SERIES 3, ISSUE 18 MONDAY, MAY 6, 2013
CULLMAN'S MONDAY NEWSPAPER
CULLMANSENSE
COMMUNITY MATTERS
$0.50 $0.50

In this Issue:

Local



Rain cannot dampen a commUNITY Fiesta

Despite heavy rains just hours before the Second Annual commUNITY Fiesta was scheduled to begin, event coordinators with the Cullman Rotary Club, church volunteers, and staff at Sportsman Lake Park worked vigorously to ensure the celebration would go on as planned. p6

Cullman and BFHOF Officials Visit Auburn Fisheries

On April 25, 2013, Cullman city officials and Bass Fishing Hall of Fame board members traveled to the Auburn University Department of Fisheries and Allied Aquacultures to learn more about the department and to discuss the goals for the planned Bass Fishing Hall of Fame (BFHOF) in Cullman. p2

State

Governor Bentley Welcomes New Expansion at Mercedes-Benz

Approximately 600 employees will work from new logistics hub. p3

Sports



Better than Good(win), perfect p4



City Hall Pilgrimage

Area children take trip to visit City Hall, Fire Department p12

Lt. Gov. Ivey Launches "Ending Child Hunger in Alabama" Campaign

By: John Ziegler

MONTGOMERY – Lieutenant Governor Kay Ivey launched the "Ending Child Hunger in Alabama" campaign at Wares Ferry Road Elementary School in Montgomery on Monday.

"Ending Child Hunger in Alabama" is the first initiative of the newly established Hunger Solutions Institute at Auburn University.

Lieutenant Governor Ivey serves as the campaign spokesperson.

"It is an uncomfortable truth that children in our state, our counties, and even our own neighborhoods are hungry; and they may not know where their next meal may come from. As Lieutenant Governor, I cannot sit back and know children in our state are going hungry. It is time to take action. I am pleased to join this collaborative effort to address the pressing issue of child hunger and food insecurity," said Lieutenant Governor Ivey.

The goal of the campaign is to move Alabama into the top 25 percent of states with the highest degree of child food security by 2020.

Currently, nearly one-third of Alabama children live in families that experience food hardships.

The campaign will focus on implementing and/or strengthening strategies that increase Alabama families' economic stability; cultivate a strong regional food system; improve the food assistance safety net for children; support community action to increase children's health and prevent obesity; and build public will to end childhood hunger.

"Ending Child Hunger in Alabama" is a collaborative effort by the Auburn University Hunger Solutions Institute, Office of the Lieutenant Governor, Alabama Possible-Alabama Poverty Project, United Way of Central Alabama, Children's of Alabama, Bay Area Food Bank, and E.A.T. South.

Local student set to travel to Sister City, Frankweiler, Germany p7



Cullman Area well represented in softball regionals

By: Josh McBrayer
joshmcbrayer@cullmansense.com

With regular season play over and area tournaments in the rear-view mirror, three Cullman area softball teams still stand. The Cullman Lady Bearcats, Good Hope Lady Warriors, and Vinemont lady Eagles are all set to represent Cullman City and Cullman County in the regionals.

Cullman Lady Bearcats – Class 5A Area 15 Runner-up - North Regional Qualifier

The black and gold Lady Bearcats have had highs and lows this year but they closed out the season in a flurry. The Lady Bearcats had a great showing in the Area 15 tournament, earning a spot on the North Regional by upsetting the favored East Limestone Indians before falling to the #2 Hartselle Lady Tigers in the championship game. Cullman will start Regional play in Huntsville this week.

Good Hope Lady Raiders – Class 3A Area 11 Champions - North Central Qualifier

The Good Hope Lady Raiders have been just about as

See Regionals - p5

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

PRINTED LOCALLY @ PRINTING Alabama Web Press

Cullman and BFHOF Officials Visit Auburn Fisheries

By: Leanne West

CULLMAN – On April 25, 2013, Cullman city officials and Bass Fishing Hall of Fame board members traveled to the Auburn University Department of Fisheries and Allied Aquacultures to learn more about the department and to discuss the goals for the planned Bass Fishing Hall of Fame (BFHOF) in Cullman.

"We thoroughly enjoyed meeting with the Auburn Fisheries Department officials and staff," commented Cullman Mayor Max A. Townson who represented the City of Cullman along with Parks & Recreation Director John Hunt and Economic Development Agency Assistant Director Dale Greer.

"They were very cordial and absolutely loved the idea of the Cullman Bass Fishing Hall of Fame being a teaching instrument, as well."

BFHOF Board President Sammy Lee and Board Member Donald Howell attended the meeting, as well.

The group met with several Auburn officials to discuss the possibility of partnering with the Auburn Fisheries Department to include an educational research center inside the Cullman BFHOF.

"We had the great privilege of meeting with Dr. David Rouse, Head of the Fisheries Department, Auburn University, and his staff to discuss the possibility of hosting Auburn with a 'research center' inside the BFHOF," said BHFOF Board President Lee.

"During the meeting everyone in attendance agreed that an association with Auburn's Fisheries department will be extremely beneficial to all parties involved."

The delegation traveling to Auburn also included Mr. Jeffery Brewer of Goodwin Mills & Cawood.

Auburn officials who hosted the meeting included Dr. Russell Wright, Brian Keeter, Rusty Wright, David Cline, and Matt Catalano.

During the visit, Auburn officials treated the visiting delegation to a tour of the facility.

"We enjoyed the tour of the Auburn Fisheries Department's outstanding and unique facility," stated Mayor Townson.

"This was also my first visit to the campus of Auburn University, and I was very impressed with the attractive campus and beautiful buildings."

After the meeting, Cullman officials were hopeful that an association with Auburn's Fisheries Department would be possible for the proposed Cullman BFHOF facility.

"Our dialogue seems to be completely in line with what the Auburn Fisheries Department is trying to accomplish," said Cullman Mayor Townson.

BFHOF Board President Lee concurred stating, "The next step is to meet with Dr. Gouge to see what's needed to move this partnership forward."

In February of 2013, the Bass Fishing Hall of Fame officially announced that Cullman had been selected as the new host site for a hall of fame complex.

The announcement was given at the annual Bass Fishing Hall of Fame Induction Dinner held during the Bassmaster Classic in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Cullman officials were present at the meeting when the announcement was made.

Upon hearing that Cullman was selected, Cullman Mayor Townson declared, "This is like landing a 20-pound bass with a 10-pound line on a spinner bait."

Cullman and Guntersville were the top two contenders.

The proposed one-of-a-kind facility will include a large state-of-the-art civic center, hall of fame, aquarium, gift shop, exhibit space, and more.

The facility will be constructed as a joint project between the City of Cullman and Cullman County on the former Burrow Property on County Road 222.

Latin is alive at St. Bernard Prep

By: Joyce Nix

St. Bernard Contributor

The so called "dead" Latin language may be a bit challenging for high school students, but several students at St. Bernard are bringing it back to life by not only learning the language, but having a clearer understanding of the English grammar, as well as a foundation that will open up their options as they enter college.

Recently, Latin instructor, Br. Leo Borelli was notified by the American Classical League that three of his students had won gold medals for their performance on the National Latin Exam which was taken the first week in March. Two freshmen – David Schartung and Samuel George; along with sophomore, Kimie Garcia.

Other students who won certificates for scoring above the national average on the test were: Freshmen: Mary Grace Vinson, Lesley O'Donnell, Anna Gongre, Aaron Crawford, Greer Cauthen, and Christopher Woods. Sophomores were Ayleana Mami, Nicholas Schweers, Tomas Russell, Bree McPherson, and Megan Butler; Junior, Gabriel Pautler; and Seniors, Nathan Denson, and Sean Moriarty.

The National Latin Exam is offered under the joint sponsorship of the American Classical League and the National Junior Classical League.

More than 149,000 Latin students from all fifty states participated this past year, as did students from thirteen foreign countries, including Australia, Mexico, Belgium, Canada, China Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Poland, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and Zimbabwe.

This year for the first time, students from Bulgaria and Mozambique also took the NLE.



Gold medal winners are from left: Samuel George, Hanceville; Kimie Garcia, Cullman; and David Schartung of Decatur.



Subscribe to CullmanSense @ CullmanSense.com/store

What's Online

Get Healthy 5K Run and Bike Ride Event at WSCC Raises Funds for United Way of Cullman

Approximately 50 runners, walkers and bicyclers took part in the Wallace State Healthy Campus Initiative's 5K Run and Fun Bike Ride on April 21.

qrne.ws/38



The 2013 Senior Bowl roster cleans up on the first round

The iconic Radio City Music Hall in downtown New York was filled to the rafters Thursday night with eager fans waiting to here who their favorite team would select with their first round pick.

qrne.ws/39

Bent but Not Broken

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.

qrne.ws/40

Governor Bentley Welcomes New Expansion at Mercedes-Benz

By: Jennifer Ardis

Approximately 600 employees will work from new logistics hub

TUSCALOOSA COUNTY – Governor Robert Bentley on Wednesday joined executives from Mercedes-Benz U.S. International to break ground on a $70 million expansion at the MBUSI campus in Tuscaloosa County.

The construction of the MBUSI Logistics Hub will lead to more new jobs from MBUSI as well as its contractors and service providers. In all, approximately 600 employees will work from the new facility.

"This latest expansion means several things," Governor Bentley said. "First, it means more good jobs for the people of Alabama. Also, it means the automotive industry continues to grow in this state. It shows the confidence that companies have in our workforce and in the positive business climate we've created in Alabama. This year marks 20 years since Mercedes-Benz first announced it was coming to Tuscaloosa County. Our partnership with Mercedes-Benz is stronger today than ever before."

Currently, MBUSI employs roughly 3,000 people at its Tuscaloosa plant. The facility produces M-Class, GL-Class and R-Class SUVs and will soon produce the next-generation C-Class sedan.

A fifth model will join the production line in 2015.

The new, on-site MBUSI Logistics Hub will help streamline logistics operations and will support the receiving, handling and sequencing of parts for the vehicles produced at MBUSI. The logistics facility is expected to be complete later this year.

"With the addition of two new products and ongoing high demand for our current vehicles, our logistics operations are becoming increasingly more complex," said Markus Schaefer, President and CEO of MBUSI.

"Within this building, both MBUSI and its service providers will do much of the preparation and logistical work necessary to keep our production operations moving smoothly."

Alabama Commerce Secretary Greg Canfield joined Governor Bentley and Markus Schaefer for Wednesday's groundbreaking.

"Mercedes continues to demonstrate a dedication to quality and innovation in the assembly of its automobiles," Secretary Canfield said.

"This logistics hub is a clear signal of the Mercedes-Benz commitment to establish stronger links between its assembly teams and the production process itself. The continued growth of Mercedes-Benz is a positive message of confidence in the team of employees in Vance and the best proof of success when products are 'Made in Alabama.'"



Governor Bentley participates in Wednesday's groundbreaking at the new MBUSI Logistics Hub. Also pictured, from left to right, are Alabama Commerce Secretary Greg Canfield, MBUSI President & CEO Markus Schaefer, and Chairman & CEO Billy Harbert of BL Harbert International Construction.

Al's Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Program Leads Nation in Quality Once Again

By: Jennifer Ardis

Governor Bentley Working to Expand Access to Voluntary Program

MONTGOMERY – A new study released Monday shows Alabama's First Class Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Program continues to lead the nation in quality.

Alabama is one of only four states in the country to meet all 10 quality benchmarks established by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER).

The quality benchmarks include teacher training, staff-child ratios, support services and more. Alabama's voluntary pre-k program has now met all of NIEER's quality benchmarks for seven years in a row.

"Alabama's voluntary pre-k program is unique to our state, and I'm proud that, once again, our program is second-to-none for quality," Governor Robert Bentley said. "Our voluntary program was developed by early childhood education experts from Alabama for the children of Alabama. They developed Alabama-based guidelines and quality assurances. And for years, the quality of our program has been recognized across the country."

"This illustrates why we need to make sure this voluntary program is available to more children and their families," Governor Bentley added. "Voluntary pre-k gives our children a strong foundation. It prepares them well for K-12 school, and it increases their chances for success. Expanding access to voluntary pre-kindergarten is a wise investment that will benefit children across the state."

Currently, only six percent of Alabama's four-year-olds are enrolled in the First Class voluntary pre-k program. In order to make the successful program available to more children, Governor Bentley recommended an additional $12.5 million in pre-k funding in his Education Trust Fund proposal for fiscal year 2014. The Education Trust Fund is currently pending in the Alabama Legislature.

Alabama's voluntary pre-k program is managed by the Alabama Office of School Readiness. The office is part of the Alabama Department of Children's Affairs, which is overseen by Governor Bentley.

Jeana Ross, the Governor's Commissioner of the Department of Children's Affairs, said the success of Alabama's voluntary program reflects the efforts of dedicated professionals throughout the state.

"Our pre-k classrooms are led by educators who are committed to providing the highest-quality experiences for young children," Ross said. "Our national recognition reflects the high quality of Alabama's voluntary pre-k program. This also reflects the support we've received from the Governor's Office, the Alabama Legislature, the business community and others who want to ensure our children are well-prepared for success in school and throughout their lives."

Full details on the study released Monday by the National Institute for Early Education Research can be found online at www.nieer.org.

Governor Bentley Announces Funding for New Coastal Restoration Projects

By: Jennifer Ardis

MONTGOMERY – Governor Robert Bentley on Wednesday announced that Alabama will receive nearly $100 million in funding for three proposed coastal restoration projects as part of the ongoing early restoration process following the BP Deepwater Horizon explosion and oil spill.

"The Alabama Gulf Coast is one of our greatest natural treasures, and we are committed to restoring and strengthening our coast," Governor Bentley said.

"These projects are designed to strengthen our natural habitat while also encouraging more visitors to explore our beautiful beaches. We have worked hard to identify projects that will benefit the people who live and work along the coast, the people who visit our coast and the natural habitats that exist along our waterways. I want to thank all of our local, state and federal partners who are working with us in this long-term recovery effort."

Funding for the proposed projects will come from the Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) Early Restoration process. The projects were negotiated with BP and Alabama's federal and state partners. The project proposals have been approved by BP and the NRDA Trustee Council.

The assessment of overall, long-term losses to Alabama's coastal resources continues under the NRDA process. Governor Bentley will continue additional efforts to restore losses suffered by the state. The new proposed projects approved for NRDA funding and detailed by Governor Bentley on Wednesday include:

- **Gulf State Park Enhancements**: This project is designed to restore lost recreational use services and lost dune habitat services through the following five primary methods:
  - Construction of an environmental research and education facility to benefit Alabama students
  - Trail construction and enhancement in the park
  - Contribute to the construction of a lodge and meeting facility to attract more visitors to the Alabama Gulf Coast
  - Dune restoration along the park's extensive undeveloped beachfront
  - Construction of a coastal ecosystems interpretive center

  The estimated cost of the Gulf State Park Enhancements project is approximately $85.5 million.
- **Oyster Reef Restoration in Mobile County**: This project would restore approximately 319 acres of oyster reef in the estuarine waters of the State of Alabama. The project would utilize oyster shell cultch to restore oyster reefs in Mobile County. The restored reefs would be near other reefs that are currently managed by the state and will be within the historic footprint of oyster reefs in the area.

  The estimated cost of the Oyster Reef Restoration project is approximately $3.2 million.
- **Swift Tract Living Shoreline in Baldwin County**: This project would construct an oyster breakwater/living shoreline to stabilize and protect 1.6 miles of shoreline from erosion by dampening wave energy while also providing a habitat for oyster colonization. The purpose is to reduce coastal marsh loss from shoreline erosion and reestablish "substrate" for shellfish colonization. This project focuses on areas within the boundaries of the Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve.

  The estimated cost of the Swift Tract Living Shoreline project is approximately $5 million.

"We recognize that recovery is a long-term process, and these projects represent only a portion of our overall efforts to address the losses suffered by the Gulf Coast and the entire state of Alabama following the oil spill," Governor Bentley said. "This is an ongoing effort, and our efforts will continue to see that all of the injuries we have sustained are properly addressed."

"In addition to its catastrophic impact on local fishermen and tourism, the BP oil spill dealt a severe blow to our pristine beaches and sensitive environmental areas," said U.S. Representative Jo Bonner, R-Alabama. "The recovery will take years, but the approval of these funds will be invaluable in setting right the damage done to our shores. Gulf State Park is vital to our state economy, and the rehabilitation and improvements these funds will provide to the park, as well as to restore Mobile County's oyster habitat and to protect Weeks Bay, are a tremendous first step to rebuilding and securing these treasures for future generations."

As part of the trustee approval process, trustees actively sought public input on project ideas through a variety of methods. In the coming months, the NRDA Trustees will provide more information about the proposed projects and will at that time invite public review and comment in accordance with the Oil Pollution Act and all other applicable legal requirements and regulations.

The funding announced Wednesday was negotiated separately from the state's lawsuit against BP that is currently pending. The funding does not release BP from any claims for monetary damages done to the state.

Good Hope, Vinemont one step closer to 3A State Title

By: Josh McBrayer
joshmcbrayer@cullmansense.com

GOOD HOPE – This past Tuesday was a day full of area softball action and those on hand to watch the action were treated to some impressive games and a little bit of history as well. CullmanSense was there, live and in person to bring you a firsthand account of all of the action from day one.

DAY ONE

GAME ONE

Hanceville Lady Bulldogs 0 vs. Good Hope Lady Raiders 10

Many words have been used to describe Cara Goodwin's career at Good Hope. Tuesday afternoon she added another, historical. Goodwin struck out 11 on her way to her seventh perfect game of the season, putting her at the top of the AHSAA softball record book all alone. She shut down the Lady Bulldogs of Hanceville 10-0 in five innings.

"My step-dad told me before the game." Goodwin said when CullmanSense asked her if she knew she could set the Alabama state record. "But I was not concentrating on that. They rarely happen."

Despite being without their catalyst and lead-off hitter Kayla Tillman due to illness, the Lady Raiders still were able to score four runs in the first to establish the tone of the game and give Goodwin a lead she would not lose.

"It is nice to play at home," said Good Hope coach John Wayne Harris, "but it is even nicer to get that first win. It takes some pressure off the girls."

Filling in for Tillman was Maegan Sterling, who did a good gob in the spot start, reaching base twice in four trips and scoring a run.

Alannah Henke was the breakout offensive star going two for three with a single, double, and four RBIs.

Kacy Thomas added two RBIs of her own with a single. She also scored a run after reaching base on a hit by pitch. Baliee Andrews also notched an RBI on a 5-3 ground out.

GAME TWO

Danville Lady Hawks 0 vs. Vinemont Lady Eagles 5

Great pitching seemed to be the theme for the first two games. Raven Christensen of Vinemont was throwing heat, striking out 11 Lady Hawks in the 5-0 victory.

Vinemont scored the first run of the game in the old fashioned way; Get 'em on, get 'em over, get 'em in. Kendra Pearson led off the game with a double and Keirsten Simmons laid down a perfect bunt to move her over to third with one out. Katie Fuller then did her job, grounding out 4-3 but earning the game's first RBI.

Vinemont pitcher Christensen would help her own cause with an RBI single to score Pearson, who had led off with a double for the second time on the day. Danville avoided the big inning then ended the threat with back to back Ks.

Thanks to the great pitching of Christensen, Vinemont was able to concentrate at the plate and added to their lead in the fifth on an RBI double by Rachel Sellers. Katie Speer also contributed an RBI single in the sixth, scoring Simmons for the fifth and final run of the contest.

GAME THREE

Good Hope Lady Raiders 5 vs. Vinemont Lady Eagles 2

Vinemont got to Cara Goodwin for two runs, breaking up the no hitter, but could not overcome the five Good Hope runs and fell 5-2 to the Lady Raiders.

Not only did the Good Hope hurler strike out 15 Lady Eagles, she was also 3-4 at the plate with a home run and three RBI's.

Although Vinemont was down by five heading to the fifth, they never felt like they were out of the game and kept plugging away.

The tenacity, along with patience, paid off with two runs on just one hit by Vinemont. The lone RBI came off the bat of Caitlyn Kuykendall while the other scored on a wild pitch that went all the way to the backstop. Unfortunately for Vinemont, this was the only runs that would score.

GAME FOUR

Hanceville Lady Bulldogs 0 vs. Danville Lady Hawks 10

It was all Danville in the one and only elimination game of the night, ending the Hanceville season by a 10-0 score. The Lady Hawks scored four in the bottom of the first, the big blow being a two RBI double by Ruth.

Danville added runs in the second on a bases loaded walk, the third on an E8 and the fifth on a fielder's choice following a leadoff triple.

The Lady Eagles closed out the Lady Bulldogs' season with the ninth and tenth runs of the game on a Dobbins RBI double and a RBI single by Burcham. Danville moves on to Wednesday for a rematch with Vinemont and a spot in the regionals on the line.

DAY TWO

GAME FIVE

Danville Lady Hawks 1 vs. Vinemont Lady Eagles 2

In the battle of the birds, the Vinemont Lady Eagles narrowly clipped the wings of the Lady Hawks, 2-1 to advance to the regional tournament next weekend in Tuscaloosa.

Danville jumped out to a one run lead in the first on an RBI single by Auburn Morris, a lead they would hold until the bottom of the third inning.

It was the third when the fabric of the game started to unravel for Danville. Kendra Pearson led off the inning with a solid single that she stroked to center. Pearson moved to second on sacrifice and to third on a passed ball.

Danville committed the first of three costly errors on the day, this one a throwing error on the first baseman, allowing Pearson to score and tie the game.

The crucial match-up stayed knotted at 1-1 until the fifth when Pearson again reached base on a single, this time with one out. She attempted to swipe second base and was safe on a throwing error, she then popped up and headed for third.

The ensuing throw to third sailed over the third baseman's head, allowing Pearson to again pop up and head to the plate where she scored standing up to make the score 2-1.

Pearson's second run would prove to be the game winner as Vinemont earned a spot in the North-Central Regional and advanced to the Area 11 Championship game.

GAME SIX

Good Hope Lady Raiders 4 vs. Vinemont Lady Eagles 1

It was ace vs. ace in the final game of the tournament as Raven Christensen of Vinemont and tournament MVP Cara Goodwin of Good Hope and their team's dueled each other for the right to be called champion.

In the end it was Good Hope, on the strength of a Kayla Tillman final inning two run blast, that would lay claim to the Area 11 title.

Vinemont continued their advantageous scoring, using two fielder's choice plays and a passed ball to score the first run of the game.

Christensen held the Lady Raiders scoreless until the fourth inning. Goodwin and Alannah Henke led off with back to back singles and thanks to some aggressive base running, moved up 60 feet on a pop out to third A wild pitch and RBI single by Savannah Fendley gave Good Hope a 2-1 lead.

Although Good Hope had a one run lead heading to the seventh and final inning, Kayla Tillman decided her team needed a little insurance. With Goodwin on base, Tillman crushed the ball over the centerfield fence for a two run homer, securing the 4-1 victory.

Both the runner up Vinemont Lady Eagles and the champion Good Hope Lady Raiders will make the trip to Tuscaloosa for the North-Central Regional Tournament.

Better than Good(win), perfect

By: Josh McBrayer
joshmcbrayer@cullmansense.com

GOOD HOPE – The Good Hope Lady Raiders softball team is loaded with talent. From the power hitting, left-handed first baseman Alannah Henke to stellar lead-off hitter and third baseman Kayla Tillman, Good Hope has no shortage of star power at the plate but hitting can only get you so far.

That is where Cara Goodwin comes in. The 5'6" right handed hurler has already signed to play for UAB next year and for good reason.

Goodwin has fired an astonishing 24 shutouts, 13 no-hitters, and seven perfect games, the latter of which has earned her the top spot in the record books for most perfect games in a season.



As good as Goodwin is in the circle, she stays humble and is concerned about getting the win for her team rather than her own personal accomplishments.

"It wasn't going through my mind." Goodwin told CullmanSense in response to a question about her perfect game following her record setting performance.

Goodwin shows impressive control and discipline in the pitching circle as well as at the plate. She is just as capable of hitting it out of the park as she is in laying down a sacrifice bunt.

Amassing 434 strike outs and having a miniscule 0.53 ERA is nice but there is only one thing on Goodwin's mind, a 3A State Championship.

Want to work with Cullman's fastest growing newspaper?

We're Hiring Self-Motivated Individuals for all Positions

For more info e-mail: jobs@cullmansense.com

Legal Advertisement

The City of Cullman's Alcohol Review Committee will hold a Public Hearing on Wednesday, May 8th, 2013 at 9:00 am, in the Administrative Conference Room of City Hall, located at 204 Second Avenue NE. Comments will be received on the proposed approval for the sale of alcohol in the City of Cullman by the following applicants:

Rock the South	1705 Lee Avenue SW	Special Event Alcohol License

Cullman heads to regionals in Huntsville

By: Johnny Thornton

HARTSELLE – The Lady Bearcats of Cullman played great in the Class 5A Area 15 Tournament, earning themselves the runner-up trophy and a trip to Huntsville. Johnny "Flash" Thornton was on hand for CullmanSense to cover each and every game. Here are the results of the tournament.

DAY ONE

Just like their previous meeting nine days earlier, Cullman and West Point played a dramatic softball game.

This one was for the winner to move on in the 5A, Area 15 tournament with the loser going home.

Cullman squeezed out a 6-5 verdict with Claire Jenkins striking out Dorana Bagwell as the tieing run, McKenzie Baswell, was at third base in the bottom of the seventh.

Both teams came into the elimination round of the area tournament looking to find a way to stay alive.

Cullman lost to Hartselle in round one by the score of 9-1 with the No. 2 ranked Lady Tigers breaking it open by scoring five times in the bottom of the fifth inning.

The fifth also presented a problem to West Point in its game with East Limestone. Holding on to a one-run lead, the Lady Warriors were not able to stay in front as the Lady Indians pushed four across in their side of the fifth to claim a 5-2 triumph.

In the final game on Thursday at Sparkman Park, it was Cullman that moved on top in the first.

McKenzie Burks drilled a single to score Kaitlyn Brannon and Hannah Morton and a 2-0 lead for coach Stephanie Barlow's Lady Bearcats.

But West Point answered against Jenkins in the bottom of the first. A walk to Daeshia Smith with the bases loaded forced home Baswell who was safe on a fielder's choice. Then it was a blast to right field by Brooke Marchman that cleared the bases.

Her triple drove in Kara Elam, Mallory Walker, and Smith to give Kevin Sullins' team a 4-2 lead.

West Point stayed ahead through the fourth.

Cullman was able to get a run in the fourth when Burns blasted a home run over the left field fence.

Additional runs were possible but the inning ended when Oliva Schwaiger singled and Tiffany Schwaiger was called out at third base when coach Barlow touched her, trying to slow her down from attempting to go home.

However, Cullman overcame that mistake by scoring twice in the fifth. Ellie Dixon laid down a perfect bunt for a leadoff single and two batters later, raced home in front of Jenkins who delivered a two-run homer putting Cullman back in front at 5-4.

An insurance run came across for the Lady Bearcats in the sixth. Hayden Short's fly ball to left to begin the inning was dropped. Burks moved her to third with a single and Tiffany Schwaiger followed with a base hit that scored Short and the Lady 'Cats were ahead by a 6-4 margin.

After giving up four runs on two hits in the first, Jenkins gained control and allowed West Point two hits from the second through the sixth inning.

At one point, the freshman had retired seven in a row.

But in the West Point half of the seventh, Courtney Walker led off by reaching first on a walk then Baswell doubled putting a pair of runners in scoring position. Elam grounded out to Short to get Walker home and narrow the gap to 6-5. A ground out by Mallory Walker sent Baswell to third as Bagwell stepped to the plate with the tieing run 60 feet away. Bagwell struck out on a 2-2 pitch to end the game in two hours, nine minutes. Jenkins finished with six strikeouts in going the distance, allowing just five hits.

DAY TWO

Despite a 10-3 loss to No. 2 Hartselle in the 5A, Area 15 championship Friday, the Cullman Lady Bearcats have no reason of holding their heads down.

They have the right to express pride in how they reached the championship game. The Lady Bearcats pulled off a 4-0 upset of East Limestone in one of their best performances under rookie coach Stephanie Barlow.

One of Cullman's young pitchers, eighth grader Hannah Morton, threw very well in the game that eliminated East Limestone and put Cullman on to next week's AHSAA North Regional in Huntsville.

Morton scattered seven hits contest and had great support from her defense. The Lady Bearcats committed only one error in the game and made plenty of big plays, converting three double plays including one in the seventh when East Limestone attempted to gain some momentum.

Cullman got the advantage in the first with Hayden Short taking a pitch from Preslet Powers and driving it over the center field fence, scoring Claire Jenkins ahead of her for a 2-0 lead.

East Limestone, who was sent into the loser's bracket by an 11-0 margin to Hartselle, never got on track. Every time the Lady Indians looked to grab momentum, they were shut down by the Cullman defense, especially the infield.

In the second after Shalee Pugh and Chyanee Brown singled, Libby Thomas grounded into a 4-3 double play, then Marissa Tucker grounded out to Jenkins at short who threw to Tiffany Schwaiger to end the inning. A 1-6-3 double play was executed by the Lady 'Cats in the third to keep East Limestone scoreless and low on confidence.

Cullman was able to load the bases in the fifth with Taiya Ponder and Jenkins getting infield singles along with a throwing error.

Kaitlyn Brannon grounded into a fielder's choice but East Limestone couldn't get Ponder out at the plate to make it 3-0.

A walk to Morton brought up Short with no outs and the bases full. Short singled to left in which was the last run Cullman would get.

McKenzie Burks hit into a 1-2-3 double play and Tiffany Schwaiger was out on strikes with Cullman taking a 4-0 lead into the sixth.

Morton retired seven in a row from the fourth through the sixth.

In the seventh, Pugh led off the inning with a single then the third double play was turned as Morton caught Brown's line drive then fired a strike to Schwaiger at first for the twin killer.

She got Thomas to end the game with a strikeout, only the second of the game by the eighth grader.

East Limestone came into the game with a .620 winning percentage against area competition, having two regular season wins over Cullman.

But the games were close three weeks ago at Cullman High School diamond with the Lady 'Cats believing if they would have a rematch with the Lady Indians, they could hang in there. That was illustrated early Friday afternoon.

Championship

In the title game, Hartselle took a 2-0 lead in the top of the second then scored three more in the third to make it 5-0.

Right hander Haley Jared was throwing a no hitter for Hartselle until Morton broke it up with a base hit in the fourth.

But Hartselle went up 10-0 in the top of the sixth by producing five runs and seemed to have the game locked up by the run rule.

However, Cullman extended the battle to a full seven innings when Oliva Schwaiger doubled home Burks and a double to right by Elli Dixon brought home the Schwaigers as it was 10-3 with an inning left to play.

With two outs, Cullman started a rally as Morton walked, Short singled and Burks drew a free pass.

But the game that was played in two hours, 18 minutes came to a close when Jared struck out Tiffany Schwaiger.

Former Tiger Tim Hudson Wins 200th Career MLB Game

By: Daniel Froehlich

AUBURN – Former Auburn baseball player Tim Hudson became the 110th Major League Baseball pitcher to win 200 career games as the Atlanta Braves defeated the Washington Nationals, 8-1, on Tuesday night at Turner Field in Atlanta.

Hudson, who was a sixth-round draft pick out of Auburn in 1997 after winning the Rotary Smith Award as the nation's top player, threw seven innings in the win, allowing three hits and striking out six.

The veteran right-hander also helped himself at the plate, going 2-for-3 with a fifth-inning solo home run. He is the third active player to reach the milestone, joining Andy Pettitte (248 wins) and Roy Halladay (201).

Hudson, who played at Auburn in 1996 and 1997 and helped the team to a College World Series appearance in '97, won number 200 in his third try, but his first in front of the home fans.

He is now 200-105 in 15 big league seasons with the Oakland A's (1999-2004) and Braves (2005-present).

Hudson is the first former Southeastern Conference pitcher to collect 200 career MLB wins.

Regionals (Cont.)

perfect as perfect can get this season. With great hitting and unbelievable pitching, Good Hope went through the Area 11 tournament undefeated to earn the right to represent Area 11 in the North Central Regional tournament. Good Hope will start play Friday in Tuscaloosa.

Vinemont Lady Eagles – Class 3A Area 11 Runner-up – North Central Qualifier

Not to be outdone by their 3A counterparts, Vinemont had a great tournament themselves. They were led by terrific defense from Katie Speer and stellar pitching from Raven Christensen, helping defeat the Danville Lady Hawks for the second time in the tournament, but this time it earned them a spot in the North Central Regional tournament, before falling to Good Hope in the championship game.

Vinemont will join the Lady Raiders in Tuscaloosa over the weekend.

Check **cullmansense.com** later in the week for dates and times of Regional games.

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

– Community Matters –

Rain cannot dampen a commUNITY Fiesta

By: Noah Chandler
noahchandler@cullmansense.com



CULLMAN – Despite heavy rains just hours before the Second Annual commUNITY Fiesta was scheduled to begin, event coordinators with the Cullman Rotary Club, church volunteers, and staff at Sportsman Lake Park worked vigorously to ensure the celebration would go on as planned.

Spearheaded by Cullman Rotary Club, the movement first began when Rotarian Joe Holmes saw a need for the Cullman community to unite wholly with the growing Hispanic community.

Holmes said the day was designed to create more fellowship among families from different backgrounds in the local community.

"Last year was a very difficult time for the Spanish community because they were doing a lot of cracking down on the immigration law. There were a lot of nervous people that thought they were unwanted, unloved, and unwelcomed," said Holmes.

"I just don't think that's the true story for Cullman, so I just wanted everyone to get together as community, and know we do love and appreciate one another, and that we are in fact one community."

The event was free to everyone. It included rides, bounce houses, children's activities, and of course, food. The menu consisted of the traditional American grillers menu of hotdogs, while the Hispanic community represented with tamales, seasoned beef, chips and salsa, refried beans, and rice.

"The Rotary Club is just a small part of it. The entire Hispanic community is a big part of this, because of lot of the food was furnished by them," said Holmes. "The intent of the whole thing was to get two communities working together as one and that's how it's working out."

The Cullman Rotary Club was joined in its efforts by several local churches and many individuals who each worked hard to try to unite a quickly diversifying community. Billy Jackson, Cullman Rotary Club President, said this year's event may have had a lower turnout when compared to the inaugural year but it was still a success.

"Part of our club motto is to do some sort of international service, so this is a close as we can come here in Cullman," said Jackson. "The weather turned out bad, so I know we won't have the numbers we had last year but it's a great day any way."

Music was provided by DJ Kozmic Sound. Local radio station 92 FM-WKUL broadcasted the event live for those who weren't able to make it to the commUNITY Fiesta.

Rainy Relay

By: Noah Chandler
noahchandler@cullmansense.com

RFL drowned out by downpour, participants still show up to show support

Cullman County Fairgrounds Friday evening, participants, volunteers, cancer survivors and others joined together to honor the lives lost, celebrate the days gained, and hopefully, raise funds to eradicate all forms of cancer during the annual American Cancer Society's Relay for Life event.

"I began my battle with Hodgkin's Lymphoma on July 25, 2012," said Karlie Baker. "I spent six months enduring chemotherapy, which ended in January of this year. So far, everything is looking good but my doctor won't say I'm cancer free just yet."

Baker, who is only 22, is a Holly Pond High School graduate. She will also be finishing her degree in Social Work at Wallace State Community College later this year.

Baker said it has been a hard battle but it was made more bearable by the outpouring of support from friends and family.

"Honestly, I couldn't have made it through one day if it wasn't for my family. They have always been there for me, but they stepped it up when I was diagnosed," she said.

"My faith in God was key to me staying strong. I knew that if I couldn't do it, my faith, my family, they would pull up and help me win this battle."

Stories such as Baker's are just one of the reasons why Patrice Fitzgerald, Cullman RFL Community Chair, first volunteered 12 years ago. Although her first year with Cullman was a brief one, fraught by rain, Fitzgerald said she is looking forward to relay action in 2014.

"Cullman is really an amazing relay community, so I just want to be able to do my best to keep the record of giving continuing," said Fitzgerald.

"I know tonight's (Friday) event was interrupted by the rain, but I just want to thank everyone who battled the storms to come here to help battle cancer."

For more photos from the 2013 ACS Relay for Life event, log on to CullmanSense.com



Area student set to travel to Sister City

By: Noah Chandler
noahchandler@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – For Cullman High School student Stephen P. McNeal the opportunity to travel abroad is coming with a heavier toll than most summer trips for fellow classmates. Why? McNeal was recently selected to represent the City of Cullman as he travels roughly 13 hours by plane to Cullman's sister city of Frankweiler, Germany.

"I'm set to leave in July and I will be gone for two weeks," said McNeal. "Right now, I'm kind of nervous about the trip but I know it will be a great learning experience."

The Friends of Frankweiler Club, formed in 1987, has been sending Cullman residents across the globe to visit the community's sister city of Frankweiler, Germany. McNeal was recently selected to travel abroad to study for two weeks.

Cullman Mayor Max A. Townson presented McNeal with a declaration marking his ambassadorship during a brief ceremony.

Townson jokingly reminded the youthful lad that he "must represent not only yourself, but also everyone living in Cullman County."

"I think Stephen is going to do a fine job as our ambassador," said Mayor Townson. "He is a bright young man, so he will do us all justice while he's in Germany."

McNeal has known about the club since he was just a young boy, as his grandmother, Dorothy Fowler, is both a member and officer in the club.

"My grandparents both told me that I could make the trip if I'd like to, so we'll see how it goes in July," said McNeal with a nervous laugh. "Now it's just time to wait for the day to arrive."

A bit about the Sister Cities

In 1986, an invitation was extended by Burgermeister Gunter Steiss of Frankweiler to then Cullman Mayor Jack Sides to come to Germany to officially twin to the sister cities.

Mayor Sides, accompanied by his wife, along with Councilman Robert Tidwell and his wife Rudene, Stanley Johnson and Julia Emauel – the great, great nephew and niece of Colonel Cullmann – and Ellen Van der Linden of Konigstein, Germany – the great, great granddaughter of Colonel Cullmann – were the official representatives of the partnership celebration. The group was housed, fed, and taken care of by the residents of Frankweiler, and each participated in all the planned activities from May 13-20, 1987.

During this one week in May 1987, the City of Frankweiler, Germany held a celebration marking the permanent partnership of Cullman, Alabama, U.S.A. and Frankweiler, Germany. Several dignitaries and citizens from Cullman attended the ceremonies in Frankweiler, housed by its people.

Since the twinning ceremony, citizens and officials from Cullman have made numerous trips to Frankweiler. Frankweiler's citizens and officials have visited us here in Cullman on several occasions. Visits take place every two years. Since the inception of the sister twinning in 1987, 198 residents from Cullman have traveled to Frankweiler, while 166 have made the trek from Frankweiler.



Left to Right: Dorothy Fowler (Grandmother and Officer, Friends of Frankweiler), Jethro Harbison (Officer, Friends of Frankweiler), Myrna Hermetz (Vice-President, Friends of Frankweiler), Stephen P. McNeal (Student Ambassador to Frankweiler), Max A. Townson (Mayor), Robert Tidwell (President, Friends of Frankweiler), Sandre McNeal (Mother), Paul McNeal (Father), Virgil Fowler (Grandfather).

Art Exhibition & Education Highlight ADMH's Promotion of National Mental Health Month

Contributed

MONTGOMERY – Each year the Alabama Department of Mental Health joins statewide and national organizations to promote National Mental Health Month, observed in May. Throughout the month, various advocacy organizations will host events statewide, and ADMH will present its 8th annual Capitol Showcase Consumer Art Exhibition.

Art Exhibition Details

More than 100 consumers around the state with mental illnesses, developmental disabilities, substance use disorders, or co-occurring disorders will showcase their artwork throughout the month at the Capitol. The exhibition promotes consumer dignity and helps the public gain a better understanding of the individuals ADMH serves.

This exhibition is about more than just the artists' work. They also have the opportunity to share their heartfelt testimonies about the obstacles they have overcome in their lives, why art is an important part of their recovery, and their own personal love of creating art.

The exhibition can be viewed in the Old Supreme Court Library in the Capitol May 1-30. Each day throughout the month, the department will also share pictures of consumer artwork, along with their accompanying stories, on ADMH's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/ALMentalHealth. Many of the pieces are also for sale, and posts will notate prices and how they can be purchased. A closing reception will be held for artists, their friends and family members on Thursday, May 30.

Information about National Mental Health Month

May is Mental Health Month was started 64 years ago by Mental Health America to raise awareness about mental health conditions and the importance of mental wellness for everyone. Pathways to Wellness, this year's theme for May is Mental Health Month, calls attention to strategies and approaches that help all Americans achieve wellness and good mental and overall health.

Dr. Wayne Lindstrom, president & CEO of Mental Health America says, "Using strategies that promote resiliency and strengthen mental health, and prevent mental health and substance use conditions, leads to improved general health and a healthier society: greater academic achievement by our children, a more productive economy, and families that stay together."

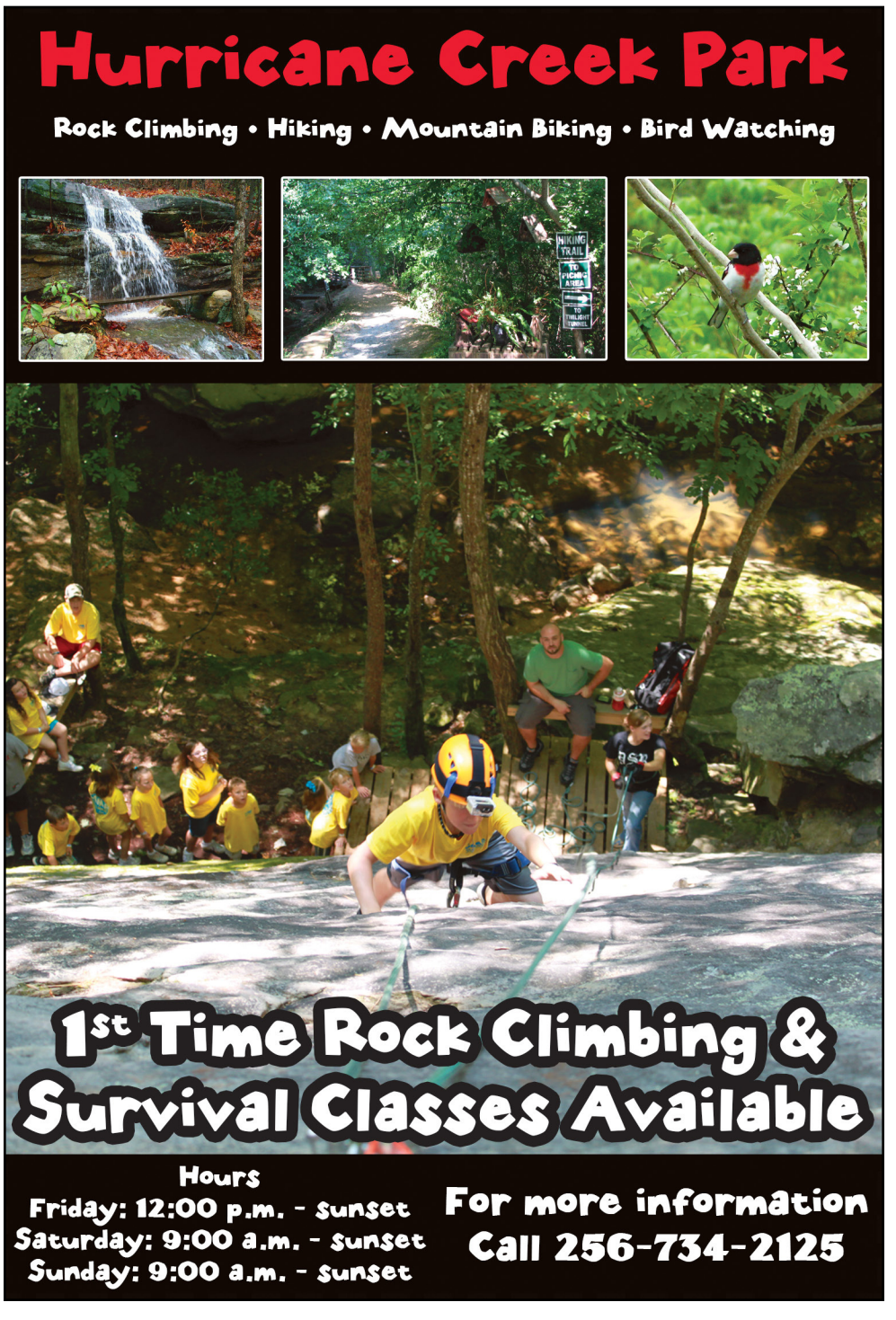
It is always a good idea to take periodic stock of one's emotional well-being. A recent study noted that everyone should get their mental health checked as often as they get a physical.

Many doctors routinely screen for mental health, which typically includes a series of questions about lifestyle, eating and drinking habits, and mental wellness. However, a check-up doesn't necessarily require a special trip to the doctor as there are also online screening tools available.

In addition, fact sheets about mental and overall health are available on Mental Health America's website at www.mentalhealthamerica.net/go/may. An electronic calendar with daily tips on advancing pathways to wellness can also be found there.

In Alabama, ADMH serves more than 100,000 people per year with mental illnesses through community contract providers and more than 2,000 people per year in state hospitals.

While mental health conditions are common, it is vital to spread the message that they are also extremely treatable.



– 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.

Miss PattyCake in Concert
Everyone is invited to attend the 'Miss PattyCake in Concert' event beginning at 10 a.m. at Cullman's First Baptist Church. Entrance fee is $5.00 for children with adults free. Check out www.misspattycake.com for further information.

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

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.

Festhalle Farmers' Market
The Festhalle Farmers' Market is once again open for business on Thursdays 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

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.

'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.

Senior Day at StrawberryFest'
All senior citizens are invited to attend 'Senior Day' at Cullman's StrawberryFest' from 9 a.m. until the fun stops. Opening ceremony starts at 9 a.m. with congregational gospel singing at 9:30 a.m. Joyful Hearts will join the entertainment at 1000 followed by lunch break at 11:30 a.m. BINGO starts at 11:45 a.m. for all in attendance, with 40 gifts being awarded to bingo winners during the games. Come enjoy Cullman's annual tribute to the county's strawberry crop and have a good time with all your friends! There also will be a farmers' market, arts and crafts booths and lots of things to do.

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 p.m. 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

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.

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.

8th Annual RCBC Outdoors Adventures Fishing Tournament
The 8th Annual RCBC Outdoors Adventures Fishing Tournament at Smith Lake Park will begin with Fishing hours from 6 a.m. or safe daylight until 3 p.m. This is a FREE tournament with loads of prizes. There also will be a guest speaker, Chris Wells. This is a Triton sponsored event. 'Big Fish' payout is $100.00, with a special payout of $200.00. Check this event on Facebook RBCB Outdoors Adventures. Contact Tony Byrd at 205-552-8640 or Joe Boyd at 205-275-7698. TO BE ELIGIBLE TO FISH THIS TOURNAMENT EVERYONE MUST BE PRESENT AT RULES MEETING AT RYAN'S CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH ON SUNDAY, MAY 5, AT 6 P.M. All are welcome to take part in this event.

Hunt of a Lifetime motorcycle 'Bug Run'
A motorcycle 'Bug Run' to benefit 'Hunt of a Lifetime' Foundation which helps children who are 21 years and younger with a life-threatening illness is scheduled to begin at 9 a.m. This event, sponsored by Charlie Leather, will start at his business, Leather's (230 U. S. Highway 278 West in Cullman near the Flea Market). The 120 mile (approximately 2 and a half hours long) ride, costs $25 per rider or $30.00 with passenger. Pre-register ahead of time or on the day of ride. There will be lots of fun, food, music and door prizes, with 2 helmets and a riding vest autographed by Ted Nugent available through an auction. Please call Charles Leather at 256-734-8774 or Rick Halverson at 256-747-8119 or 256-352-6670 for additional information. Come enjoy a great springtime day of riding, relaxation, fun in the sun and fellowship while raising money for a great cause.

Cullman County Public Library Book Sale
Cullman County Public Library will be hosting a HUGE Book Sale at the library from 9 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. There will be a large selection of adult's books as well as children's books and audiovisuals as well. The library is located at 200 Clark Street N.E. This is between Cullman City Hall and Sacred Heart Catholic Church. The library shares the same block with the Cullman City Power Board. For more information please contact Lesia Coleman. At 256-734-2720 Ext. 23.

Community Yard Sale at West Point Town Hall
West Point Baptist Church will hold a community yard sale from 7 a.m. until 2 p.m. at West Point Town Hall with proceeds benefiting Haiti's Eden project. All are welcome to come see what bargains they can get.

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

PorktoberQue
Oktoberfest meets Barbecue Competition in Dothan, Alabama September 27-28, 2013. This KCBS sanctioned BBQ competition draws teams from across Alabama and features $5,000 in prize money and an entry to the American Royal for the cookoff/ BBQ winner. It is also a stop on the Alabama BBQ Trail and has a points award for national barbecue team rankings. Spectators enjoy polka music, country and rock bands, an indoor Biergarten, outdoor "man cave" and loads of shopping opportunities. Barbecue and Bratwurst dominate the food menus from regional vendors, and beer is available in several areas. Sponsored by MIke Schmitz Auto group- come take a test drive for free tickets, or take a drive at PorktoberQue for great deals! FREE ADMISSION IF YOU DRESS UP IN LEDERHOSEN OR A GERMAN OUTFIT! Kids welcome, many kid's activities available. See www.porktoberque.com for details and info.

Movie Review: *Tremors*

By: Spike Harville

Tremors, starring Kevin Bacon, Fred Ward, and Reba McIntyre is a cleverly written horror-comedy directed by Ron Underwood. This 1990 Monster movie cost $11 million to make and made $16.7 million at box office. Two drifters, Valentine McKee played by Kevin Bacon and Earl Bassett played by Fred Ward, are hard working handymen in the small Nevada town of Perfection.

They tend sheep, they drive cattle, they pump out sewers, fix broken fences; whatever anyone needs done, they will do. The problem is they're about to starve to death and definitely frustrated with their circumstances. When things in Perfection finally get unbearable they decide to pack up their pickup and head for the greener pastures and broader horizons of Bixby, located over the mountains some 30 miles away.

With great joy and a sense of accomplishment they finally head out of town, even turning down free beer if they stay. Their performances and Underwood's surefooted direction create loveable characters in a believable situation to which the viewer can enthusiastically relate. But they don't get very far. Just outside of town they find an old friend has climbed a powerline tower and has died. They take his body back to town where the doctor tells them the old man died of dehydration, not a heart attack, as they had assumed.

They attempt another exodus from town, only to discover another friend has been killed. They race back to town to call the sheriff. On the way they warn road workers of a murdering maniac on the loose. Back in town, they discover the phones are dead and since they live in a valley surrounded by mountains of rock, two-way radios are useless. When they decide to drive out of town for help they discover a rock slide has blocked the road. They are trapped. Finn Carter plays Rhonda LeBeck. A student on field assignment with the university seismology department. She is tracking what the science community believes to be a series of small earthquakes. What she doesn't realize is that she's measuring earthworms not earthquakes...giant carnivorous worms. These 40 foot long, 5 foot wide worms swim thru dirt like sharks swim thru water. And with the same intent. Find food. The worms use vibrations to locate food. That means things like walking or tapping the ground, or riding a pogo stick will attract them. The worms hone in on it and then burrow up from beneath their victim's feet with sharp-fanged teeth and wide open, gaping jaws. It's not pretty.

Kudos: to the special effects team. The man-eating worms in this movie look real. Never once did I notice anything that said "puppet" or "fake". The effects are all practical models, that means they are puppets, miniatures, animatronics or guys in worm-suits. There is no CGI at all in this film. These worms are some of the best monsters I have ever seen. They are beautiful! Except that they are hideously ugly, slimy, creepy and scary. Other than that, they're beautiful. Hats off to writers S.S. Wilson and Brent Maddock for striking the perfect balance between funny and fear. Horror is hard enough to write, but comedy is really hard. Tremors has a wit and charm that will keep you laughing between jumps and screams. So... how does it rate? I asked my actor and filmmaker friends to rate the film on a 5-star scale. I asked the same of my non-filmmaker friends and family.

This might surprise you, especially if you've seen the movie, but actors and filmmakers give it an average of 4 1/2 stars. That's right up there with Oscar winning films. But then friends and family only give it 2 1/2 stars. That's the definition of average on a 5-star scale.

I was initially befuddled by the 2-star difference between my filmmaker and non-filmmaker friends but after thinking about it I think I have an explanation.

Looking at it from a filmmakers point of view: 1) The acting is spot on. Even Reba McIntyre did alright, and this movie was her first professional acting gig. 2) The monsters are perfect from a special effects point of view. 3) Tremors is what we in "the biz" call a "Movie in a Bottle": a handful of actors and one or two locations; smaller budget to make; easy to finance and make a profit. My non-filmmaker friends don't think so much about those things and it often comes down to did they like the story and did it scare them?

I liked this movie a lot. It reminds me of horror movies when horror meant monsters, ghosts, zombies, and so forth. Lots of people today relate horror to movies where some crazy guy has a knife. Hmm. (Insert cricket sound f/x here.) Not me. I am inclined to agree with my filmmaker friends and rate it high. It is definitely one of my favorite monster movies, but, I mark it down because there is a lot of foul language in the movie. Granted, if I were stranded in Nevada with giant man-eating worms on the attack... I might also have a swearing issue. But for that, I demote it one star so my total is 3 1/2 stars.

I'm an actor, writer, and filmmaker. I do weekly movie reviews and Vox Box where I look at the history of film and how it touches our culture or anything else that catches my fancy. Please visit my blog www.MyFriendsCallMeSpike.com and follow me on Twitter @SpikeHarville.

Reflections of History



Morrow Library Ground Breaking 1967 — Contrib. by Cullman County Museum

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

This Week in History May 6 - 12

May 6th

- 1787 – First Black Masonic Lodge (African # 459) forms in Prince Hall, Boston
- 1890 – Mormon Church renounces polygamy
- 1960 – President Eisenhower signs Civil Rights Act of 1960
- 2012 – More than 1,000 birds, mostly pelicans and hundreds of dolphins die off the coast in the north of Paru, under unexplained circumstances

May 7th

- 1866 – German premier Otto von Bismarck seriously wounded in assassin attempt
- 1925 – Pirate shortstop Glenn Wright makes an unassisted triple play
- 1975 – President Ford declares an end to "Vietnam Era"
- 2012 – Russian swears in Vladimir Putin for his third, six-year term as President

May 8th

- 1784 – Only known deaths by hailstones in U.S. in Winnsboro, South Carolina
- 1936 – Jockey Ralph Neves unexpectedly revived after being declared dead after a fall. His wife fainted when he returned to track
- 1958 – President Eisenhower orders National Guard out of Central High School, Little Rock
- 1988 – Amateur referees work New Jersey Devil-Boston Bruin playoff games, as NHL refereres walk-off, due to a restraining order brought by Devils

May 9th

- 1754 – First newspaper cartoon in America-divided snake "Join or Die"
- 1896 - First horseless carriage show in London featured 10 models
- 1960 – U.S. is first country to use the birth control pill legally
- 2011 – The U.S. Texas Senate approves amended legislation allowing students in Texas to carry handguns on campus

May 10th

- 1267 – Vienna's church orders all Jews to wear a distinctive garb
- 1865 – Jefferson Davis captured at Irwinsville, Georgia
- 1948 – Winston Churchill visits The Hague
- 2011 – April exports for the People's Republic of China reach an all-time monthly height of $155.69 billion

May 11th

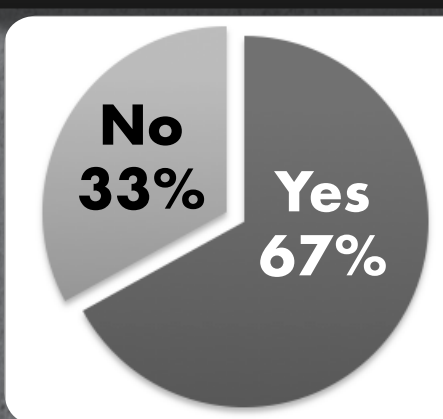
- 1751 – First U.S. hospital founded; Pennsylvania Hospital
- 1910 – Montana's Glacier National Park forms
- 1949 – First Polaroid camera sold $89.95 in New York City
- 2012 – U.S. researchers report that preventable infections are the leading cause of the world's child mortality rate, where out of 7.6 million children who died before the age of 5 in 21010, 60% died of infections like pneumonia

May 12th

- 1789 – Society of St. Tammany is formed by Revolutionary War soldiers. It later becomes an infamous group of New York City political bosses
- 1928 – Mussolini ends women's rights in Italy
- 1978 – Commerce Department says hurricane names will no longer be only female
- 2010 – After new allegations of torture, the International Committee of the Red Cross reports a second U.S. secret prison exists at Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan

Last Week's Poll

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



This Week's Poll

What interests you most: Home & Gardening, Entertainment, Outdoor Sports, or Crime Blotter.

Vote Today at CullmanSense.com/Poll

New Wallace State program to offer certificate in injection molding

By: Gail Crutchfield
WSCC Contributor

HANCEVILLE –Wallace State Community College is partnering with local industry to offer a new program that will give students a chance to work while they learn. The Injection Mold Technologies short-term certificate program, developed in response to local industry demand for qualified employees, will be added this fall to the Machine Tool Technology (MTT) curriculum.

The new program will offer training on the injection molding process used by several companies in the Cullman County and North Alabama area.

An apprenticeship program is also anticipated as part of the program, with students able to start working in local industry as soon as they enter the program.

Jimmy Hodges, Dean of Applied Technologies at WSCC, said several members of the industrial community approached him about starting a program to specifically train students on injection molding technology.

"In Cullman County we have quite a few injection molding companies," Hodges said. "Rehau makes plastic bumpers for Mercedes, Royal Technologies does a lot of injection molding and Robson Company is a company in Vinemont that does some injection molding."

After being approached to start the program, Hodges said he and Suzanne Harbin, Wallace State's Director of Advancement, created a grant proposal for the Governor's Office of Workforce Development (GOWD) Region 2 to receive funding for the machine needed to teach the program.

By early April, the college earned approval for the program by the Department of Postsecondary Education and received a $76,503 grant from the GOWD to purchase an injection molding machine.

The Injection Mold Technologies program will be a 29-credit hour program. It can be taken separately as a certificate program, or in conjunction with the with Machine Tool Technology's associate degree program.

"If a student were interested in this technology, we suggest they complete the associate degree program," Hodges said.

"An associate degree provides them with another credential to make them more employable."

Another factor that will help WSCC graduates of the MTT program more employable will be the apprenticeship program that is currently in development.

"We are in the process of developing apprenticeships for industrial maintenance as well as injection molding," Hodges said.

"That will be an incredible opportunity for students not only to receive work experience and training at Wallace, but also to earn a registered apprentice credential that in this day and time open doors of opportunity for our students."

Terry Puffer, Molding Production Manager at Royal Technologies, sees the apprenticeship program benefitting Wallace State students by giving them a foot in the door, and offering them a chance to grow within their company.

"We get great leaders by promoting from within," Puffer said. "It's our preference and often our first choice. We feel the apprenticeship program will provide the candidate an opportunity to grow and expand their skills for a high-tech and rewarding career with Royal."

Hodges said the college often gets approached by industries seeking specific training procedures for current and potential employees, and that they always try to help.

"We are a central location for the state of Alabama, so it is extremely important and we pride ourselves on responding to industry needs and doing so quickly," Hodges said.

The industry appreciates that response.

"It's refreshing," said Chris Robson, owner of Robson Company, Inc., who was among those who discussed such a program with WSCC officials and expects some of his employees to go through the program.

"I'm excited for it, and I think it's a good addition to Wallace State," he said of the program.

Robson said he thought larger companies like Rehau and Royal Technologies will benefit greatly from the program. Representatives from those companies agreed.

"The production environment in the automotive industry is fast paced and demanding," said Dan Plank, Human Resources manager at the REHAU plant in Cullman. "As a supplier to this industry, REHAU must have highly-trained, qualified people in order to perform efficiently and consistently.

The Injection Molding Technology program at Wallace State will benefit REHAU and other molders in the area by improving existing employees' skills and creating prospective employees who will have the knowledge and training they'll need to be successful in this environment."

Wallace State's willingness and ability to work with local industries to improve the workforce is not lost on local economic leaders.

"It is gratifying to see a relation between local industry and the community college where companies identify a workforce training concern and within weeks the college has the desire and the flexibility in curriculum to develop and implement a program to address it," said Dale Greer, Assistant Director of the Cullman Economic Development agency.

"Growth in any industry is tied to the ability and productivity of the workforce," he added. "Not every community has a supportive college like Wallace State that focuses on workforce training. Cullman and the surrounding counties are extremely fortunate to have that asset and Wallace has certainly played a significant role in the new and expanding industry growth in this region."

Helping area industries improve and expand is just one of the responsibilities of Wallace State, said Wallace State President, Dr. Vicki Hawsey.

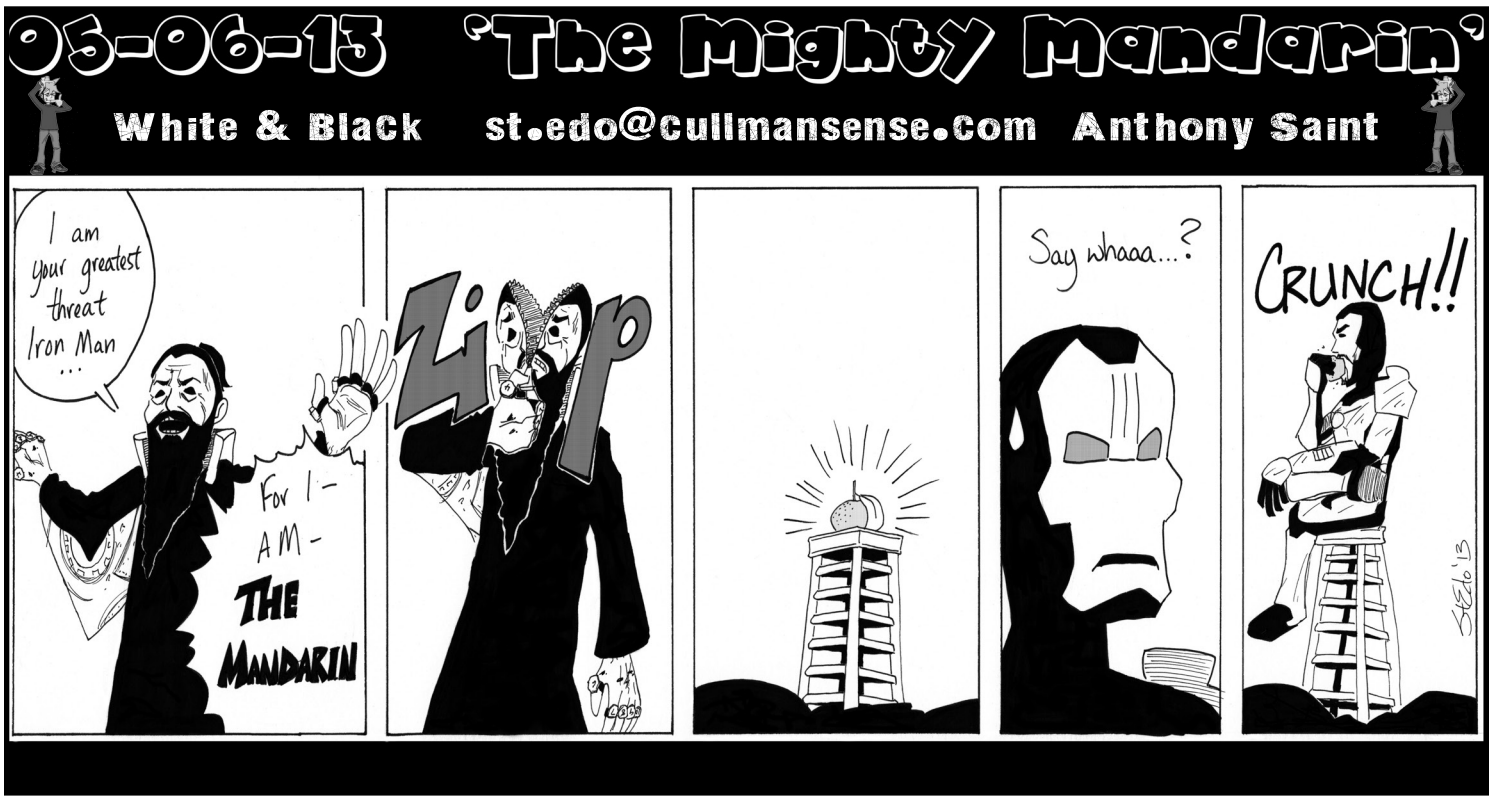
"Community colleges are the driving force for regional economic and workforce development," said WSCC President Vicki Hawsey. "Wallace State is a leader in this region in meeting the needs of our employers for a skilled workforce. We are continually adding curriculum and reshaping existing programs to more closely align with the current and future needs as advised by local industry."

cullman city parks & recreation cpr&

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..
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **Speed & Agility Camp:** A speed and agility camp will be held at Heritage Park for ages 7-12 from June 11-July 16. Registration will be $125. Camp will be led by Steve Johnson and is open to boys and girls. Register at the Civic Center.
- **Men's & Women's Open/Church League Registration:** Registration for summer league Men's, Women's, and Men's Church and Women's Church will be from May 1-May 31 at Heritage Park. Cost per team is $375. Call 256-739-9931 for more details or to register.
- **Outdoor Pools Opening at CWAC:** The outdoor pools and water park at the Cullman Wellness & Aquatic Center will open Saturday, May 25.
- **Gun Safety Class:** A gun safety class will be held at the Cullman Civic Center on Saturday, May 8. For full details and requirements, call the Cullman Civic Center at 256-734-9157.
- **Junior Tennis Lessons:** Tennis lessons will be held this summer at the Municipal Tennis courts in three different sessions beginning on June 3. Classes offered for all skill levels. Call the Civic Center for details or to register.





Mixed Feelings

By: BJ Morgan
Community Contributor

When the city of Cullman went wet in 2010, I had mixed feelings; I daresay most residents did. It was a big move for a small town, fraught with the peril—and the fears—of the unknown. I'd lived in many communities, both wet and dry, and knew firsthand the advantages and disadvantages of both.

But my trust was in our local government—the City Council, the Mayor, the Zoning Committee, and the Planning Committee—to forge a way to bring the best of increased revenues to Cullman while controlling the undesirable elements that would necessarily creep in. And I feel they have done an outstanding job doing just that. I also feel that was an important element in their 2012 reelections, with incumbents in both mayoral and city council all being reelected.

The recent news stories about the proposed development of a large entertainment center near State Highway 157 leaves me conflicted. On the one hand, I welcome the promise of live music, a brewery, and a wine room.

I welcome the jobs this project would create, and, of course, the revenues that will flow into the city coffers, benefiting our schools, police department, providing fire protection, maintaining our streets, building economic development, and providing public safety, not to mention appropriations to many non-profits.

However, the proposed location leaves me downright cold.

The parcel of land in question is about 10 acres located, not on, but off, Highway 157. It's behind Quality Inn off Highway 157, behind Waffle House and Mental Health Authority on Commerce Avenue, and behind Alabama Agricultural Credit on St. Joseph Drive.

The only way to access the land is via Commerce Avenue and St. Joseph Drive, NW; there is no direct access to the property from Highway 157. And that's a major issue.

As I understand it, the proposed venue would accommodate as many as 2,000 people: 500 for indoor live music, and an additional 1,500 in an outdoor amphitheater. The additional traffic, noise, and burden on law enforcement and other systems is simply too great. The cost to the community when weighed against the benefit is a losing proposition. Here's why I believe this:

The mile section of Highway 157 between I-65 and Highway 31 sees a tremendous amount of traffic even now, before you consider adding the vehicles of an additional 2,000 people.

Remember, there is no direct access to the proposed venue from Highway 157—traffic will snarl off I-65, with the short off-ramps at Exit 310, only to turn less than a 10th of a mile later onto the small, two-lane Commerce Avenue. Coming from Highway 31 would be worse, as traffic negotiates the "suicide lane" to turn left onto Commerce Avenue.

At this time, there are numerous accidents in this short strip of Alabama highway, and adding an unconscionable burden of traffic is begging a question—how many lives are worth the revenue?

Perhaps the worst will be the traffic on St. Joseph Drive, coming from the downtown area.

The 2.5-mile St. Joseph Drive from Main Avenue downtown to Highway 157 is two lanes, with solid "double-yellow striping," which means no passing is allowed.

St. Joseph's 30-40 mile-per-hour speed limit is in place to protect the more than 50 residential driveways and 20-something streets that link hundreds of residences to this important city artery—nearly 200 houses within only a one-half mile area from the proposed venue, not to mention the hundreds of other houses slightly farther away.

This sleepy little roadway will likely become a bumper-to-bumper gridlock. Combine that with the existing heavy traffic on Highway 157, and you can imagine a nighmarish experience for everyone, both those anxious to get into the venue for a large concert as well as the residences in the area and law enforcement trying to deal with it all.

Speaking of parking, the parking lot to accommodate up to 2,000 concert-goers will likely cover about seven acres or so. That would probably make it about the size of the parking lot at Wal-Mart.

A major difference is the smooth traffic flow around Wal-Mart, with numerous multi-lane streets. In contrast, the proposed Entertainment District is flanked only by small, two-lane residential streets.

To give you a reference point, consider Cracker Barrel. Cracker Barrel seats about 200 people at a time. On days like Mother's Day, not only is their parking lot filled to overflowing, but patrons are parking on the grass median in front of the restaurant and at the nearby gas stations.

Businesses along Highway 157, like Cracker Barrel, are stretched to the maximum to serve their own customers during peak usage—and they do it well. But if one were to consider adding non-paying, non-customer parkers, things would take an unfortunate turn.

Most large concert venues charge a parking fee. This would mean that once concert-goers arrive, they will likely be faced with the choice of paying to park for a fee in the parking lot, or, for a little risk, park for free at a nearby local business.

It would be easy enough to park at McDonalds, Taco Bell, Waffle House or Chevron. For a little extra risk, they might park at Logans, Cracker Barrel, or Arby's or other business on the north side of Highway 157 and take their chances in crossing the highway.

Now picture those pedestrians trying to cross a Highway 157 that's busy with concert traffic to get to the venue. Some have suggested to me that a simple solution is a traffic light at Commerce Avenue.

However, remember that Highway 157 is under the control of the Alabama Department of Transportation, not the City of Cullman. A traffic light would likely be years in the making.

Another major factor will be the noise associated with an outdoor amphitheater. The nearly 200 residents who live within close earshot (both in Woodland Heights to the east, and Culpepper Subdivision to the south) would have the peace and quiet of their families disrupted by music until 11:30 nightly as allowed by Cullman's Noise Ordinance, something they didn't count on when moving into their homes.

An additional problem is light—bright light—that is a requirement for any new Entertainment District.

The Entertainment District ordinance requires lighting from dark until dawn, seven days a week. These lights will cause a night-turned-to-day effect on many houses located within eyesight and beyond.

The lights are an attempt to discourage shady characters and crime, of course. However, once anyone leaves the venue property, it's only a very short distance to the residential areas, so one could realistically expect an upturn in crime in those neighborhoods.

These factors are almost certainly to cause a dramatic loss of property values across a large swath of the City. With loss of property value comes loss of property tax revenues for the City.

In addition, many of these factors—the snarling traffic, the illegal parking, the pedestrians crossing Highway 157, the increase in crime in the neighborhood—will necessarily impact the City's law enforcement communities, not to mention ambulance and emergency medical services.



Another consideration is the venue's proximity to the mental health authority and chemical treatment facilities is a poor idea. Although it's true that there are several restaurants in the area that serve alcohol, at this time, all of them are located across Highway 157 or a greater distance across St. Joseph Drive from the mental health facility, making access to served alcohol a bit more difficult.

And no one can accuse those restaurants of creating a huge party scene the way a nightclub venue would—something that would be a serious temptation to a person recovering from alcohol, chemical dependency, or mental illness, especially when the new venue would be literally across the street.

Finally, there are several other issues, smaller, perhaps, but no less troubling. Things like trash along Highway 157 and St. Joseph Drive. Runoff from the parking lot at a rate of 25,000 gallons of water per acre during a one-inch rainfall.

That equals about 175,000 gallons of fast-moving water carrying sediment, chemicals and toxins (from the vehicles that park there), pathogens, trash and other debris, eroding and flooding everything in its path. Where's it going to go?

So after thinking long and hard about these issues, it's my firm opinion that this piece of land for this venue is a bad idea.

But there's an easy and reasonable solution. Cullman already has a designated Entertainment District.

It's a full 12 acres (not just 10) located behind the Smith Farms store on Highway 278, and is much better sited for the sort of events such a large venue would need to be successful. There is better highway access to the property, there are many fewer residences that would be negatively affected, and there are only a couple of nearby businesses in operation.

Let's develop the E-1 District that we already have rather than create another one.

I have been assured by the city administration that the City Council will vote only "yes" or "no" on changing the zoning of the Commerce Avenue property—not on permitting the proposed venue to build. The permitting vote would come later.

However, it seems we're starting to slide on a slippery slope. Documents seem to indicate that the limited liability corporation planning the proposed venue has indicated they will purchase the property contingent once it has been rezoned to E-1.

It only stands to reason that once that happens, they would, of course, pursue a permit to develop it. This would place a tremendous pressure on the City to approve a permit. I feel that now is the time to stand up to this pressure.

If you feel as I do, the Cullman City Council has scheduled a public hearing for May 28th at 7:00 p.m. at the Cullman City Auditorium at 204 Second Avenue NE.

You can write to the City Council or the Mayor (PO Box 278, Cullman, AL 35056), or write a letter to the editor. In any case, now is the time to speak up before a final decision is made. Let your voice be heard.

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

City Hall Pilgrimage

By: Noah Chandler
noahchandler@cullmansense.com

Area children take trip to visit City Hall, Fire Department

CULLMAN – Is there anything more fun for a child than a field trip? Well, yes there is. A field trip that takes children on a walk to City Hall, the Fire Department, Duchess Bakery, and even by a nearby field for a demonstration by the Cullman City Police Departments K9 Unit, ranked pretty high on the awesome scale according to kindergartners at Cullman Primary School.

The annual pilgrimage to City Hall starts at the school, where four classes of kindergarten students take off – with the assistance of teachers and a police escort – to the various destinations plotted on their daylong course.

"Today we were lucky and were treated to several great stops, including one where we all were able to see the police K9 perform," said CPS teacher Erica Rutherford. "Afterwards we treated the students to doughnuts from Duchess Bakery, because I mean, who doesn't love doughnuts? Then we came to City Hall to see the mayor."

And Mayor Max A. Townson was prepared. Or at least so he thought.

"I always enjoy seeing their smiling faces," said Mayor Townson shortly after the students arrived. "It's one of the fun parts of today."

Once arriving at the mayor's office, the students crowded around his desk to hear several quick stories of the importance of being mayor.

"You know when there's a hole in the street or if someone did not have their garbage picked up, they call me, so as mayor you must always be prepared to deal with any situation," he said to the children. "It takes a lot of work, but it's a job I love, serving the residents of Cullman."

Once leaving the office, the students toured the rest of City Hall including the Municipal Court where Dana Phillips, Court Clerk, gave a brief tour of her department. After leaving court, the students traveled to the rear of the building where they caught a glimpse of fire trucks.

Members of the CFD demonstrated how the lifesaving gear they use is properly handled and stored. Students stood in amazement as one firefighter suited up in full gear. One student was heard saying, "now that's scary," to which the firefighter replied, "We should never look scary. You can trust us."

"It really was fun day for all of us," said Rutherford. "It was my first year with the group, so I'm looking forward to next year, for sure."

The classes which took the field trip were Ms. Erica Rutherford, Mrs. Tonya Trammell, Mrs. Carrie Byrd, and Mrs. Mallory Hall.

For a look at more photos, visit **CullmanSense.com**.









