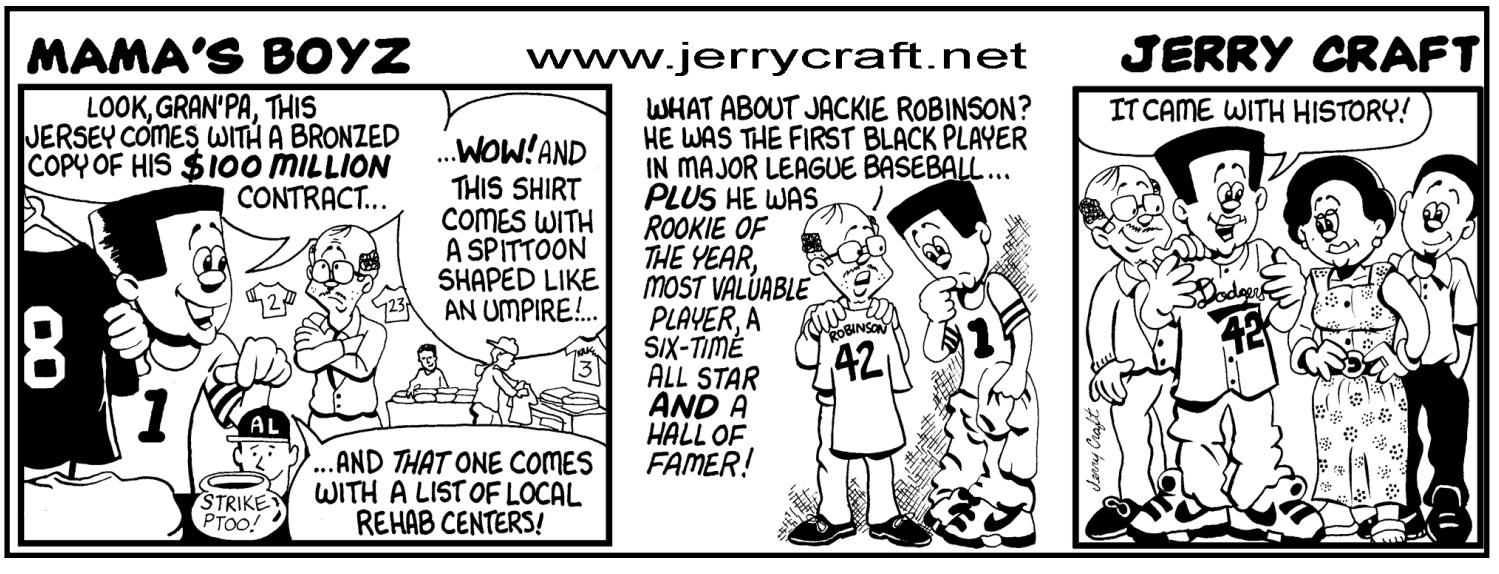
WHAT'S ON DECK AT PARKS AND REC....

www.cullmanrecreation.org

256-734-9157

- **Yoga Classes**: Stay fit and relax with yoga held at the Civic Center every Tuesday night at 6:00pm with Fabian Holland. Six classes for $40 or $30 for seniors. Call 256-734-9157 for details..
- **Dog Obedience Class:** Classes held on Tuesdays, beginning March 26. $65 for 6 week session; puppy class held at 6pm and adult at 7pm. Call 256-734-9157.
- **Nia Dance Fitness Classes:** Includes yoga stretching, anti-aging tips, and more with instructor Ann Caretti. Class is held Tuesdays at 10:00am at the Cullman Civic Center. Call 256-531-4429 for more details.
- **Oil Painting and Acrylic Classes:** Classes are held Mondays from 6:30-9:30pm at the Cullman Art Guild with instructor Delancey Gardner. Class is $20 per month, call 256-734-9157 for details.
- **Camp Cullman Summer Camp Registration:** Registration will open on April 1 for Camp Cullman. Ages 12 & under can register at the Cullman Wellness & Aquatic Center.
- **Lifeguard Certification Classes:** Held at the Cullman Wellness & Aquatic Center April 22-May 9. Cost of the class is $200 which includes CPR and all certification. Must be 15 to take the class. Call 256-775-SWIM (7946) for details.
- **Ballroom, Latin, and Swing Dance Lessons:** Classes will be held April 4-25 on Tuesday nights at the Cullman Civic Center with Instructor Mack Wilson. Call the Civic Center for details.
- **Autism Walk:** The Therapeutic Recreation program and the Autism Society hold this event Saturday, April 27 at the Wallace State track at 8:30am. Games and other activities will also be held. Call Hollie at 256-734-9157 for details.
- **Cullman Golf Course Spring Invitational:** The Cullman Golf Course will hold its spring invitational tournament on Saturday, April 27 and Sunday, April 28. Call 256-739-6762 for details.
- **Senior Spirit Travel:** Last day to register for Loretta Lynn Ranch trip on June 6 and New York City Trip on July11-17 will be May 3. Call for full details on both trips at 256-734-4803.





29th Bloomin' Festival Held at St. Bernard

By: Joyce Nix
St. Bernard Contributor

CULLMAN – The 29th Annual Bloomin' Festival may have had a chilly start, but the art-filled weekend at St. Bernard Prep School in Cullman, Alabama created the perfect setting for a warm welcome to the thousands in attendance.

Festival Director, Joyce Nix said, "I was very pleased with this year's event. We worked extremely hard to make sure we had artists of exceptional quality who came to exhibit at the festival. In addition, the visitors who attended this year's show had the opportunity to speak with the artists and learn about their craft. Our volunteers did a great job in welcoming our guests to the campus as well as to the City of Cullman."

Dr. Nancy Thornton had this to say about the Festival Director and in particular about the quality of work displayed. "My mother is a well-known Western artist and does many juried shows in addition to her own gallery. She commented that your careful selection of talent made the show a serious regional event. Quality not quantity. Your leadership is to be commended and special thanks given to all of the volunteers."

Saturday morning St. Bernard held a 5K/10K run. St. Bernard students, Will Faulk, was the overall 10K winner, and Seamus Russell was overall 5K winner. Jaden Edge was the female winner in 5k, while Ayleana Mami finished 2nd in the 10K female division.

The master's winners in the 5K were Eric Fillinger and Shannon Barnett both of Cullman. The 10K overall female winner was Jenna Woodruff of Cullman. The master's winners in the 10K were Kelly Lambert (female) of Cullman and Stan Johnson (male) of Moulton. A complete listing of times can be found at www.bloominfestival.com.

Winners of the prize giveaway were as follows: Mike Latham of Birmingham – took the first prize of a 2013 Jeep Patriot; Mary Beckman of Killen, AL won a Kindle Fire HD; Carmelita Watts of Tuscaloosa won a Canon Camera; Lydia Caballo of Tampa, FL received a Garmin GPS; and Linda Mitchell of Centre, won the IPod Shuffle.

Fr. Marcus Voss, OSB Development Director for St. Bernard said the school utilizes the proceeds from the festival to do the work of education. "We appreciate everyone who made a donation to our program to make the weekend such a success."



Fr. Marcus Voss, OSB, Director of Development at St. Bernard presents the keys to the 2013 Jeep Patriot to Mike Latham of Birmingham, AL.

Festival dates for next year have been set for April 5-6, 2014. Keep up to the minute by "liking" Bloomin' Festival on Facebook.

Hopper's Pharmacy Opens

By: Deonne Ludwig
Chamber of Commerce Contributor

FAIRVIEW – The Chamber of Commerce recently held a ribbon cutting for Hopper's Family Market – Pharmacy, a family owned, full service pharmacy with a convenient drive through service. You may stop in or call ahead of time with any of your prescription needs and the folks at Hopper's will handle the rest.

The hours are Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m., Saturday from 8:30 a.m. until 1 p.m., and closed on Sunday. Most insurance accepted including Tricare, Peehip, Caremark, Express Scripts, Medicare, and Medicaid. For more information call 256-796-6500.



(Left to Right): Buchanan Jackson, CCED; Senator Paul Bussman; Valerie Hopper Long; Jared Long; Imogene Hopper; Jack Hopper, Rachel Burks; Tiffani Hopper Twilley; Kerry Twilley; Terry Woodham; Mayor Dale Seals, Town of Fairview; Durwood Cushing; Jimmie Hopper, Hopper's Family Market; Connor Twilley; Mike Hopper, Hopper's Family Market; Sheriff Mike Rainey; Eric Laney, Fairview Town Council; Debbie Shedd; Randall Shedd, House of Representatives; Kenneth Walker, Cullman County Commission; Cherrie Haney, CCED.

Helping People. Changing Lives.
community Action
PARTNERSHIP OF NORTH ALABAMA
AMERICA'S POVERTY FIGHTING NETWORK

Need Help Paying Your Utility Bill?

Where: McGukin Civic Center
510 5th Street SW
Cullman, AL 35055

When: Monday, April 29th &
Tuesday, April 30th

Time: 8:30 am – 12:00 pm &
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

NO APPOINTMENT NECESSARY

You must bring in the following documentation in order to receive assistance:

- Current Utility Bill
- Alabama Picture ID
- Social Security Cards for all Household members
- Proof of income for the **PREVIOUS** month for everyone in the Household **BANK STATEMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED**
- Anyone in the Household that is 18 or older that does **NOT** have any income or is **NOT** a **FULL-TIME** student must be present and bring a witness in with them, (witness **cannot** be a member of their immediate family **NOR** a member of the Household and **cannot** be someone receiving assistance on the same day).
- If you live in **public housing**, you must bring copy of **current lease that includes utility allowance.**

If you have received assistance since December 1, 2012 you will NOT be eligible until June.

For additional information please call 256-734-5170

5 Tips to Avoid Contractor Fraud

(StatePoint) Each year, thousands of trusting homeowners hire contractors for home repairs or renovation projects. But for many, dreams of a remodeled kitchen, new roof or updated patio are dashed by contractor fraud. Amy Matthews, home improvement expert and TV host, is sharing five simple steps homeowners can follow to safeguard themselves:

- Look for an established company with a permanent business location and a listed phone number: Fraudulent contractors are often "travelers" — businesses from out of the area, or contractors with no permanent business location.
- Ask for a written, signed contract: Legitimate contractors will have no qualms about signing a contract and providing their business information. This simple step will typically weed out most fraudulent businesses afraid of having their scams discovered.
- Never pay with cash up front: Without cash in hand, unscrupulous contractors have few ways to pull off a scam. Never pay in full with cash before a job is started, and never pay a deposit with cash.
- Ask for referrals or check reviews online: Referrals are a simple way to learn about a contractor's track record from a friend, associate or other trusted source.
- Use licensed contractors: A licensed contractor's reputation is at stake when completing work.

Before hiring contractors, check with the state contractor licensing board to see if a license is required. Make sure their license is valid and there are no legal claims against the contractor.

More information about home improvement, maintenance and repair projects, including project cost guides, emergency support and pre-screened professionals, can be found at www.HomeAdvisor.com

Don't deal with unscrupulous contractors. By taking precautions, you can ensure your home renovation projects are completed professionally and on time.

EvaBank
More Loans & Fewer Excuses
Manufactured Homes * Construction * Commercial
Conventional * USDA * FHA * VA
Apply in person, over the phone or online to get started today.
We are here to help!!
256-255-2000
256-737-1655
www.evabank.com
EQUAL HOUSING LENDER
Member FDIC
NMLS#414640

A Piece at a Time

By: Noah Chandler
noahchandler@cullmansense.com

Autism Walk draws crowd despite threat of rain

HANCEVILLE – On the day marking the two year anniversary of the devastating tornados of 2011, a group of care free, fun loving children and adults converged on the grounds of Wallace State Community College to celebrate life while raising awareness for a life altering condition.

The 9th Annual Autism Walk featured a multitude of events for everyone, including bounce houses, face painting, a tumbling display by Cullman Gymnastics, horse and buggy rides, and even a special appearance by the Cullman Police Department Helicopter.

Melissa Dew is the autism specialist with Encore Rehab for Cullman County. Dew, who has been working as a specialist for 10 years, said the walk was great for everyone involved, from the organizers down to the participants.

"The walk is a great time for parents to get together and talk about their children," said Dew. "Plus, it's a great way for the community to come together to lend support to those families who are dealing with autism."

Dew said she found her love for working with children with autism after she was given the opportunity a decade back. She said it's a decision she's never regretted.

"I got into the school system and found my niche with children with autism," she said. "When they (autistic children) get something, they really get it. It's almost like you're a detective and you have to help find a way where they are able to communicate."

Rhonda Davis, mother of Jordan who is now 16, has been coordinating the Autism Walk since its inception. She said the purpose is to raise awareness but it also serves as a way to invite the community in to see there isn't much of a difference between families with and without autistic children.

"We help Blount, Cullman, and Winston County raise awareness about autism, along with helping to support families," said Davis. "It's a great way for the community to see families with autistic children are just the same as anyone else."

One strong supporter is 10-year-old Blountsville resident Kathleen Whatley. Whatley has been helping raise awareness since she was five, a feat which makes her mom Debbie very proud.

"I always love to help charity and I think autism is a terrible disease so I chose to walk to raise awareness and also give everyone my support," said Whatley. "To see so many people out walking, it shows me that a lot of other people care, which is something that makes me feel very good; it touches me. I just want others to get involved so we can raise more awareness and hopefully help everyone we can."

For more on the Autism Walk, visit www.cullmansense.com.





