SERIES 3, ISSUE 33 MONDAY, AUGUST 19, 2013

CULLMAN'S MONDAY NEWSPAPER

CULLMANSENSE

COMMUNITY MATTERS

$0.50 $0.50

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Alabama's preliminary, seasonally-adjusted July unemployment rate is 6.3%, down from June's rate of 6.5% and well below July 2012's rate of 7.6%. p12

5.4%

Local

Cullman native named finalist for 480th Airman AF level Award



A member of the 480th Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Wing, Lt. Robert Lee, has been selected as a finalist for the Air Force Association's Gill Robb Wilson Award. p6

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LIFE After Dark: The Hillbilly Lovers

Self-described "good time cover band" makes it a family affair at Moe's BBQ. P7



Local, State, and Federal First Responders Team Together

Contributed

MONTGOMERY – A letter addressed to the Alabama Attorney General containing a white powdery substance was received and opened in the reception area of the Attorney General's office located on Washington Avenue on Wednesday, August 14.

Local, state, and federal first responders immediately evacuated the building and began efforts to identify the substance and decontaminate the eight employees that were exposed.

Initial tests performed by the United States Postal Service concluded the substance was not harmful.

The substance was removed from the building and further tests were performed by the Alabama National Guard Civil Support Team confirming the substance was not hazardous.

"The actions performed by the federal, state, and local first responders is a prime example of how working together as a team makes a more effective and efficient government," said Secretary Spencer Collier of the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency. "I would like to commend the City of Montgomery's Fire Department for the exemplary efforts today."

The Alabama Bureau of Investigation is conducting an investigation into the incident.

Representative Ed Henry and Chief Kenny Culpepper to speak on new gun law at open carry seminar

By: Jackie Moore

CULLMAN – The Chamber will host an overview of the new "Open Carry Law" on August 20th from 8:30 a.m. until 9:30 a.m. in the Charter Business room at the Chamber.

Representative Ed Henry and Chief Kenny Culpepper will be on hand to discuss the new law.

There will be discussion on the passing of the bill and the effects it has on local business owners.

This is event is free and open to the public.

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Walking for a Cause

By: Josh McBrayer
joshmcbrayer@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Some people walk for exercise, and some people walk for fun, but for Steve Young, walking is his life's purpose.

"This is my fourth walk across America," Young said, "and I walk to raise awareness for a camp for sick and terminally ill children."

Young walks to raise awareness for the Victory Junction Gang Camp. The camp is located in Randelman, North Carolina and was founded by Kyle and Patty Petty, of the legendary Petty racing family, in honor of their son Adam who died in 2000 while in a practice run on the New Hampshire National Speedway. The camp caters to children form the ages of 6 to 16 who have chronic or life threatening illnesses.

"It is a year round camp on 84 acres that Richard and Linda (Petty), Kyle's dad and mom donated," said Young. "It is totally free." Young, although not associated with the camp, felt the Lord tug on his heart and felt the calling to walk and raise awareness for the camp.

"I have traveled over 17,000 miles and of that I have walked 12,000 miles," Young said when asked about his incredible journey across the United States. Young travels with no cell phone or any other communication devises and is, for the most part, alone on his journey. He never asks for donations or solicits rides but does sometimes take help form those who offer it.

"I have turned down a couple of rides but sometimes I will accept them," said Young.

During his time in Cullman, he has stayed in his small, one man tent with just a thin sleeping bag for comfort on the vinyl domed structure he has called home for the first two months of his 10 month trek. The modest blue tent has been staked at Cullman Church of Christ located at the corner of Childhaven Road and Hwy 157. For Young, this is where he felt God wanted him and this is also where he met Carla Stricklin and Bama Turner, who he was quick to point out that he wanted to be recognized. "He is an inspiration," both ladies said of Young. Steve Young will be staying in Cullman until the 19th and then will be making his way to Louisiana for the next part of his journey.

Wallace State Upholstery Department recovers couch for COA

By: Gail Crutchfield
WSCC Contributor

HANCEVILLE — "This is an example of how a community college helps the community," said State Rep. Randall Shedd, director of the Cullman County Commission on Aging (COA).

Shedd recently met with Alabama Commission on Higher Education board member Patricia McGriff, Wallace State Community College President Vicki Hawsey, Dean of Applied Technologies Jimmy Hodges, and instructors and students in the college's Upholstery department to collect a couch that received a long-overdue update.

With McGriff's guidance, the once orange and gold floral print couch that sits in the foyer shared by the COA and the Cullman County Senior Center, was re-upholstered by a current student in the Wallace State program.

McGriff donated the fabric for the project, while student Pennye Conner of Mt. Olive in Jefferson County, worked on the couch with department chair Karan Smith providing her assistance when needed.

"She's an extremely talented instructor," Conner told Smith, after working on the project throughout a semester. Conner said she learned a lot while completing the project and was able to put her design skills to work as well.

Conner and Smith said they had to improvise on the design. The original solid silver-blue design was changed to incorporate more of the smoke-gray fabric patterned with square boxes. The seat cushions were created with the print fabric and trimmed in the solid blue. The back cushions were made with the solid blue fabric and trimmed with the print fabric. The center back cushion included a strip of the print fabric.



Wallace State Community College's Upholstery Department recovered a couch used in the foyer of the Cullman County Commission on Aging Office, using fabric donated by Patricia McGriff. From left are, WSCC President Vicki Hawsey, 4th Congressional District Commissioner of the Alabama Commission on Higher Education Patricia McGriff, Upholstery Department Chair Karan Smith, COA Direct and State Rep. Randall Shedd, upholstery student Pennye Conner, and Dean of Applied Technologies Jimmy Hodges.

The whole of the couch was covered in the solid blue fabric, with the print fabric used in sections of the skirt and as trim on protective pieces for each arm of the couch.

"To me, it was a learning experience," Conner said.

And her grade: "A-plus," Smith said when asked about the results.

McGriff, said she often tells people she meets about Wallace State, especially the technical programs. "I took this program," she said of the upholstery program, adding she would like to take another course to help her finish projects she has at home. Shedd expressed his appreciation to McGriff and Wallace State for taking on the project. "It looks beautiful and I know the seniors are going to enjoy seeing it," he said. For more information about Wallace State, visit www.wallacestate.edu or call 256-352-8000.



The orange and gold couch before being reupholstered.

A Roast for the Ages

Contributed

CULLMAN – "Through humor, you can soften some of the worst blows that life delivers. And once you find laughter, no matter how painful your situation might be, you can survive it," – Bill Cosby

The aforementioned quote best summarizes the joining of forces between Victim Services of Cullman, Inc. and Cullman's own, Mr. Roy Drinkard for a night of laughter, smiles, but most importantly, fundraising to help aide some of the counties.

Victim Services of Cullman will be hosting the 2nd Annual Roast, honoring Cullman's Roy Drinkard. Donna Jacobs, Executive Director at Victim Services of Cullman, Inc., said the success of the first year's roast left the group seeking out a new roast-e.

"After our first Roast honoring Rev Kurtz, staff and board members of Victims Services started thinking of who in our community we should honor next. Roy Drinkard was a unanimous decision," Jacobs said.

"Mr. Drinkard is an American businessman who has served in the Marine Corp, Owned and operated a funeral home, and opened and ran an automobile dealership in Cullman."

A reception will begin at 6 p.m. to allow everyone a minute or two to speak to Mr. Drinkard before the roasting ceremonies begin. Dinner will begin at 6:30 p.m. and the Roast Festivities will begin at 7 p.m.

"This is going to be a night filled with fun, food, and laughter, so don't miss out," she said. "Tickets are available at VSOC."

The Roasting of Mr. Roy Drinkard will take place at TP Country Club on Thursday August 22nd.

Ticket price is $20. For further ticket information contact 256-775-2600. All proceeds go to support Harbor Haus, domestic violence shelter of Victim Services of Cullman, Inc, a United Way organization.

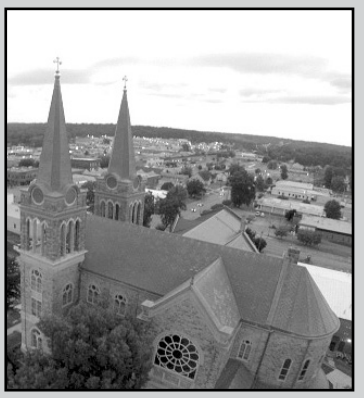


What's Online

100 year Anniversary of Catholic Church

Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church celebrated Mass recently as the final closing event of the past year's commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone of the present historic building in downtown Cullman.

qrne.ws/83



Sterile Product Recall Issued—Specialty Compounding, LLC, Cedar Park, Texas

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is alerting healthcare professionals not to use any sterile products from Specialty Compounding, LLC, of Cedar Park, Texas.

qrne.ws/84

Bentley awards grant to assist expansion of Cullman County trucking company; business to hire 25 new employees

A $150,000 grant awarded by Gov. Robert Bentley will help put a Cullman County trucking company on the move, creating up to 25 new jobs in the process.

qrne.ws/85

States begin to take the wheel on driverless cars as Google advances technology

By: Maggie Clark • Stateline

PALO ALTO, Calif.— Drivers here already gawk at Google's self-driving car zipping around the freeways. In California, Nevada, Florida, and the District of Columbia, the future of transportation is now: All four jurisdictions are setting ground rules for self-driving cars on the roads.

The trend is spreading. In this year's legislative sessions, nine more states debated driverless car bills.

While most of the bills died in committees, Michigan's bill is likely to pass by the end of the year with support from Republican Gov. Rick Snyder, a former tech titan who advocated for the new car technology.

"(California, Nevada, and Florida) are ahead of us, and aren't we the automotive capitol of the world?" Snyder said earlier this year. "So, I think we should be stepping it up here and make sure we are on the forefront of advances [in] vehicles and opportunity."

Legislation is just the beginning. These laws authorize companies to test their vehicles on private roads, then public roads.

After that, the states and the U.S. Department of Transportation must write rules to allow an average car owner to operate a driverless car when it becomes commercially available.

That could be as soon as 2017, predicted Google's co-founder Sergey Brin at California's bill-signing last year.

While Google is not focused on expanding legislation state by state, the company is committed to working on the California regulatory process, which will be completed by the end of 2015, according to a Google spokesperson.

The company is also working to lower the price tag of its autonomous driving system, which currently costs about $150,000.

Stateline is a nonpartisan, nonprofit news service of the Pew Charitable Trusts that provides daily reporting and analysis on trends in state policy.

Egypt is Burning



Image courtesy @tabishpandit, Twitter.



President Obama speaks by phone with his National Security Staff regarding the situation in Egypt. Official White House Photo by Amanda Lucidon



A burned out fire engine outside Giza government building. Image courtesy @Aaron_T_Rose, Twitter.

Statement by Principal Deputy Press Secretary Josh Earnest on Egypt

The United States strongly condemns the use of violence against protesters in Egypt. We extend our condolences to the families of those who have been killed, and to the injured.

We have repeatedly called on the Egyptian military and security forces to show restraint, and for the government to respect the universal rights of its citizens, just as we have urged protesters to demonstrate peacefully. Violence will only make it more difficult to move Egypt forward on a path to lasting stability and democracy, and runs directly counter to the pledges by the interim government to pursue reconciliation.

We also strongly oppose a return to a State of Emergency law, and call on the government to respect basic human rights such as freedom of peaceful assembly, and due process under the law. The world is watching what is happening in Cairo. We urge the government of Egypt - and all parties in Egypt - to refrain from violence and resolve their differences peacefully.

Birmingham helps Peace Corps move closer to its goal of 1,000 new volunteers

By: Alethea Parker

Birmingham recruiting event a success, Agency heading to Huntsville to find volunteers to live, learn, and work with a community overseas.

BIRMINGHAM – Birmingham residents showed lots of interest in becoming Peace Corps volunteers at an event Wednesday evening. "It's a childhood dream of mine (to serve in Peace Corps)," said Michelle M of Birmingham.

Michelle, who attended tonight's event, is just one of the many people interested in making a difference in the lives of others around the world, while at the same time making a difference in their own lives.

The Peace Corps is looking for 1,000 new volunteers who would be interested in using their education, work, and volunteer experience to help those who live in developing Countries. The Agency's Southeast Regional Recruitment Office will be in Huntsville next Tuesday (August 20th) to answer questions about the opportunities it has for citizens of all ages and backgrounds.

WHAT
Huntsville Peace Corps Information Session

WHEN
August 20, 2013 from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

WHERE
Huntsville-Madison Public Library. 915 Monroe Street, Huntsville, AL 35801

WHY
The Peace Corps needs 1,000 new volunteers

"Serving as a Peace Corps volunteer is probably one of the most rewarding experiences a person can have in their life," said Becky Ament, a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer and a Regional Recruiter for Peace Corps. "You give so much of yourself, but you get so much in return—new friends, a new culture, and the feeling of giving back."

There are currently 7 volunteers from the Huntsville area who are serving overseas. Almost 140 volunteers from Huntsville have served with the agency since it was founded by President Kennedy in 1961. Returned volunteers are also expected to attend the August 20th event which will be held at the Huntsville-Madison Public Library at 6 p.m.

Destructive Tree Pest Detected in Georgia

By: Wendy Burnett

GEORGIA – An invasive insect responsible for the death or decline of tens of millions of ash trees in 20 states has been detected in Georgia for the first time. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, suspect emerald ash borer beetles were removed from survey traps during routine monitoring in DeKalb and Fulton counties in July. Federal officials confirmed the specimens as emerald ash borers days later, setting in motion plans to prevent its spread and educate the public.

The Georgia Invasive Species Task force is working to execute the plan. This group consists of the Georgia Department of Agriculture, Georgia Forestry Commission, University of Georgia, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, and USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

"Forestry specialists have been monitoring the emerald ash borer for more than a decade, and have been surveying for the pest since 2005," said Robert Farris, Georgia Forestry Commission Director. "We'll need the public's help in stopping it from spreading further."

According to Agriculture Commissioner Gary Black, emerald ash borers "are hitchhikers." Black said emerald ash borer larvae live underneath the bark of ash firewood, hidden from view. People unknowingly give the pest a ride when they move emerald ash borer firewood between counties or from home to campsite. "Everyone can help by spreading the message, 'Don't move firewood,'" he said.

Farris explained that while only one percent of Georgia's forested acres contain ash trees, the potential destruction is significant. Some three million ash trees are in urban environments and another two million acres are in rural settings. Losses generated to the forest industry and the public could reach $1 billion.

Because of known occurrences, DeKalb and Fulton counties are proposed to be quarantined to prevent potentially infested ash wood from spreading outside this area.

The Georgia Forestry Commission and Georgia Department of Agriculture are developing regulations in an effort to quell the spread of emerald ash borers.

These rules are in draft form now and will be available for public comment soon Both agencies will work with forest landowners, loggers, firewood producers, nurseries, municipalities, and others to insure that commerce can still occur while safeguards are in place to prevent ash borer movement.

The emerald ash borer (EAB) is a small, green metallic beetle first detected in North America in 2002 in southeastern Michigan. The emerald ash borer attacks only ash trees and all ash species – including green, white, black, and blue – are at risk.

Signs of emerald ash borer infestation include a general decline in the appearance of the tree, thinning of upper branches and twigs, loss of leaves, and serpentine tunnels produced by EAB larvae under the bark. Woodpeckers may often be observed removing the bark of infested trees to access the larvae.

For more information, including identification tips for landowners who suspect the presence of emerald ash borers or other invasive species on their property, visit www.gainvasives.org/eab. For more information about emerald ash borers and the proposed quarantine for Dekalb and Fulton counties, visit http://www.gatrees.org/forest-management/forest-health/alerts-and-updates/index.cfm.

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Stewart Hired as Director of AU Basketball Operations

By: Matt Crouch



Stewart

AUBURN – Nikki Stewart has been hired onto the Auburn Women's Basketball staff as Director of Basketball Operations, head coach Terri Williams-Flournoy announced recently.

As the Director of Basketball Operations, Stewart will be in charge of team travel, game day preparations, monitoring players' academic progress, and handling community service for the student-athletes.

"For the Director of Basketball Operations position, you want someone who is more of an administrative-type that understands the business side of running the program and Nikki is that person," said Williams-Flournoy. "Her background in both the sports and corporate worlds make a great mixture and will really help with what we want to get done here."

Stewart is a 2002 graduate of the University of Tennessee where she graduated magna cum laude with her degree in political science. While at UT, she served as a manager for the Lady Vol women's basketball team for two seasons and was promoted to head manager as a senior.

From Knoxville, she moved on to law school at Vanderbilt University, graduating from the VU Law School in 2005.

While there she served as chairperson of the Vanderbilt Student Athletic Committee, a group that worked to incorporate the student-athletes into the general undergraduate community.

A native of Atlanta, Ga., Stewart returned to her home area in 2006 and held positions as an Associate Attorney at both Smith & Williams, and Hall, Booth, Smith & Stover law firms.

She spent the 2010-11 season with the Kentucky women's basketball team as a recruiting and operations assistant. While there, she prepared correspondence, maintained the recruiting database and filing system, and provided camp and clinic administration.

She returned to the legal world in 2011 as a project attorney with King & Spalding in Atlanta. She then took a similar position with Alston & Bird.

Former WSCC teammates Derek Holland, Jake Elmore proud to represent the Lions in MLB during Rangers-Astros series

By: Russell Moore • WSCC Contributor

> *"You always hear guys in the major leagues say they played with certain people in high school or college. I'm proud to say I played at Wallace State with Jake Elmore and Craig Kimbrel. That's about as cool as it gets."*

HANCEVILLE – Wallace State has definitely made a splash in Major League Baseball, having four different players in four consecutive years (2009-2012) make their major league debuts.

Last Saturday night in Houston, two former Wallace State teammates, Texas Rangers starter Derek Holland and Houston Astros infielder Jake Elmore, opposed each other for the first time in their careers, marking yet another unique feat for coach Randy Putman's program. Both Holland and Elmore were integral pieces to the 2006 Wallace State baseball team that advanced to the NJCAA World Series, and it remains the last WSCC team to advance to Grand Junction, Colo.

Holland and Elmore had somewhat of a reunion the night before they opposed each other. Elmore dropped by the Rangers hotel to pick up Holland on their way to Minute Maid Park for the series opener, and, among other things, they reminisced about their Wallace State days.

It was all business, though, when it was Holland's turn to take the mound in the second game of the series.

"It was definitely an interesting night. We joked about it the day before. We hadn't seen each other in a while and then to see Jake in the box and match up against him was neat," said Holland in a phone interview earlier this week. "It was hard not to think about how impressive it was to have two guys from a junior college in Alabama facing off in the big leagues. Jake has worked his tail off to get where he is like we all have. I was just making sure I didn't give up a hit to him."

Elmore went hitless in two at bats against his former teammate, popping up twice.

"Derek got two fastballs in on me in both at bats. I worked a 3 and 1 count on him in one at bat. I thought he was coming in with the next pitch and I guessed right, but he put it right on the corner, where I couldn't turn on it enough. I had to swing at it because it was what I was looking for," Elmore said.

"It was a fun experience. We talked a lot of trash to each other the day before. I guess Derek won this round. It was just a fun experience to step in the box against someone you shared the same jersey with in college even though it was years ago."

The Rangers won the game 5-4 with Holland earning a no-decision after striking out six and allowing three runs in six innings. The first-place Rangers ultimately swept the four-game set.

Holland was the first former Lion to make his MLB debut during the recent surge, earning the promotion in April 2009.

Still only 26 years old, the southpaw has pitched in two World Series (2010, 2011), helped the Rangers win two American League pennants (2010, 2011), and is one of the team's premier and reliable pitchers. Holland enters against Seattle with a 9-6 record and a 3.07 ERA, which is 9th-best in the American League. Holland has compiled a 48-35 record in 114 career starts and is 3-0 during 13 post-season appearances.

"I've been blessed to do some things people can only dream about, but winning Game 4 of the (2011) World Series was an unbelievable feeling for me. I was fortunate enough to pitch one of my best games on the biggest stage in baseball," said Holland, an Ohio native.

"Another memorable start was a shutout I threw in Cleveland in 2011. It was special because most of my family got to come, and it was the first time my grandmother was able to see me live."

Holland pitched at Wallace State during the 2006 and 2007 seasons. He was 8-2 with a 2.69 ERA and struck out 80 batters in 77 innings as a freshman in 2006, propelling the Lions to the World Series, and followed it with a 9-2 record and 1.82 ERA in 13 starts as a sophomore, recording 84 strikeouts and issuing only 11 walks in 74.1 innings.

Holland was drafted by the Rangers in the 25th-round of the 2006 draft. At the time, Holland had the draft-and-follow option at his disposal and had the choice to accept the Rangers offer or transfer to Arizona State before the following draft in 2007. He elected to join the Rangers system following his 2007 season at Wallace State and bypassed Arizona State.

Elmore also carved out quite a career at Wallace State, spanning the 2006-07 seasons. He hit .407 with three homers, 48 RBIs, and 22 steals as a freshman.

At the World Series, Elmore earned the "Big Stick" award for hitting .526 during tournament play as the Lions finished fourth nationally. The same season he was named the ACCC/Region 22 Tournament MVP.

As a sophomore, Elmore hit .450 with four homers, 45 RBIs, 26 steals, and 20 doubles and completed his Wallace State career as a .428 hitter with 93 RBIs and 111 runs scored.

Elmore transferred to Arizona State after his Wallace State career and played one year for the Sun Devils before he was drafted by the Arizona Diamondbacks in the 34th round of the 2008 draft.

Elmore squared off against Holland a day before he celebrated the one-year anniversary of his major league debut with the Diamondbacks. After spending his entire professional career with the Diamondbacks, Elmore was released by the club last November, but was quickly scooped up by the Houston Astros. He has a pair of homers, four doubles, and six RBIs in 97 at bats this season for the Astros.

"It was kind of a surreal moment when I was informed the Diamondbacks didn't want me anymore. It was definitely a shock," said Elmore, also 26. "The Astros were the first team in the waiver wire pecking order and they took me. As disheartening as it was to be let go by the Diamondbacks, it was as uplifting that the Astros thought enough of me to pick me up right way. That experience helps me stay motivated every day."

As far as the debuts of former Wallace State players, sandwiched in between Holland and Elmore were Craig Kimbrel's in 2010 and Graham Godfrey's in 2011.

With exception of the legendary Mariano Rivera, Kimbrel is considered the most dominant closer in the game, racking up 127 saves in less than four full seasons for the Atlanta Braves. Godfrey made his debut with the Oakland Athletics and has since pitched for the Boston Red Sox and Pittsburgh Pirates organizations. He is currently pitching for the Triple-A Indianapolis Indians.

Holland and Elmore both agree it's a special bond and a rewarding feeling to be representing Wallace State in the major leagues, especially since the odds of such great talent coming from a junior college at one time aren't the norm.

"You always hear guys in the major leagues say they played with certain people in high school or college. I'm proud to say I played at Wallace State with Jake Elmore and Craig Kimbrel. That's about as cool as it gets. It's an awesome feat. I got to play with Craig Kimbrel for Team USA during the World Baseball Classic and get to see Jake Elmore when we play the Astros. That's some good company," Holland said.

"I owe a lot of credit to coach Putman for getting me mentally and physically prepared to play in the big leagues. My Wallace State years were a big turning point in my career to get where I'm at now. I'm also grateful for Coach (Chuck) Davis and for the things he taught me about pitching."

Added Elmore: "Wallace State is a place you hold dear to your heart. It's definitely something special to have so many guys make it to this level from one college, especially since there are three of us who all played together. We all have a lot of love for Wallace State. People are interested and surprised when I tell them I played college baseball with Derek Holland and Craig Kimbrel. Some can't believe that much talent could come from one junior college."

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SEC Schedules Released

The pre-season poll is out and the defending BSC National Champions, the Crimson Tide, are on top. The SEC has six teams in the top 25: Alabama (1), Georgia (5), Texas A&M (6), South Carolina (7), Florida (10), and LSU (13).

ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE
8-31 Virginia Tech
9-7 BYE
9-14 @ Texas A&M
9-21 Colorado State
9-28 Ole Miss
10-5 Georgia State
10-12 @ Kentucky
10-19 Arkansas
10-26 Tennessee
11-2 BYE
11-9 LSU
11-16 @ Mississippi State
11-23 Chattanooga
11-30 @ Auburn

ARKANSAS RAZORBACKS
8-31 UL Lafayette
9-7 Samford
9-14 Southern Miss
9-21 @ Rutgers
9-28 Texas A&M
10-5 @ Florida
10-12 South Carolina
10-19 @ Alabama
10-26 BYE
11-2 Auburn
11-9 @ Ole Miss
11-16 BYE
11-23 Mississippi State
11-28 @ LSU

AUBURN TIGERS
8-31 Washington State
9-7 Arkansas State
9-14 Mississippi State
9-21 @ LSU
9-28 BYE
10-5 Ole Miss
10-12 Western Carolina
10-19 @ Texas A&M
10-26 Florida Atlantic
11-2 @ Arkansas
11-9 @ Tennessee
11-16 Georgia
11-23 BYE
11-30 Alabama

FLORIDA GATORS
8-31 Toledo
9-7 @ Miami
9-14 BYE
9-21 Tennessee
9-28 @ Kentucky
10-5 Arkansas
10-12 @ LSU
10-19 @ Missouri
10-26 BYE
11-2 Georgia
11-9 Vanderbilt
11-16 @ South Carolina
11-23 Georgia Southern
11-30 Florida State

GEORGIA BULLDOGS
8-31 @ Clemson
9-7 South Carolina
9-14 BYE
9-21 North Texas
9-28 LSU
10-5 @ Tennessee
10-12 Missouri
10-19 @ Vanderbilt
10-26 BYE
11-2 Florida
11-9 Appalachian State
11-16 @ Auburn
11-23 Kentucky
11-30 @ Georgia Tech

KENTUCKY WILDCATS
8-31 Western Kentucky
9-7 Miami (OH)
9-14 Louisville
9-21 BYE
9-28 Florida
10-5 @ South Carolina
10-12 Alabama
10-19 BYE
10-24 @ Mississippi State
11-2 Alabama State
11-9 Missouri
11-16 @ Vanderbilt
11-23 @ Georgia
11-30 Tennessee

LSU TIGERS
8-31 TCU
9-7 UAB
9-14 Kent State
9-21 Auburn
9-28 @ Georgia
10-5 @ Mississippi State
10-12 Florida
10-19 @ Ole Miss
10-26 Furman
11-2 BYE
11-9 @ Alabama
11-16 BYE
11-23 Texas A&M
11-29 Arkansas

MISSISSIPPI STATE
8-31 Oklahoma State
9-7 Alcorn State
9-14 @ Auburn
9-21 Troy
9-28 BYE
10-5 LSU
10-12 Bowling Green
10-19 BYE
10-24 Kentucky
11-2 @ South Carolina
11-9 @ Texas A&M
11-16 Alabama
11-23 @ Arkansas
11-28 @ Ole Miss

OLE MISS REBELS
8-29 @ Vanderbilt
9-7 SE Missouri State
9-14 @ Texas
9-21 BYE
9-28 @ Alabama
10-5 @ Auburn
10-12 Texas A&M
10-19 LSU
10-26 Idaho
11-2 BYE
11-9 Arkansas
11-16 Troy
11-23 Missouri
11-28 @ Mississippi State

MISSOURI TIGERS
8-31 Murry State
9-7 Toledo
9-14 BYE
9-21 @ Indiana
9-28 Arkansas State
10-5 @ Vanderbilt
10-12 @ Georgia
10-19 Florida
10-26 South Carolina
11-2 Tennessee
11-9 @ Kentucky
11-16 BYE
11-23 @ Ole Miss
11-30 Texas A&M

SOUTH CAROLINA GAMECOCKS
8-29 North Carolina
9-7 @ Georgia
9-14 Vanderbilt
9-21 BYE
9-28 @ UFC
10-5 Kentucky
10-12 @ Arkansas
10-19 @ Tennessee
10-26 @ Missouri
11-2 Mississippi State
11-9 BYE
11-16 Florida
11-23 Coastal Carolina
11-30 Clemson

TENNESSEE VOLUNTEERS
8-31 Austin Peay
9-7 Western Kentucky
9-14 @ Oregon
9-21 @ Florida
9-28 South Alabama
10-5 Georgia
10-12 BYE
10-19 South Carolina
10-26 @ Alabama
11-2 @ Missouri
11-9 Auburn
11-16 BYE
11-23 Vanderbilt
11-30 @ Kentucky

TEXAS A&M REBELS
8-31 Rice
9-7 Sam Houston State
9-14 Alabama
9-21 SMU
9-28 @ Arkansas
10-5 BYE
10-12 @ Ole Miss
10-19 Auburn
10-26 Vanderbilt
11-2 UTEP
11-9 Mississippi State
11-16 BYE
11-23 @ LSU
11-30 @ Missouri

VANDERBILT COMMADORES
8-29 Ole Miss
9-7 Austin Peay
9-14 @ South Carolina
9-21 @ UMASS
9-28 UAB
10-5 Missouri
10-12 BYE
10-19 Georgia
10-26 @ Texas A&M
11-2 BYE
11-9 @ Florida
11-16 Kentucky
11-23 @ Tennessee
11-30 Wake Forest

Area Team Spotlight: the West Point Warriors

By: Josh McBrayer
joshmcbrayer@cullmansense.com

WEST POINT- This week the CullmanSense Spotlight focuses on the West Point Warriors. Just like other teams across the county, West Point has undergone some off season changes, losing players to graduation and grooming others to step in and take their place. But unlike other teams, West Point is one of the two county schools that have also gained a new head coach in a short summer months, Holly Pond is the other.

Former defensive coordinator Don Farley has been named the new West Point Warriors head football coach, losing the interim tag. He has had his players working hard in the off season and hopes to have them ready to dominate Region Eight in 5A.

With school getting ready to start again around Cullman and football season shortly after that, coach Farley took time out of his busy schedule to answer these questions for the Spotlight.

Josh McBrayer: What starters from last year's team did you lose? What positions did they play?
Don Farley: On offense we lost linemen Paul Quattlebaum and Aaron Griggs, Wide Receiver Wesley Smith, and Running Back Tate Duckett. On defense we lost Linebackers Kristian Chappell and Brandon Addison and Defensive End Wesley Waters.

JM: What new players do you have coming in this year that will see a lot of playing time? What positions?
DF: New players coming in on offense are Linemen Josh Gray (Sr.), Delton Cooke (Jr), and Drew Jenkins (So.). On defensive, Defensive Linemen Brandon Wray (Sr.), Linebackers Austin Young (Jr.), Jacob Daniel (Jr.), and Tanner Young (So.), in the Secondary Blake Yearwood (Jr.), Ryan Dye (Jr.), and Jordin Skinner (So.).

JM: Who are you looking to for the biggest impact on offense? Defense?
DF: Offensively we are expecting Linemen Chandler Nelson (Sr.), Zach Tilley (Sr.), and Kyle Butler (Jr.) to lead the way for Quarterback Bryant Farley (Jr.), Tight End Ryder Jones (Jr.), Wide Receiver Will Wrenn (Jr.), and Running Backs Tristan Dubberly (Sr.) and Kobe Smith (So.). Defensively we are expecting big things from Jacob Perez (Jr.), Lance Ray (Jr.), Trent Campbell (Jr.), Levi Laney (Jr.), Joseph Slatton (Sr.), and Dustin Gonzalez (So.).

JM: What are your expectations for the 2013 season?
DF: The kids have worked extremely hard and we are excited about the 2013 season. We are taking each week one at a time and our goal is to improve every week and to be in the playoff picture come seasons end.

It will be a tough road for the Warriors, but if anyone is up to the task, it's West Point.

WSCC volleyball ranked No. 18 in NJCAA Division I preseason poll

By: Russell Moore • WSCC Contributor

HANCEVILLE – Wallace State's volleyball team is ranked No. 18 in the NJCAA Division I pre-season poll, released Monday. The Lions are recognized in the Top 20 preseason ranking for the fifth year in a row and will seek their fifth consecutive state championship this season under coach Randy Daniel.

"Seeing us ranked in the preseason is always a great honor. It shows we've done well in the past and that our expectations are again high for this team," said coach Randy Daniel.

Returning Wallace State sophomores are setter Nicole Penny and outside hitter Kianna Delaney. Penny, an ACCC/Region 22 all-tournament selection last season and 2nd-team All-Region member, finished with a team-high 1,076 assists, while Delaney, a 2nd-team All-Region member, was second on the team with 249 digs and third with 361 kills. Newcomer Blaise Brown, a 5-foot-8 setter from Southside HS in Gadsden, rounds out the sophomore class.

Wallace State has 11 freshmen on this season's roster, highlighted by outside hitter Montana Clark, from Plainview, who holds the Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) record with 3,045 career digs. She also is third in the all-time AHSAA ranks with 2,569 career kills.

Wallace State finished with a 33-8 record last season, capturing its fourth straight ACCC/Region 22 tournament title and fifth consecutive ACCC/Region 22 regular-season championship.

The team made its fourth straight trip to the NJCAA national tournament in West Plains, Mo., and 13th overall.

Wallace State opens the 2013 season on Aug. 23-24, hosting its sixth annual tournament at Tom Drake Coliseum.

Daniel, entering his seventh year with the Lions, has a 228-41 career record at Wallace State.

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

cp&r
cullman city parks & recreation

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

www.cullmanrecreation.org
256-734-9157

- **Yoga Classes**: Stay fit and relax with yoga held at the Civic Center every Tuesday night at 6:00pm with Fabian Holland. Six classes for $40 or $30 for seniors.
- **Nia Dance/Ageless Grace 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.
- **Dog Obedience Classes:** Tina Cagle Parker will be holding dog obedience classes at the Cullman Civic Center on Tuesday nights beginning on Tuesday, August 13 at 6pm. Class is 6 weeks after first week orientation. Puppy class at 6pm and adult class at 7pm. $65 per dog; register at the Civic Center.
- **CLUCKNBREW:** CP&R will be holding Clucknbrew, a wingfest event on Saturday, September 7 at Depot Park. There will be a wing cook off, live music, beer, a kid's zone, games, and more. The event will be held from 3pm-9pm. Call 256-734-9157 for details.
- **Fall Baseball/Softball Registration:** August 1-20 at the Cullman Civic Center for ages 6-8 and 9-12. Cost per child is $75 or $350 per team. Fall Men's and Coed softball is also registering from August 1-20 at Heritage Park for $350 per team. Call 256-739-9931 for details.
- **Wilderness Survival Classes:** Held at Hurricane Creek Park on Sunday afternoons at 1pm, this course teaches basic survival skills including building a shelter, fire, finding safe water, and navigating. Register in advance by calling 256-734-2125.
- **First Time Rock Climbing:** Available for anyone interested in trying rock climbing with little or no experience. The program is offered on Saturday mornings at Hurricane Creek Park to anyone 6&up. A professional guide will be on site and all gear is included. Reserve ahead at 256-734-2125.
- **Tee off at Cullman Golf Course:** Come by our beautiful 18 hole course and relax with a game of golf! Discounts daily after 2pm. Call to book a time at 256-739-2386.

Follow @CullmanSense

Farm Y'all Just a Few Days Away

Saturday festival to feature regionally sanctioned giant pumpkin weigh-in, celebrity chefs, local farmers, food tasting, educational classes, exhibits, fun for children, and more.

By: Noah Chandler
noahchandler@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – With just under a year since Leah Bolin took the reins as president, the Cullman Chamber of Commerce, or aptly known now as CoC, has been restructuring not only the way business is conducted inside the organization but also how the organization interacts with the community.

The newest venture the CoC is undertaking is the inaugural Farm Y'all – Farm to Fork Festival, set in the historic Downtown District. Bolin said many deciding factors went into the formulation Farm Y'all, but none as important as Cullman's ranking as top in the state for agriculture.

"This is both an honor and an advantage to this community. The CoC wanted to develop programs that helped our farmers, educated the public, and brought tourists to the area for ag specific experiences. (this is called agritourism) Jackie Moore, Director of Business and Workforce Development, and I set out to create some of these new programs," Bolin said.

"Providentially, we received a call from one of our local farmers, Trent Boyd, to discuss the possibility of hosting a regionally sanctioned giant pumpkin weigh-in here in Cullman. Obviously, we were all ears. That meeting led to many other meetings. The Agribusiness Committee partnered with The County extension office, Farm-City, local farmers, local restaurants, and local merchants to launch this new ag festival called Farm Y'all," she continued.

When Bolin was asked what the importance of the event was for both farmers and residents residing inside the city she listed off a four significant points.

She said:

-This is the farmer's time to shine! Farming is a hot, laboring, back breaking job. They love what they do and we love the benefits of their labor! It's about time we hold an event that honors our local farmers!

-We want folks to understand the importance of growing and eating locally. This not only helps to sustain our farmers, but yields many benefits to the consumer such tastier foods and a healthier lifestyle.

-"It's the economy stupid." Farm to table initiatives are being developed all over the nation. We want folks to understand that every time money changes hands within a community, it boosts the community's overall income and level of economic activity, and fuels the creation of jobs. Farming is no exception.

-Tourism is more than theme parks and beaches. Tourists want to have fun and they want to have an experience. Agritourism is an untapped resource for our farmers and our local economy. Thousands of people have never touched a goat or a cow. They have never seen how farmers plant and harvest a crop. Cullman is the perfect destination for these experiences and Farm Y'all is the perfect venue.

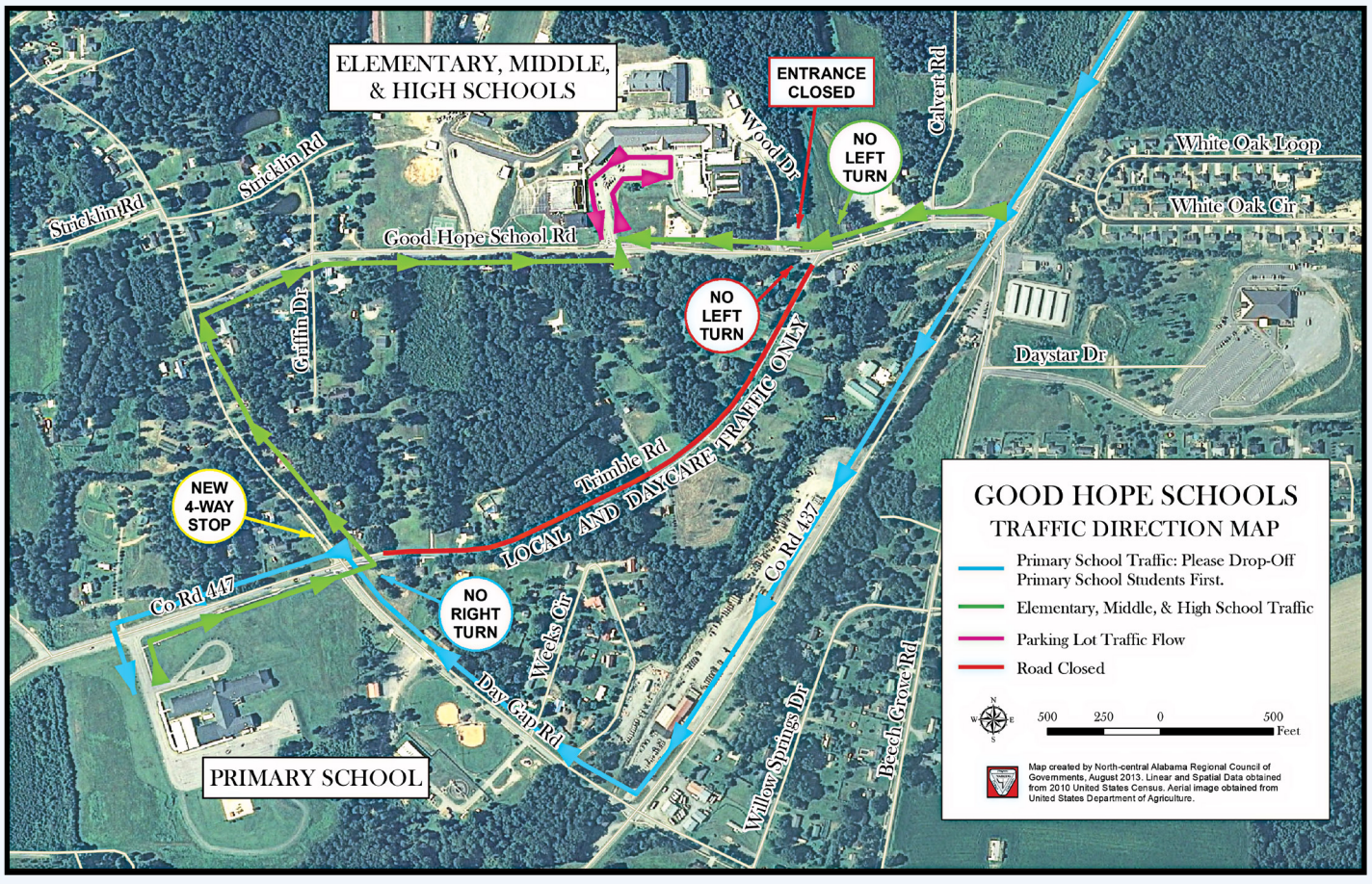
Despite being a first year event, Bolin said the response to the Farm to Table Dinner was overwhelming, as it sold out within just a few days of its announcement.

"We would like to give a big shout-out to TriGreen Equipment for sponsoring this event. Without our sponsors, events like Farm Y'all would not be possible," she said. "Please visit the website for a complete list of all of our sponsors and better yet, take to visit and thank each of them for supporting our farmers and the local food initiative."

The fun and festivities will begin at 8 a.m. Saturday with a local chef demonstration at the Festhalle Market Platz.

There will be contests, celebrity chefs, farmers in the market, food tasting, live music, education classes, exhibits, children's activities, local food vendors, and of course the giant pumpkin weigh-in. A complete schedule can be viewed on the festival's website: www.farmyall.com.

Good Hope Schools Traffic Direction Map Released



Cullman native named finalist for 480th Airman AF level Award

By: Joyce Nix

Joint Base Langley-Eustis, VA – A member of the 480th Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Wing, Lt. Robert Lee, has been selected as a finalist for the Air Force Association's Gill Robb Wilson Award.

The AFA presents this award—named for Gill Robb Wilson, an American pilot, minister, military advocate, writer, and the first director of the Civil Air Patrol—for the most outstanding contribution to national defense in the field of arts and letters, covering a wide range of activity such as writing, speaking, and media relations.

Lee earned his nomination because of his numerous writing and speaking accomplishments last year in the area of cyber security, but does not take full credit.

"My nomination is not a singular achievement by me," said Lee, "but is more a representation of a lot of work by a lot of great people, starting with my chain of command and including my Wing Public Affairs Office. I'm very thankful for the team I get to serve with."


Lee

Last year, Lee published papers on advanced cyber threats and direction of the cyberspace domain in four magazines; presented speeches at conferences in five different countries creating international alliances on battling cyber threats; and penned nine newspaper articles and six magazine stories on cyber security.

Lee also devoted off-duty time to teaching free classes on cyber defense to more than 100 on-base personnel.

"We are all extremely proud of Lt. Lee for being recognized at the Air Force level for his contributions," said Lt. Col. Maurizio Calabrese, Lee's squadron commander.

"His selection as a finalist is well deserved, and he is a shining example of how our newest generation of Airmen are the driving force in maintaining America's advantage in the cyberspace domain."

Lee plans to continue his efforts on educating people about cyber defense in the foreseeable future.

"I will use this nomination as another piece of motivation to continue speaking and writing on the important topic of cyberspace and how we approach national security in that domain," noted Lee.

The Air Force had just three nominees for the award, putting Lee among an elite group of people.

"I'm honored to be considered for this award" said Lee, "especially with competition such as the Air Force Band and 22d Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs Office."

The Air Force Association is a non-profit, independent, professional military and aerospace education association promoting public understanding of aerospace power and the pivotal role it plays in the security of the nation.

Lt. Lee is currently an Adjunct Professor at Utica College in their graduate-level Cybersecurity distance program and is publishing a book titled "SCADA and Me" in September. He is the son of Cullman residents James and Mary Lee. Lee is a 2006 graduate of Saint Bernard Prep School in Cullman.

In 2012 he obtained his Bachelor of Science from the United States Air Force Academy, and in 2013 received his Master of Science from Utica College.

LIFE After Dark:

Hillbilly Lovers perform at Moe's BBQ

By: Dillon Lee • Entertainment Editor
dillon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Welcome to Life After Dark, this is the first of what we hope will be a recurring series covering Cullman's burgeoning nightlife, restaurants, pubs, and music. CullmanSense has always covered major entertainment events in Cullman like Rock the South, Celebrate Cullman, and the recent Pub Crawl. However, Life After Dark will allow us to look more specifically at the people and places that are creating a cultural and artistic renaissance in downtown.

The Hillbilly Lovers, fronted by husband and wife Rob and Veronica Wright, are entertainers. An hour observing their stage show and a few moments speaking with band and you know that right away. "I'd drive 3 hours for $100 bucks," proclaims the prolific Rob, a music veteran of myriad stage acts including Christian groups like Truth and For Him. He even played for popular evangelist Benny Hinn. He is at home with a guitar in his hand and never more alive that when he is on stage.

Rob had finished a double shift by the time the Hillbilly Lovers started setting up at Moe's. His friends asked him if he was worried that he would crash. How could he maintain the stamina needed? Rob simply answers, "I feed off the energy of the crowd." It sustains him.

Veronica has been singing with Rob for 20 years. Lately, Veronica has been grateful of all the venues available in Cullman. The group has played at The Local Standard, the Elks Lodge, and has made another appearance at Moe's after their debut performance at that venue on August 1st. Veronica likes to make at least three appearances in Cullman a month. It's close to their home in Blountsville but more importantly, playing in Cullman lets the HillBilly Lovers keep their music a family affair.

Veronica and Rob are often joined on the stage by their two eldest children, Harrison Gage Woodard, 15 and Emma Kansas, 12. Harrison plays bass on select tunes while Emma harmonizes and occasionally takes lead vocals with her mother and father. Harrison and Emma both show a vibrant interest in theatre and film. Emma even appeared in an nationally viewed Indie short. There are two younger Wrights at home, aged 4 and 6 months, already showing a predilection, or well on the road, towards the family business.

Playing more traditional bars like the Oasis in Nashville and Overtime off Lakeshore in Birmingham, Veronica explains, "Sometimes we have to keep the kids in the back until showtime." That's the joy of playing in Cullman. Every venue is an all-ages affair. Families come and go, enjoying the show, the food, and, if appropriate, an adult beverage. Everyone is included.

In fact, Saturday at Moe's allowed the extended family to temporarily join the HillBilly Lovers doing what they do best. Local contractor and cousin to Veronica, Dale Bales, sat in on bass, as his daughter Leah Bales harmonized with her cousin Emma. Leah is a recent Cullman High School graduate with a passion for music and performing, spending years on the CHS Danceline and making a stunning choral and theatrical debut her senior year. Dancing and singing are second nature to Leah, who leaves home for Covenant College this week. When asked about the upcoming move, Leah said with a smile, "I don't want to talk about it." Clearly, a bit nervous about the dramatic shift in her life, Leah was happy to live in the here and now enjoying some time with family and friends.

The HillBilly Lovers are a self-described "good time cover band." When asked what guides them in making the decision on what to cover and how to make it their own, Rob answered, "One of us will bring a song to the table, then we see if we can pull it off with a guitar, kick drum, and bass." The challenge does not seem to be the adaptation, but in presenting the constant diversity of songs the Lovers strive for.

According to Veronica, "You have to read the crowd and sell it with a balanced mix (of music)." Delivered with a soulfulness and country rock sensibility, Veronica almost brings the crowd to church with an impassioned, gospel tinged cover of Prince's "Purple Rain." Continuing to please the assorted revelers, Rob and Veronica present standard cover tunes like "Space Cowboy" and "Wanted Dead or Alive." But remember, it's about diversity; it's about pushing an arrangement with just a kick drum and guitar.



Rob Wright (left) with Emma Wright and cousin, Leah Bales. Photo by Dara Moss

To accomplish that almost surprising range, the Lovers bring out a jangling version of Alanis Morissette's "One Hand in My Pocket" and Bruno Mars' "Heaven." Pushing their range further, the two offer a duet of Adele's "Rumor Has It" transforming the song fundamentally and, like "Purple Rain," giving rise to something new.

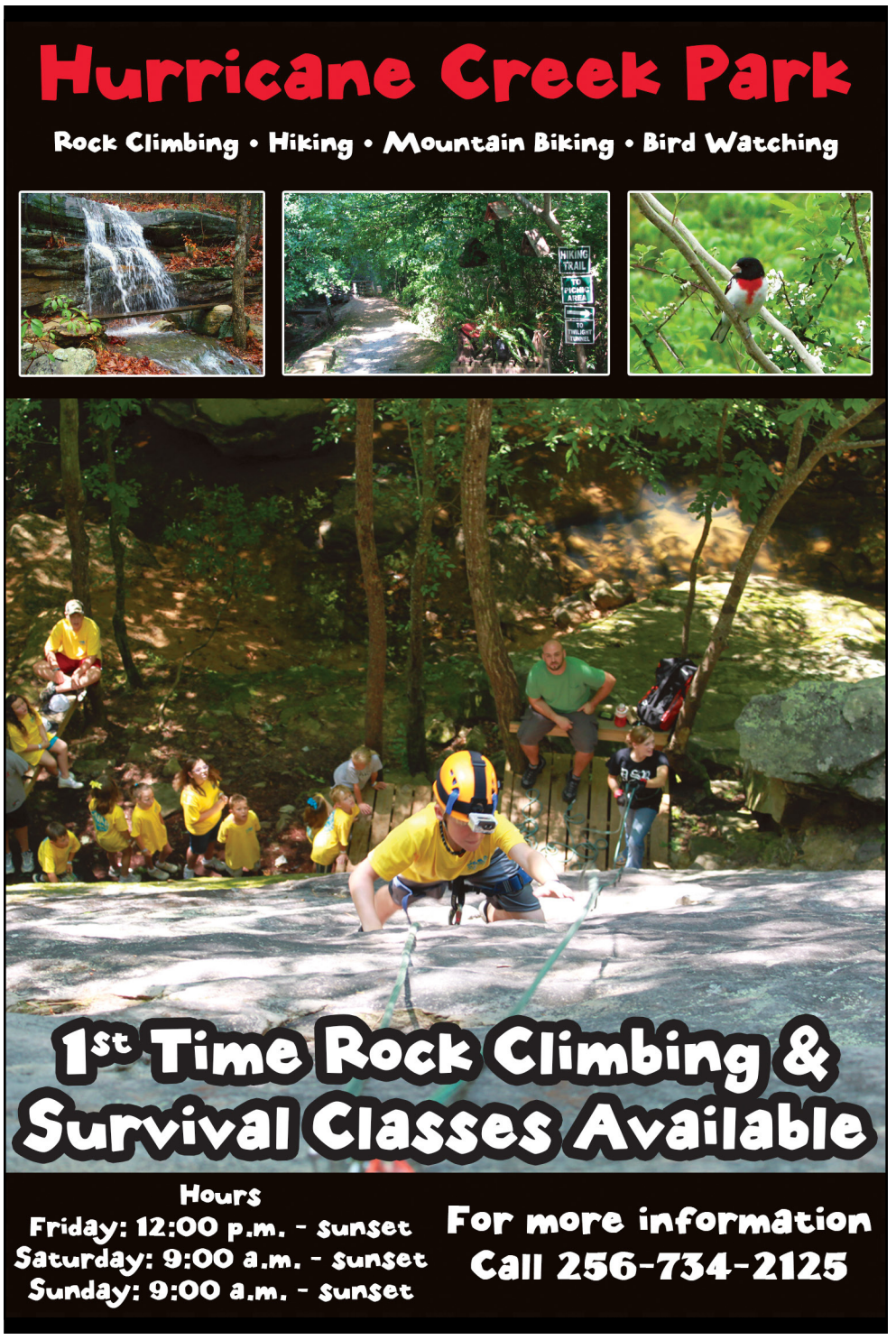
As consummate entertainers, having as much fun as the crowd in front of them, the HillBilly Lovers pull audience members onstage to dance or even join in the vocals.

It's shameless interactive fun and everyone seems to love it. They are sure they will return to Moe's and its family friendly atmosphere. Rob compliments the establishment's "good management" and their stage which features "plug and play" wiring. These strengths make the physical setting of Moe's one of the best small venues in town.

Coming up, the Lovers will hit Somewhere On the Lake in Guntersville and return to Overtime in Birmingham, always with a keen eye towards Cullman. As the nightlife continues to heat up, talented acts like the HillBilly Lovers will be continue to be drawn here. Drawn towards a Downtown in the midst of renaissance and a culture in bloom, they are summoned like a moth to a beacon in the dark.

Check out the HillBilly Lovers on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/HillBillyLovers.





– 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.

Holly Pond Center Open Daily
Holly Pond Senior Center opens its doors to all seniors each Monday through Friday with games, fellowship, rook, Wii bowling, and a lunch served each day at 11 a.m.

Domestic Violence Survivor Support Group
Victim Services of Cullman sponsors a Domestic Violence Survivor Support Group meeting every Monday evening from 5 p.m. until 7 p.m. in the old County Board of Education Building with childcare available. For additional information please call 256-775-2600. CRISIS HOTLINE - 256-734-6100.

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.

Fairview Senior Center Open Tuesdays
Fairview Senior Center opens its door in the Town Hall each Tuesday morning for all seniors. Activities and games include rook, dominoes and other entertaining events. A covered dish meal will be available until 12 noon. For more info please call 256-796-5424.

Free 'Sign Language' Classes Offered Weekly
Free 'sign language' classes will be offered each Tuesday and Thursday for 5 weeks (Tuesdays June 18, 25, July 2, 9, and 16) and Thursdays (June 20, 27, July 4, 11, and 18) with classes scheduled for 3 periods 8 a.m. until 10 a.m.; 10 a.m. until 12 noon; and 1 p.m. until 3 p.m. Classes will be held at the Child Development Center and to enroll please call the Center at 256-739-0486. Avail yourself of these free learning services if you are friends with or associated with anyone with hearing disabilities.

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.

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.

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

'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.

Good Hope Senior Center Open Wednesdays
Good Hope Senior Center welcomes all senior citizens to come visit on Wednesday mornings for music, games such as rook, dominoes, Wii bowling and many other activities. A covered dish lunch is served at 11:30 a.m. All are welcome!! The Senior Center is located inside the Good Hope Town Hall.

Latter Day Saints Genealogy Library
The Genealogy Library at the Latter Day Saints (L.D.S.) Church is open to the public each Wednesday night from 7 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. Don Jones is available to open the Library at other times, if needed, so please contact him at 256-784-5098.

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.

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

Thursday

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

Baileyton Senior Center open Thursdays
Baileyton Senior Center opens its doors every Thursday morning with music, games, activities, rook, dominoes, Wii Bowling and fun for all. A covered dish lunch is served at 11:30 a.m. For more information please call 256-796-6447.

Free 'Sign Language' Classes Offered Weekly
Free 'sign language' classes will be offered each Tuesday and Thursday for 5 weeks (Tuesdays June 18, 25, July 2, 9, and 16) and Thursdays (June 20, 27, July 4, 11, and 18) with classes scheduled for 3 periods 8 a.m. until 10 a.m.; 10 a.m. until 12 noon; and 1 p.m. until 3 p.m. Classes will be held at the Child Development Center and to enroll please call the Center at 256-739-0486. Avail yourself of these free learning services if you are friends with or associated with anyone with hearing disabilities.

Elks Lodge Buffet Lunch
Cullman Elks Lodge opens their doors to the general public on Thursdays for their buffet lunches served from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. each Thursday. Meal is $8.00 for two meats, vegetables, drink! So come visit your neighbors and enjoy a great meal to boot.

First Community Bank Women's Investing Class
All women are invited to attend a FREE 'Women's Investing' Class at 12 noon at First Community Bank. This free educational lunchtime meeting is being held to help women learn more about investing for themselves. Bring your own lunch. This is NOT a sales meeting. For additional information please contact Heather Branch at 256-734-4863.

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

'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.

Chamber of Commerce 4th Friday Luncheon
Everyone is invited to attend the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce's 4th Friday Luncheon starting at 11:30 a.m. at the All Steak Restaurant. This month's featured speaker will be Cliff Vaughn of Red Clay Pictures, the production company which is working on the story of 'Brother Joseph and the Ave Maria Grotto' located right here in Cullman at St. Bernard Abbey. Lunch is $15.00 for Chamber members and $20.00 for 'future' members. Reservations in advance are required. Please register at www.cullmanchambe.org or through e-mail at info@cullmanchamber.org or you may simply call 256-734-0454.

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

Saturday

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.

Dogfest 2013
Dogfest 2013 will take place at St. Paul's Lutheran School starting with registration at 9 a.m. All dogs must be on a leash. Events, which start at 9:30 a.m., will include a wiener dog race (must be a Dachshund with 2 people to assist the dog - 1 to hold it at starting line, and the other person to call the dog to the finish line), which costs $5.00 per dog to enter and $10.00 for all other categories which will include best dressed, most like it's owner, most talented, cutest, ugliest, cutest in bathing suit, and best kisser while licking their owners' faces! Attendees will take part in a dog parade following all the festivities. Food will be available for purchase during the event. Funds raised will go toward both the Cullman Animal Shelter and St. Paul's Lutheran School Scholarship Fund. Come out and show off your family pets and enjoy a morning of great fun. Please call 256-734-6580 for more information.

Good Hope Farmers Market
Local Good Hope farmers and growers will be on hand to sell their produce each Saturday from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. at Hathcock Park in Good Hope.

Rock Climbing at Hurricane Creek Park
If you are interested in rock climbing then check-in with Hurricane Creek Park for their Saturday morning rock climbing session, starting at 10 a.m. Reservations are required. For more information, call 256-734-2125. Hurricane Creek Park is located on Highway 31 North.

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.

Holly Pond Center Open Daily
Holly Pond Senior Center opens its doors to all seniors each Monday through Friday with games, fellowship, rook, Wii bowling and a lunch served each day at 11 a.m.

Domestic Violence Survivor Support Group
Victim Services of Cullman sponsors a Domestic Violence Survivor Support Group meeting every Monday evening from 5 p.m. until 7 p.m. in the old County Board of Education Building with childcare available. For additional information please call 256-775-2600. CRISIS HOTLINE - 256-734-6100.

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

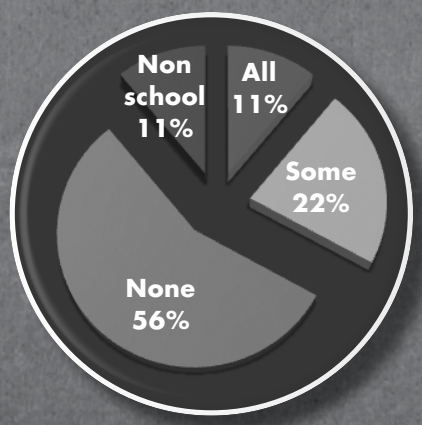
Cullman Oktoberfest
This year's Cullman Oktoberfest will be held October 5-12, 2013 at Festhalle Market Platz and Cullman County Museum. For more information e-mail jburks@cullmancity.org and visit www.cullmanoktoberfest.com.

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.

Register for Summer Youth Programs
Now registering for North Alabama Agriplex Summer Youth Programs. Summer Garden Camps for ages 3-10, starting May 29th, 9:30-11:00 a.m. Touring Farms for Kids, June 19-20, ages 7-13, and Sewing Camp July 9-12 ages 5-10. For more info call 256-297-1044 or e-mail cullmanag@gmail.com.

Last Week's Poll

Did you do your back to school shopping during the tax holiday?



This Week's Poll

Have you been the victim of an online scam? Did you find resolution?
Vote Today at CullmanSense.com/Poll

Reflections of History

Share your historic photos with us!
E-mail history@cullmansense.com



Kuhn's Variety Store - 1958 — Contrib. by Cullman County Museum

This Week in History

August 19th
- 1692 – 5 women executed for witchcraft in Salem, Mass.
- 1897 - First electric taxi's drive in London
- 1955 – U.S. raises import duty on bicycles 50%

August 20th
- 1741 – Alaska discovered by Danish explorer Vitus Bering
- 1910 – U.S. supported opposition brings down Madriz in Nicaragua
- 1941 – Police raid 11th district of Paris, takes 4,000+ Jewish males

August 21st
- 1938 – Italy bars all Jewish teachers in Public and High School
- 1967 – Ken Harrelson becomes baseball's first free agent
- 1995 – U.S. marshals move in on Randy Weaver's cabin in Idaho – Ruby Ridge

August 22nd
- 1654 - First Jewish immigrant to U.S., Jacob Barsimson arrives in New Amsterdam
- 1846 – U.S. annexes New Mexico
- 1958 – Great Britain performs atmospheric nuclear test at Christmas Island

August 23rd
- 1784 –Eastern Tennessee settlers declare their area an independent state and name it Franklin; a year later the Continental Congress rejects it
- 1906 –Cuba's first president Tomas Estrada Palma asks for U.S. intervention
- 1974 – John Lennon reports seeing a UFO in New York City

August 24th
- 79 – Mount Vesuvius erupts, buries Pompeii and Herculaneum, 15,000 die
- 1891 – Thomas Edison patents motion picture camera
- 2011 – Apple Inc. CEO Steve Jobs resigns over poor health issues; Tim Cook takes over as CEO

August 25th
- 1718 – Hundreds of French colonists arrive in Louisiana; New Orleans is founded
- 2012 – Astronaut Neil Armstrong, the first person on the Moon, dies at age 82

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Men's and Co-ed Softball
Miracle League

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cpr ATHLETICS
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or Heritage park @ 256-739-9931/9582
www.cullmanrecreation.org

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Netflix Gold: *Once Upon a Time in The West*

By: Dillon Lee • Entertainment Editor
dillon@cullmansense.com

The classics never die and new classics are made all the time. Netflix Gold lets us remind you of some fantastic films floating in the cloud of the world most popular streaming movie service.

It's almost like every western ever made led to this masterpiece by Sergio Leone. He arguably made his greatest "Spaghetti western" attempting to swear off the genre.

Its construction is like a transformative doctoral dissertation on the Great American Western as Leone brilliantly references westerns of days past and fundamentally affects great artists of today (notably Quentin Tarantino and the makers of the western video game opus *Red Dead Redemption*).

While initially a flop, it is considered one of the greats of all time. Its merits are many, here are just a few:

It has the quintessential element so impressive about late 60s and 70s films- the lack of over-explanation rife in today's movies. Things are given time to build- slowly, intentionally. The motivations of the principle villains are not revealed until an hour into the film. The opening scene is methodically paced, with almost no dialog or music.

Characters are built through reaction and small moments that hang on the screen. Scenic vistas and quiet encounters are suddenly punctuated by brief violence. Tension is expertly constructed as if each stand-off takes place at high noon.

The casting is magnificent- as perennial Western hero, Peter Fonda, plays a great bad guy; Charles Bronson plays a typical quiet menace. Meanwhile, Jason Robards steals almost every scene he is in as an imminently likable antihero. Even the railroad baron, the vilest of western bad guys, is given complexity. Time is taken to allow the audience to understand his misguided motivations.

The dialog is sparse and utilitarian- but often unforgettable. Take this line uttered by Fonda's character Frank, "How can you trust a man who wears both a belt and suspenders? The man can't even trust his own pants."

It is a somber methodical masterpiece and certainly not for every movie or even western fan, but the subtle way in which *Once Upon a Time in the West* characterizes and epitomizes the death of legendary time in American history and in a way punctuates the death of traditional Western cinema.

Can't Live With 'Em: A Review of Brian K Vaughan's *Y The Last Man*

By: Jackson Hogan
Entertainment Reporter

A woman calls out in urgency: her sons are sick. She is covered in their blood. She reaches out to a female police officer for aid, but the police officer shrugs her off. "It's too late. It's like this everywhere. My partner. My Husband. All over the city. All over the world, maybe. . . it's the men." The police officer puts her own gun to her temple. "All the men are dead."

This is the kick-start opening of the sprawling epic that documents the only known male survivor of a plague that wipes out every y-chromosomed being on the face of the earth, 22 year old escape artist Yorick Brown.

With his pet monkey Ampersand, who is the only male animal that is known to be alive, he sets out in the suddenly apocalyptic wasteland that is the United States without man. Along the way he is aided by his mother (a U.S. Congresswoman), who assigns Agent 355 of the mysterious Culper Ring to be his guardian and guide.

The character dynamic of Yorick and Agent 355 is one of the many gems of this series, with affable comic Yorick playing off the colloquial "straight-man" persona of 355.

They make their way across the Eastern seaboard, facing a myriad of challenges, including the haunting group of femme fatales known as "the Amazons", a gang that styles themselves after the mythological Greek all-women warriors.

Eventually, they reach Boston to meet the famed geneticist Dr. Allison Mann, who completes the trio. It is from there that the real journey begins.

To list all the interesting happenings and brilliant symbolisms of this work would take a far greater writer than I, as well as infinitely more space. This work takes on the mantle of the classic journey tale in the heritage of the *Odyssey*, bursting at the seams with ingenuity and wit. The way Vaughan executes his premise is creative yet grounded in reality, never really going so far as science fiction but always transcending the hum-drum of reality.

What is most significant is the eclectic blend of punny on-the-nose humor, real suspense, literary reference, and widespread social critique.

The reader is never fully relieved of the gravity of the plague and the height of the stakes, but by the same token the read is never too heavy. This balance makes the pace of the novel remain much more of a romp than a slog.

In addition, anyone who is at all familiar with any vector of pop culture would find some deep cut reference to relish within the 10 volumes of *Y*.

The social critique, as said before, is sterling, being a large part of what makes this book so relevant and rich. The U.S. President, Vice President, Speaker of the House, etcetera were (and are) all men, leaving the reins of power to the Secretary of Agriculture.

The vast majority of pilots were men, as well as the majority of truckers, CEO's, boat captains, cops, and military personnel. The infrastructure collapses overnight, left vulnerable due to the disproportionate nature of employment in the world.

But in the same breath violent crime worldwide also disappears, as statistically men are the main perpetrators. Factions form, hailing this new status quo as disaster or divine providence, blessing or curse.

Nations that allowed women to be equals in both the public and private forum become superpowers overnight, while those that repressed women's freedoms and abilities suffer the consequences.

Without doubt, the commentary Vaughan provides sets this book on par or above the majority of traditional literature.

A review of a graphic novel would be incomplete without mentioning the artwork of the piece.

Pia Guerra, the Canadian artist who drew the 1,000 plus pages of *Y*, abandons the polished, computer generated glossy style of art that is so prevalent in modern comics.

Instead, she chooses to provide a subdued, simple style of artwork that is detailed but stripped down at the same time, never flashy but always effective.

Yet the highest triumph of Guerra is the faces of her characters: they bring each word bubble to life with detailed expressions that truly speak the words and convey the meaning of each person.

It can be difficult for some readers to accept the fact that the medium of the graphic novel (a.k.a. the comic book) can be every bit as poignant and literary as the classic novel format.

For a long time comics have held an untrue stigma of childishness, lack of sophistication, or true aesthetic merit.

And while it is true that not all of the "funny books" are made for adults to enjoy on a high level of thought, neither are all traditional books.

Y, which earned five Eisner awards, takes full advantage of every tool in the comic book utility belt, combining the thrilling directorial shots of powerful cinema with the effervescent flow of prose dialogue that accompanies great writing.

Whether you have enjoyed comics before or not, this series will satisfy every craving for entertainment you possess while also fulfilling intellectual desires. It will also make you think twice before wishing you're the only man alive.

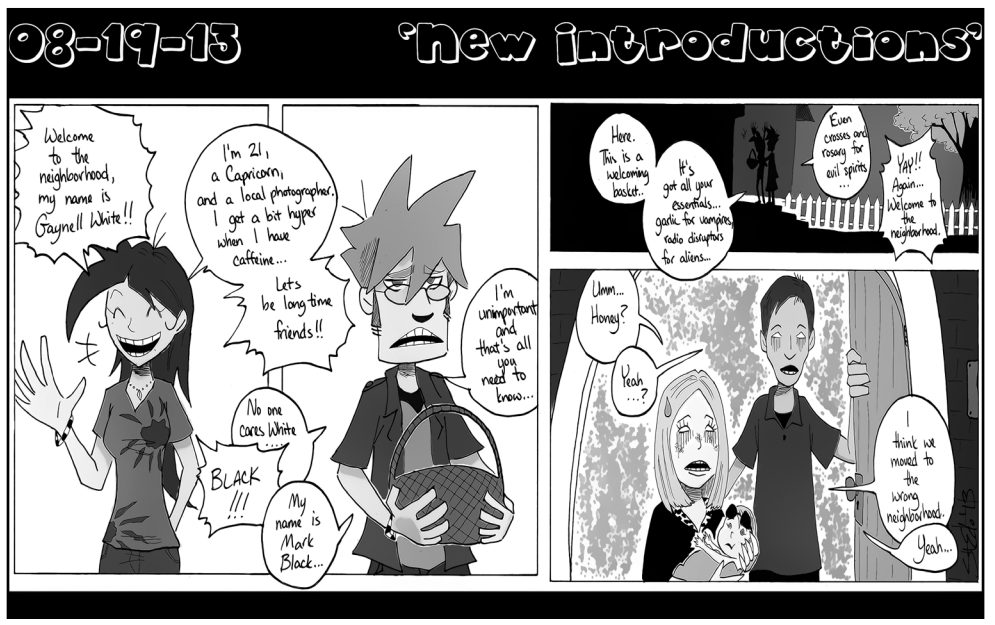
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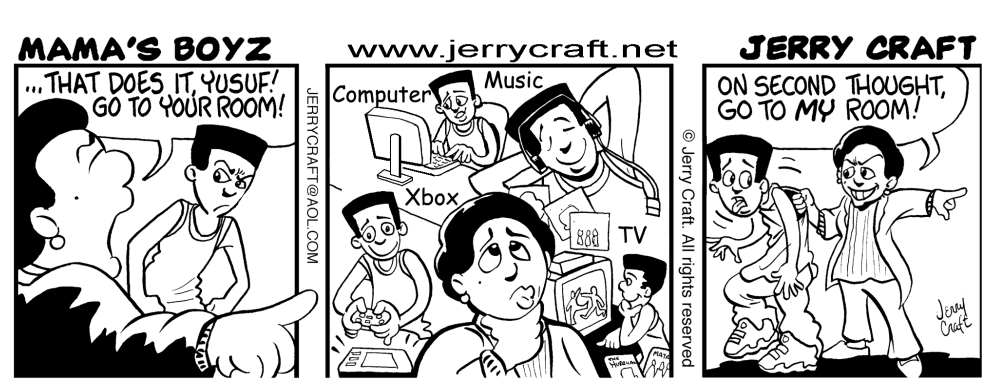
Are you a **local cartoonist?** **We** want to feature **your** work! **E-mail** comics@cullmansense.com

SUNNY STREET



"OOooh! Looks like we hit the jackpot Rita! Royalty!"





What should we review next? reviews@cullmansense.com

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Ala. needs a comprehensive water management plan now, not later

By: Mitch Reid

The Roman orator Quintilian once said, "Whilst we deliberate how to begin a thing, it grows too late to begin it." The recent decision by the State of Florida to escalate the water war over Georgia's use of water for Atlanta should ring as an alarm to the people of Alabama that time is running out for us to protect our water resources. While Florida moves ahead with action to enforce its water plan and protect its natural resources, Alabama is scrambling to put such a plan together.

Alabama is the only state in the tri-state water conflict that does not have a comprehensive water management plan, leaving us in the weakest position for negotiating the water needs of people, businesses, communities, and ecosystems. A look at the history of Supreme Court decisions dealing with interstate water conflicts shows that, when the court decides who gets the water, they tip the scales in favor of the states with the best plan for protecting and using the limited resource. If we delay much longer we will surely be left with whatever our neighbors can't use.

A comprehensive water plan is crucial for the protection of Alabama's water resources. Alabama shares most of our water with our neighboring states, so the future of Alabama's water resources depends not only on making sure that water uses within our borders are fair and balanced against protecting the system future generations but also on balancing our water needs with our neighboring states' needs as well. To do this, Alabama must implement a meaningful management plan geared to the long-term sustainability of our water resources. To safeguard our fair share of the water, our plan must ensure that we are as efficient as possible in our water use, that we account for and balance the competing needs of water users across the state, and that we have protections in place to ensure that our rivers and bay ecosystems have the water they need to sustain the system. Only then can we demonstrate that our neighbors are taking more than they deserve.

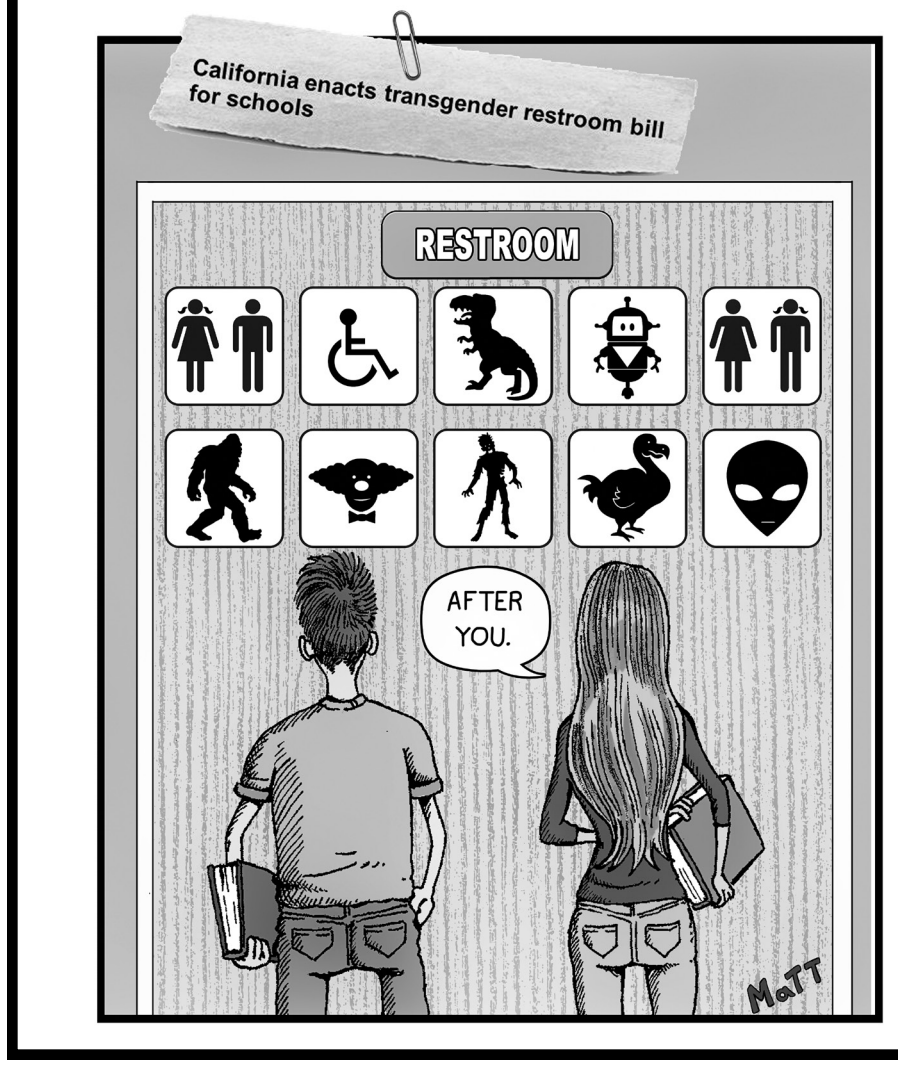
Alabama has had fair warning that this crisis was headed our way. In 1990, Governor Guy Hunt created the Alabama Water Resources Study Commission to study water shortages in the '80s. The Commission found that every day that the State delayed in developing a plan brought us one day closer to the worst case scenarios. In 2008, the State Legislature created the Permanent Joint Legislative Committee for Water Policy and Management to study the issue and to develop policy. Finally, in April of 2012, Governor Bentley created the Alabama Water Agencies Working Group and directed them to study the issue and provide him with a recommendation for a Comprehensive Statewide Water Management Plan by December 1st of this year. While some have suggested that the AWAWG hold off on providing recommendations for a plan and are suggesting, instead, that the AWAWG develop issue papers and study groups, Florida's action in the Supreme Court suggests that the time for study groups has passed. The AWAWG must meet this challenge of our time and provide the Governor with a recommendation for a solid, implementable water management plan this year and our elected officials should be standing by to take up these recommendations as soon as they are presented to the Legislature.

While the recent water headlines focus on the water war with Georgia, last year our farmers were reeling from the second year of devastating drought. These situations are occurring more frequently and their effects on our water resources, environment, and economy are becoming more severe. Everyone in the State has an interest in protecting our water resources and making sure that there is a system to ensure that everyone gets the water they need. Our current system does not do this. Alabama currently only protects those who happen to live higher up on the river or with the biggest pump in the ground. Whether you are looking to invest in irrigation for your farm or want to bring a business to your town, you must have a predictable and secure source of water. That is not possible under Alabama's current system.

Thankfully Governor Bentley has taken action through his directive to the AWAWG and the Legislature stepped up with one million dollars in funding for an assessment of our State's water resources. This commitment, along with leveraging funds available for studying and protecting the fresh water needs for Mobile Bay and our Gulf Coast, will establish the scientific groundwork for a water plan. Now we must finish the job. Alabama must put the necessary laws and policies in place so that we can use this science to defend against Georgia's water grab and protect our water resources here at home.

The stakes cannot be higher: water, our most precious natural resource, upon which our economy, our environment, even our very existence depends, hangs in the balance. We manage our budgets, our offices, and our households; it's past time we managed our water.

BRIEF BIO
Mitch is Program Director for Alabama Rivers Alliance and manages the Alabama Rivers Alliance programs, working with both the state and federal governments towards real and lasting protection of our rivers.



What You Need to Know About Congress Right Now

By: Lee H. Hamilton

Deeply unpopular and flagrantly unproductive, Congress is on its August recess right now. It won't return until Sept. 9, after a five-week recess, leaving itself just a few days to settle issues like raising the debt ceiling and passing a federal budget. Here are some things you should know about where it stands at this stage of the game:

— Few, if any, Congresses can match this one for futility — whatever your politics. The repeal of Obamacare, action on climate change, a "grand bargain" on our fiscal problems — the list of dropped balls is long. A few weeks ago Speaker John Boehner told Americans not to judge Congress by how many laws it passes, but by how many it repeals. It hasn't succeeded on either count.

— The budget process is a mess. None of the appropriations bills needed for the government to continue running after Sept. 30 has been enacted. Passing a budget is the most basic function of government, and Congress can't manage it.

— Members of Congress do not like to compromise. The parties are divided ideologically and neither can get things done on its own. That's when responsible lawmakers usually step forward to build a consensus, but in this Congress, either they don't know how or they're not interested.

— Hardly anyone thinks Congress is doing a good job — it's consistently below 20 percent approval ratings — and most people think it's too partisan. Yet members aren't concerned. They've become skilled at running against Washington, even though they are Washington, and they count on voters supporting their own member of Congress, however unpopular Congress as a whole has become.

— As lobbyists descend in swarms on Capitol Hill, they hold more power than ever. They rain cash, twist arms, and even draft bills — all the things that powerful congressional leaders used to do. Perhaps this is why a good number of my former colleagues have made a tidy living for themselves by becoming lobbyists.

— Finally, all of this contributes to the emerging themes for the 2014 congressional campaign. Candidates will clearly run against the mess in Washington, and a good number of them, though not all, will talk regularly about the need to be bipartisan. The big question for 2015 will be whether the successful ones can translate their talk into legislation to help move the country forward.

Lee Hamilton is Director of the Center on Congress at Indiana University. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.

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CullmanSense.com/store

Party (from Front)

By: Natalie Bonner

CULLMAN – It's mid-August and the hint of an early fall breeze presented itself this past Friday night. Families watched their children play, strangers became friends, and everyone around the stage nodded their heads to the beat provided by Exit 310.

Exit 310 performed their reunion and farewell concert at Depot Park from 6-10 p.m., with proceeds benefitting The Link of Cullman County. The Link is a faith-based non-profit who supports the needs of our community through goal-setting, career advising, and financial counseling.

"The Link helps people financially or spiritually in need. It is a faith-based community of support. It is really beneficial to our community," Jonathan Hollis, a community resident, enthusiastically stated. "I think it takes people away from having their hand out in need to helping others find that giving back is better than receiving."

A family-oriented event, the benefit concert attracted many members of the community. Several lawn chairs were strewn about Depot Park as kids ran freely and chowed on cotton candy, and adults manned the booths and caught up with one another.

Wearing a bright blue shirt emblazoned with the passionate phrase "You were meant for MORE, MORE, MORE," Board Chair of The Link, Lindsey Dossey, said, "We actually change lives. We provide people with the tools they need in order to overcome their circumstances or problems. The homeless are no longer homeless. They have jobs. They have pride in their ability to provide for themselves and their family. The Link gives them the ability to pick themselves up and change their lives."

The Link provides a vast array of resources including but not limited to: encouragement; goal-setting; career coaching; financial counseling; adult literacy coaching; English as a Second Language (ESL) classes; Jobs for Life (TM) classes; General Educational Development (GED) classes and orientation; and Wise Up Money Skills for Teens (life economics in our local schools).

Founder and Executive Director of The Link, Dawn Owens, said she experienced a vision for the organization – that it would sit like a hub in a wheel and be a clearinghouse of information to maximize resources and help others in need. The Link's desire was to understand the needs of the community, fill the gap with services people need, and not duplicate what had already been done.



With an impressive database of agencies, county schools, ministries, hospitals, educational institutions, etc., The Link was the answer to the question Owens originally posed: How do we move a person in poverty from a place of dependency to self-sufficiency in order to conclude in a true life transformation?

"Being here at the park is surreal. I'm some chick from Philly. Who am I to move here, create an organization, put together this event, and people actually come out?" Owens stated. "It's almost like an author writing a book. You think, 'Am I the only one who's going to read this?' You don't know when you launch an organization if people are going to be passionate. It's the same feeling."

Owens paused and a small smile flickered across her face. "But this is community. And this is Cullman. Where you can throw a party in the park and people show up for it. And whether they realize it or not, every single dollar is going to change a life and transform someone's world."





Alabama's Unemployment Rate Drops to 6.3%; Cullman County at 5.4%

By: Tara Hutchison

MONTGOMERY – Governor Robert Bentley recently announced that Alabama's preliminary, seasonally-adjusted July unemployment rate is 6.3%, down from June's rate of 6.5% and well below July 2012's rate of 7.6%.

July 2013's rate represents 135,089 unemployed persons, down from 140,024 in the previous month and 163,932 in July of 2012. The last time Alabama's unemployment rate was at or below 6.3% was October of 2008 when the rate was 5.9%.

"While we are encouraged to see another drop in our unemployment rate, we need to remember there is still a lot of work to be done," Governor Bentley said. "We will continue to recruit more jobs. We will continue to show how Alabama is a great place to do business. We will encourage more companies to build here and expand and hire more people. And we will continue these efforts until everyone who wants a job is able to find one."

Currently, over 15,000 jobs are available on JobLink, Alabama's free online jobs database (www.joblink.alabama.gov). Record numbers of jobs continue to be posted to the database, with the average monthly job count consistently being 1,000 more than at the same time last year.

Help Wanted Online (HWOL) data, which counts jobs on JobLink and other online sources, counts more than 51,000 total job ads in Alabama. The professions with the most jobs advertised online, as reflected by HWOL, are registered nursing and truck driving, with average hourly wages of $26.37 and $17.99 respectively. In July, there were 2,277 ads for registered nurses and 2,852 for truck drivers.

"Employers are hiring in Alabama," Alabama Department of Labor Commissioner Tom Surtees said. "The most in-demand jobs posted – meaning jobs available now – are relatively high-paying jobs that translate into lifelong careers. Additionally, we know that more jobs are coming, as more companies have announced that they are locating or expanding in Alabama."

For assistance in applying for jobs, or to determine eligibility for available vocational and education training assistance, please visit your local Career Center. A listing of career centers is available at www.joblink.alabama.gov or at www.labor.alabama.gov.

Counties with the lowest unemployment rates for July of 2013 are: Shelby County at 4.2%, Baldwin County at 5.3%, and Cullman County at 5.4%. Counties with the highest unemployment rates are: Wilcox County at 16.3%, Perry County at 14.7% and Dallas County at 14.4%.