SERIES 3, ISSUE 45 MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2013

CULLMAN'S MONDAY NEWSPAPER

CULLMANSENSE

COMMUNITY MATTERS

$0.50 $0.50

Local



Young Student Receives National Poison Prevention Awareness Award p6

National Honor Society induction ceremony held at St. Bernard Prep p6

State/National

Cash-Strapped States Turn to Public-Private Partnerships for Relief p3

Get prepared during Winter Weather Awareness Week p7

Sports

Cullman falls just short in football playoffs p4

LOCAL



CEMS Finds Permanent Home p2

Charlie Daniels Band to rock out at Rock the South 2014 p10

Making Strides Towards Awareness



2nd annual Strides Walk raises awareness for diabetes p7

Waters appointed director of Workforce and Economic Development

By: Gail Crutchfield • WSCC Contributor

MONTGOMERY — Dr. Mark Heinrich, Chancellor of the Alabama Community College System, recently appointed Terry Waters of Tuscaloosa to the position of Senior Executive Director of Workforce and Economic Development, effective Tuesday, Nov. 12, 2013. He will be responsible for the department's critical efforts in promoting economic development and developing skills and competent workforce.

"For me, Terry was an obvious selection for this position," Heinrich said. "I have worked closely with him for many years, and his considerable experience eminently qualifies him for this assignment. He will be a valuable asset to the department as we establish an effective organizational structure and new initiatives for workforce and economic development that will benefit the entire state."

"I am looking forward to working with

p6

States Insist on Third Grade Reading Proficiency

By: Adrienne Lu • Stateline

Educators have known for decades that learning how to read by the third grade is a critical milestone for children. Students who fall too far behind by the third grade rarely catch up.

One recent study found that students who don't read well by the third grade are four times more likely to drop out of high school.

Despite progress in some states, only 35 percent of fourth graders across the country are proficient in reading, according to the most recent National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), released earlier this month.

"I think it's an outrage," said Carol Rasco, chief executive officer of Reading is Fundamental, a children's literacy nonprofit organization that distributes millions of books to needy children every year. "To me, that's an emergency. It's a crisis."

States across the country appear to agree. About 30 states have adopted measures to try to meet the reading milestone, according to Ralph Smith, managing director of the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, a collaboration of nonprofits, foundations and communities. Last month, the National Governors As-

p6

CPD phone lines to be upgraded Tuesday morning

Cullman Cty Police Department Announcement

CULLMAN – On Tuesday, November 19th, at 9 a.m. the City of Cullman will be upgrading certain phone line circuits.

No numbers will change but between 9 a.m. and 10 a.m. the Police Department will not be accessible at 256-734-1434.

During that time, emergency calls should (as always) go to 9-1-1, and non-emergency calls to the Dispatch business line at 256-775-7145.

Again, the normal published phone number of 256-734-1434 will be down for maintenance during the hour of 9 a.m. and 10 a.m. Tuesday.

Commission explores Medicaid pharmacy savings possibilities for state

Contributed by Medicaid

MONTGOMERY – At two separate meetings in October, members of the Alabama Medicaid Pharmacy Study Commission heard presentations from other state Medicaid pharmacy program administrators and from pharmacy benefits management programs and other organizations with new ideas for reducing pharmacy costs to the state.

An October 10 meeting focused on the experiences of three southern states – Arkan-

p7

Sports - 4 Calendar - 8 Poll - 9 Comics - 10

PRINTED LOCALLY @ PRINTING Alabama Web Press



Architectural rendering of the CEMS Building after the renovations are complete.

Cullman Emergency Medical Services Finds Permanent Home

By: Lindsey Dossey • CRMC Contributor

CULLMAN – After more than two and a half years, the Cullman Regional Medical Center Board has determined a suitable, permanent home for the Cullman Emergency Medical Service Ambulance Service displaced after the April 27th Tornado. After careful consideration and reviewing all possible options in and around Cullman County, the Board has determined that the most viable solution is to renovate the former location on Alabama Highway 31 in Downtown Cullman.

"The CRMC Board Buildings and Grounds Committee has spent countless hours working on this project as a top priority over the past 18 months," said CRMC Board Chairman Todd McLeroy. "The time and effort they put into making sure that this was the most suitable location for our ambulance service, should definitely be applauded."

Many factors were considered in determining the permanent site including location which allowed for the best response times, lowest cost, and the best visibility and curb appeal for the ambulance service. During this month's board meeting, the Building & Grounds Committee presented a couple of options for the permanent site, but recommended proceeding with renovation of the former facility.

"After considering multiple other sites and facilities, nothing seemed to compare to the former location after renovations," said CRMC Board Building and Grounds Chairman Roger Humphrey. "The primary factor being the location's impact on response times for 9-1-1 calls. By keeping the former location, CEMS Ambulance will be able to keep response times consistently below the national average in both the City and County. "

The new facility will meet all program certification requirements and will feature 10-ambulance bays, waiting room, office space, sleeping quarters, conference room, break room, restrooms, and storage area. The estimated construction time of the project is five months.

The Cullman Emergency Medical Services is currently located in the old Woodland Medical Center Emergency Department where they have been temporarily housed since November of 2011.

"We are excited to give our Ambulance Service a much deserved permanent home," said CRMC President/CEO Jim Weidner. "The new structure will meet the needs of CEMS, keep response times below the national average, and add an aesthetically pleasing building to the Downtown Cullman thoroughfare."

For more information on Cullman Emergency Medical Services, call 256-734-1524 or visit online at www.crmchospital.com.

Nov. 16 Proclaimed "Strides: Walk for Diabetes Awareness Day" in Cullman



By: Leanne West

CULLMAN – On November 16, 2013, members of the Cullman Community Lions Club, along with their friends and families, will walk in the "Strides: Walk for Diabetes Awareness" event at Heritage Park. The walk is scheduled to begin at 10 a.m.

On Tuesday, November 12, 2013, in recognition of the upcoming event, Cullman Mayor Max A. Townson proclaimed November 16, 2013, "Strides: Walk for Diabetes Awareness Day" in the City of Cullman. Cullman Community Lions Club members Ron and Karen Seybold, J.J. and Patty Miller, Charles and Janice Osborne, Joyce West, and Catherine Haggard were present to accept the official proclamation from Mayor Townson.

"This event is a great event that helps bring awareness to a disease that affects many of our citizens," said Mayor Townson. "The City of Cullman is proud of the Cullman Community Lions Club and their determination to educate people on this disease and its complications and their support of efforts to control and treat diabetes."

The Cullman Community Lions club is a new co-ed Lions Club that has chosen Diabetes Awareness as its primary focus. Their mission is to conduct and support efforts leading to the control and treatment of diabetes and its complications through education, prevention, and research.

Lions all over the world organize Strides events in their communities to heighten awareness of diabetes and its complications and to provide information on preventing and managing the disease. These events promote regular, healthy exercise and include participants of all ages.

"I urge all citizens to go to Heritage Park this Saturday to participate in this event or to show their appreciation to the members of the Cullman Community Lions Club for their devotion to this cause, and for all they do for our community," said Mayor Townson.

Lions Clubs International is the world's largest service club organization with nearly 1.3 million members in approximately 46,000 clubs in over 200 countries and geographical areas around the world. Lions have aided the blind and visually impaired and made a strong commitment to community service and serving youth throughout the world.

For more information on the "Strides: Walk for Diabetes Awareness" event, or the Cullman Community Lions Club, visit www.cullmancommunitylions.com or call 256-531-6075 or 256-739-0139.

"Stuffing Party" at Sacred Heart

By: Barbara Ragsdale

CULLMAN – Every few months a dedicated group of friends of Sacred Heart Monastery in Cullman gather for fun and fellowship while they hold one of their "Stuffing Parties" at the Convent.

Together with some of the Sisters, the group manages to stuff several thousand envelopes with information pertaining to events and news about the Monastery and Retreat Center.

The day or days, depending on the number of outgoing mail pieces, include Mass and lunch and a 'whole lotta joy' while accomplishing much needed assistance to the beloved Sisters of Sacred Heart Monastery!



N2COLLEGE

30-Day Sr. Scholarship Boot Camp

Email: info@N2College.com
Website: www.N2College.com
Phone: 256-736-5969

Did you know that traditionally the most important deadline for 12th grade college funding is Dec. 1 nationally for them to receive priority, merit-based funding consideration for all (4) years of undergraduate work?

Did you know that seniors who want to transfer from a 2-year program to a 4-year need to go ahead and prepare for transfer scholaship eligibility now?

While there are many variables that affect a student being selected for a merit-based award over another similarly academically qualified student, typically, the student's gpa & test score are the standards by which the student is entered into his/her highest "eligibility selection window":

- Seniors with higher scores, let us show you how to maximize your auto-offers!
- Seniors with mid-range scores, let us show you how to maximize your remaining merit-based funding opportunities!
- Seniors with no/low scores, let us show you what you still can do to get as much funding as possible!
- Seniors with exceptional circumstances, let us show you how to help ensure that all of your additional opportunities are utilized!



Jill Gudger Howell, M.A. Ed.
President/ Developer,
PreK-12th Grade
"$cholar$hip Jump$tart"

Our locally owned & nationally known company that is featured on the Dave Ramsey Radio Show's 'Kids & Money segment' and recommended by certified Dave Ramsey coaches & Financial Peace University coordinators across the country since 2005, invites your family to give our results-oriented college funding team a call today to let us help you 'make college cost less'!

What's Online

City meets County in annual Farm-City Tour



Have you ever had one of those days which started with freshly dug peanuts for breakfast, followed by a display of cutting-edge automotive technology for brunch, before delving into a hearty steak for lunch, only to be followed up with fresh baked orchard fresh...

qrne.ws/122

Supreme Court Considers Government Prayer

The Supreme Court will soon consider the limits of government-sanctioned prayer as the justices wade into an area of American history and law that one expert called "a mess."

qrne.ws/123

Traveling this Holiday? Take Your Family Traditions on the Road

Traveling this holiday season? Even if you aren't in the comfort of your own home, you can make the experience special for your family. From decorating your hotel room to welcoming Santa, there are ways you can still enjoy those holiday...

qrne.ws/124

Cash-Strapped States Turn to Public-Private Partnerships

By: Elaine S. Povich • Stateline

Still strapped for cash in the aftermath of the recession, states increasingly are partnering with private companies to build and maintain highways, prisons, water facilities, tunnels, and even hospitals and schools.

Since these partnerships began two decades ago, their popularity has increased to the point where today, two-thirds of the states have laws authorizing so-called "P3s," and 24 states recently have considered legislation related to the partnerships, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Under the P3 strategy, private companies typically cover the upfront costs of projects, in exchange for the right to run the facilities and to collect tolls or other payments.

Privately-run toll roads have been around for a while, but now other types of P3s are drawing interest, in large part because states are running out of bonding authority and other public revenue-raising methods.

Take the $663 million Port of Miami tunnel, which is designed to funnel port traffic directly to the waterfront from an interstate highway, thereby avoiding downtown Miami's traffic lights and narrow streets.

The project began in 2009 with a "design-build, finance, operation, and maintenance" contract with Bouygues Civil Works Florida, which is constructing the tunnel.

Under the agreement, Florida officials paid only a portion of the construction costs upfront, pledging to pay the rest in "milestone payments" as specific parts of the tunnel were completed.

Bouygues Civil Works, rather than the state, assumed the upfront financing risk, allowing Florida to avoid a potentially controversial bond issue.

The state will pay Bouygues in installments, after each "milestone" in construction is reached: $20 million for completing the design, $40 million for the first bore; $25 million for the second bore; $15 million for completion of a causeway, and $350 million at the end of the project.

Once the tunnel is complete, Florida will pay another private company, Transfield Services Infrastructure, to operate the tunnel and to maintain it. The tunnel is scheduled to open in May 2014, and the agreement is to last until 2044.

Once construction is complete and the operating and maintenance period for the tunnel begins, the state will make so-called "availability payments," no more than $32.5 million a year (adjusted for inflation) to Transfield Services for operating and maintaining the tunnel.

"By doing a P3, it allowed us to deliver this project today and take advantage of the prices we're seeing today, and giving the project to the public today rather than some time far beyond today," said Brian Blanchard of the Florida Department of Transportation.

"I don't think we would have been able to set a day when this could have been done (without the P3)."

Virginia Prison Leads the Way

Virginia pioneered the P3 concept two decades ago with a prison that was privately designed and built.

The prison, which ended up costing $42 million to construct, had to be built to state specifications, but the private company had its own design ideas that arguably were more efficient and less expensive, according to Michael Maul, associate director of the Virginia Department of Planning and Budget.

"The point they made was they could build it cheaper," Maul said.

"It was built more quickly and for less cost."

In 1998, Virginia officials estimated that using a P3 to build and operate the prison would generate savings of between 15 percent and 20 percent.

Maul said the bottom line for states is that the P3s allow state more flexibility to do "things that they might otherwise not have had the political will or the upfront money to do."

However, Maul cautions other states considering P3s to examine them closely.

"It's like any deal, go in with your eyes open, and if you can find a mutually acceptable deal, it's great," he said. "Otherwise, be willing to walk away."

Flush from the success of the P3 prison project, Virginia lawmakers six years later approved the Public-Private Education Act, which was intended to build K-12 schools.

Before long, the state had expanded the law to include water systems, parking lots, and hospitals. Since then, Virginia has used P3s to build a geriatric hospital in Williamsburg, dormitories and classroom space at state colleges, and many other things.

Other states, including Florida, have used Virginia's legislation as a model, according to Richard Norment, executive director of the National Council of Public-Private Partnerships.

Florida expanded its P3 law this year to cover housing, water, and transportation projects, and to allow the use of P3s by other governmental entities, including counties, municipalities, school board, and regional governments.

"Anything you can think of that's a public infrastructure is eligible for a public-private partnership," Norment said.

According to Florida attorney S. Elysha Luken, who writes a blog on the subject, the new law will allow many Florida projects that have been sitting on the shelf for years to move forward.

Corey Boock, a partner in a national law firm known for negotiating P3 deals, said they "incentivize higher quality on the front end," because the private entity knows it is going to have to take care of the facility over the long term.

If maintenance issues arise, it will be more costly to the firm and jeopardize their return on investment, he said.

Skepticism from Unions

Boock acknowledged that the non-traditional process is off-putting to some government officials.

In addition, he said, some people "key on the fact that because investors get a return on equity, the cost of capital is higher than the traditional municipal tax-exempt market.

That's generally an accurate statement. But they don't appreciate the tradeoffs in terms of transferring risk and lifecycle cost."

The biggest skeptics of the state public-private partnerships have in many cases been public labor unions, who see jobs going away, particularly as the result of private companies owning and operating public facilities.

For example, the state engineers union in California sued to try to stop the rebuilding of the road that leads to the Golden Gate Bridge to make it more earthquake resistant, but lost in the courts.

And Chicago's proposal to privatize Chicago Midway International Airport ran into trouble when all but one bidder dropped out of the process.

That lack of interest was traced to a private parking meter deal the city cut for $1 billion five years ago, which resulted in skyrocketing parking-meter rates and irate citizens.

Despite those missteps, Boock argued that more P3s are inevitable as the country's infrastructure needs outstrip its ability to pay for them.

He pointed to Project Neon in Las Vegas, an interstate highway widening project, and a 30-year, $86 million deal that Rialto, Calif., recently struck with a private firm to improve water and wastewater facilities as examples.

"The need to have private capital come in is so persuasive that we're going to see this more and more," he said.

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

Motorcycle, Pedestrian Deaths Rise

By: Daniel C. Vock • Stateline

More than a thousand more people died in U.S. traffic accidents in 2012 than the year before, and nearly a third of those came from Texas, new federal data shows.

The increase of 1,082 road deaths last year amounted to an uptick of 3.3 percent nationwide. Most of the additional deaths were from pedestrians and motorcyclists. Both groups experienced a higher jump in fatalities than people in passenger cars.

Last year marked the first increase in vehicle fatalities in six years.

Preliminary reports from 2013, though, show more encouraging news. Traffic deaths dipped in the first six months of this year, according to a federal report.

Last year's increase itself is not a surprise to traffic safety experts. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration indicated earlier that the numbers were up. But data released Thursday shows exact numbers for the first time and also includes state-by-state breakdowns.

Texas, the country's second-most populous state, saw the largest jump in number of deaths in 2012. With an increase of 344 traffic deaths over the previous year, Texas had 3,398 people die on its roads last year. That is the most of any state.

The next-biggest increases came in Ohio (106), Tennessee (77), North Carolina (62), and Michigan (49).

By percentage, Vermont saw the biggest increase, at 40 percent. Fatalities there went from 55 to 77. Hawaii (26 percent), Maine (21 percent), and New Hampshire and South Dakota (both 20 percent) had the biggest percentage increases after Vermont.

Last summer, Vermont officials stepped up traffic enforcement because of what they called an "epidemic of serious and fatal crash rates" in the first six months of the year. Forty-four people died between January and June of 2012, compared to 55 in all of 2011.

But the 2012 jump also appeared more drastic when compared to 2011, because the state had the fewest fatalities since World War II in 2011. Vermont had more than 70 road deaths each year between 2008 and 2010.

Twelve states and the District of Columbia had fewer deaths last year than the prior year.

Mississippi saw 48 fewer deaths, the biggest decrease in the country. DC had the highest proportional decrease at 44 percent, followed by Alaska with an 18 percent drop.

Road deaths typically vary depending on seat belt laws, drunk driving, and speed as Stateline has reported.

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

New rules, web portal established to register Regional Care Organization collaborators

Contriuted by: Medicaid

MONTGOMERY – As directed by state law, the Alabama Medicaid Agency has established new rules and a new web portal for individuals and entities who wish to cooperate, negotiate, or contract in the establishment of the Agency's planned Regional Care Organizations.

According to Acting Alabama Medicaid Commissioner Stephanie Azar, "Since the law was signed in May, the Agency has been researching and drafting rules and regulations that are consistent with the legislative mandate."

An emergency rule, or change to the state Administrative Code, was filed October 11, outlining the requirements for those individuals and entities seeking a Certificate to Collaborate in the establishment of an Alabama Medicaid Regional Care Organization. A permanent rule was filed October 21.

To register, potential collaborators will need to go to the Agency's website at www.medicaid.alabama.gov and click on the "Regional Care Organizations" icon on the left hand side of the webpage to access the web portal.

Once the applicant creates a profile, a short application can be completed and then submitted for review.

Approved collaborators will receive a certificate and will be required to follow specific standards and file periodic reports.

Cullman falls just short in playoffs

By: Josh McBrayer
joshmcbrayer@cullmansense.com

GADSDEN- Through the wind and rain, mist and fog, Cullman fought hard and played until the final whistle but fell just short in their second round match up against the Southside Panthers Friday night.

Dantly Coker of Southside ran up and down the field, carrying the ball 34 times for 191 yards and a pair of touchdowns.

Cullman was the first team on the board Friday as they held Southside to a three and out and quickly took it 64 yards down the field culminating in a Tyler Glenn 18 yard pass to Maison Goodwin but Southside would answer right back. In just a single play, Blake Devine of Southside hit the hole and sprinted 61 yards for the score.

Cullman started their next possession in Panther territory thanks to a great return by Will Crenshaw. They would take advantage of the good field position and marched 47 yards to pay dirt, finishing with a three yard Garrett Crider touchdown to give the Bearcats a 14-7 lead at the end of the first quarter,

The Panther's Coker got his team on track in the second, carrying the ball 12 times on the drive that took eight minutes off the clock and resulted in a one yard touchdown from Coker. Cullman and Southside swapped punts to end the half at 14 each.

The third quarter was all about field position. Southside won the battle as a halfback pass from Holt Keeling found a wide open Austin Abernathy for a touchdown.

The fourth quarter saw Cullman go to the air with great success. Glenn completed three passes to three different receivers, including a nine yard TD strike to Crider to tie the game at 21.

Cullman's defense came up strong again when Lucas McMinn recovered a fumble at midfield but the offense was unable to do anything with it and had to punt the ball right back.

From here it was all about the Southside run game as the Panthers moved the ball 98 yards by way of the run, for what turned out to be the game winning score.

Cullman had one last chance when last week's hero Auston Neal wound up with the football and ran it down to the Panther five before being tackled with no time on the clock.

Wallace State golf wins Central Alabama Invitational to conclude fall season, Atchley claims low medalist honors

By: Russell Moore • WSCC Contributor

HANCEVILLE – Wallace State's seventh-ranked golf team has made sure its offseason is filled with tons of momentum. The Lions knocked off Faulkner State and defending national champion Central Alabama earlier this week in Alexander City, winning the Central Alabama Invitational by five strokes at Willow Point Country Club.

Wallace State finished with a two-round score of 587, winning by five strokes over Faulkner State (592).

Sophomore Chris Atchley, a Buckhorn graduate, was the tournament's low medalist after shooting a 3-under 141 (71-70).

Atchley also earned a low medalist honor at the 2013 ACCC/Region 22 tournament in May and was a first-team All-Region selection.

Wallace State stared the fall season in September as the runner-up to Central Alabama in its own invitational. The Lions were more than thrilled to return the favor, closing out the fall with a bang.

"Our guys have gotten better as a team as the season has progressed. It's special to beat Central Alabama on its home course, along with many other quality teams like Faulkner State and Eastern Florida," said Wallace State Community College golf coach Dan York, a NJCAA Hall of Famer.

"The win definitely gives our guys a lot of confidence and makes offseason workouts a little easier for them."

Wallace State's Aksel Olsen, the NJCAA Division I defending individual national champion, finished in fourth place (71-75) and Cooper Brown finished eighth. Patrick Twesme and Will McDowell rounded out the field for the Lions.

Also this week, Olsen, Twesme and sophomore Jake Miller all inked with four-year colleges during the early signing period. Olsen signed with the University of South Florida, Twseme with UNA and Miller with Samford University.

Atchley is expected to sign with Troy University soon.

When Olsen won his individual national championship in May, Wallace State finished seventh overall as a team.

York believes his team has the potential to improve on that finish if the Lions continue to get better.

"We've got to work on getting other guys involved once the spring season approaches. We'll have to count on each other to pick up the slack when Aksel Olsen and Chris Atchley have off days. Those two guys have a long way to go as well," York said.

"If we continue to get better, I feel we can compete with anyone nationally."

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

Tips for a Safe and Successful Hunting Season

(StatePoint) Hunting can be a rewarding sport, providing billions of pounds of organic, free-range deer meat to outdoorsmen each year. By following certain guidelines when hunting deer, elk, or any other animal, you can ensure a more successful hunt and fill your freezer.

"Deer can be some of the craftiest, smartest big-game animals. Matching wits with one requires skill, experience and a few tricks," says Scott Bestul, Field Editor for "Field & Stream" magazine and Co-Author of the new book, "Total Deer Hunter Manual: 301 Essential Skills."

Whether you spend all year plotting and preparing for your ultimate deer season, or just enjoy a few trips yearly with your buddies, Bestul, along with co-author Dave Hurteau, deputy editor of "Field & Stream," are offering hunting advice for a safe, successful season.

Gun Safety

The best policy in hunting is to be overly cautious. So assume every gun is loaded, even when you know it isn't. "Extra caution guards against human error and over-confidence," says Hurteau.

Triple-check your target and keep your safety on until the moment before shooting. When you're not using your gun, unload it.

Tree Stand Safety

Treestands provide hunters with a birds-eye view of the land and animals below, but being high above ground comes with inherent risks, the most common of which is falling.

"One of the very dumbest things a deer hunter can do is hunt from a treestand without using a safety harness," says Bestul

How to Dress

Because deer can spot colors in the ultraviolet spectrum, if your hunting garments contain UV brighteners or are blue, you'll actually appear to glow in low light to deer.

Opt for camouflage, which makes it harder for deer to spot you from a distance. But don't neglect to wear at least the required amount of hunter-orange clothing, to be visible to other hunters.

Body Odor

When it comes to managing body odor during a hunt, it's not just a matter of politeness toward fellow hunters. The human nose has about five million olfactory receptors, the neurons responsible for the detection of odor. Deer have an estimated 297 million. The way you smell can scare off a deer.



"The goal is to delay the inevitable -- to fool a buck's nose long enough to make a shot."

Use pine, acorn, earth, and -- if you're up for it -- skunk scents to cover your smell. And you could even draw a buck to you by using deer urine scent.

Follow the Rules

Whether they're for safety or deer population management, be sure to follow the rules of the park or grounds on which you are hunting. Clean up after yourself and never trespass.

Safety tips and deer hunting advice for all skill levels can be found in "The Total Deer Hunter Manual." For more information, visit Bestul and Hurteau's blog at www.fieldandstream.com/blogs/whitetail-365.

Before heading out for your hunting excursion, brush up on new skills and old hunting basics.

FIRST COMMUNITY BANK
256-734-4863
EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY
Member FDIC
Checking • Savings • Mortgages
www.fcbcullman.com
First Community Bank • 420 2nd Avenue, SW • Cullman, AL 35055

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

Wallace State athletics has handful of sophomores sign with four-year colleges

By: Russell Moore • WSCC Contributor

HANCEVILLE – Wallace State had a handful of sophomore student-athletes sign letter of intents with four-year colleges during the recent early period.

Wallace State baseball left-hander Izaac Yarbrough signed with Auburn University. Yarbrough, a Vinemont graduate, finished 4-2 with a 1.85 ERA last season for the Lions. He tossed 48 2/3 innings, recording 36 strikeouts and issuing only nine walks in 12 appearances, including nine starts.

"I'm excited about the opportunity and thankful I've learned as I much I have at Wallace State. I think anyone who has played here will agree how much you learn as far as being mentally tough. You can't get by with things on the college level like you can in high school. You have to develop a different mentality and learn how to pitch. Coach (Randy) Putman and coach (Adam) Scott have really helped me change my mentality," said Yarbrough, who will be one of the top anchors of the 2014 Wallace State rotation. "As a pitcher here, you look up to Craig Kimbrel and Derek Holland and see what they've accomplished. You hope people can look up to you like that one day."

Yarbrough will become at least the third Wallace State pitcher joining a SEC team within the last year, joining Robby Clements at Auburn and Bret Marks at Tennessee.

"Izaac has progressed 100 percent since he joined us. I knew there was something there when he came out of Vinemont and he has since developed into a much better pitcher. He's very coachable and is willing to listen," said Wallace State Hall of Fame coach Randy Putman. "I'm proud of each of our players who can leave here and join a four-year school. I'm happy as long as they are happy."

Wallace State men's basketball guard Jestin Lewis signed with Mercer University on Wednesday. The Virginia native becomes the first Lion to sign during the early period since John Meeks inherited the program less than five years ago.

Lewis is one of Wallace State's returning players this season after finishing second in the conference last season by averaging 17.1 points per game. He was a second-team All-Region selection and a first-team All-ACCC North Division member as a freshman, dishing out 85 assists and shooting a team-best 42 percent from the 3-point land and 77 percent from the free throw line.

"It definitely takes a lot off my shoulders to be able to sign early. It's a blessing. I'll be leaving good people and a good program and joining another like it. Coach Meeks and I talked in the offseason about how one of my goals was to sign early, so we could focus even more on winning a state championship," Lewis said.

Meeks is excited Lewis has achieved one of his offseason goals.

"It says a lot about our program and how far we've come in the last four years athletically and academically. It speaks to the reputation of the college that we are sending students to four-year schools where they'll fit in comfortably and be able to graduate," Meeks said. "Mercer was very involved in recruiting process. It laid out its ground work last year in regards to making Jestin a top target. Mercer also has a high academic reputation. Our mission coordinates very well with theirs."

Wallace State golfers Aksel Olsen and Patrick Twesme signed with the University of South Florida and UNA respectively.

Earlier this year, Olsen became the first individual Wallace State national champion golfer, after earning low medalist at the NJCAA Division I Men's Golf Championship in Lubbock, Texas. As low medalist, he earned the Arnold Palmer Award along with being recognized as a NJCAA All-American.

Olsen and Twesme helped Wallace State's golf team finish seventh nationally among 24 teams in Texas.

Wallace State softball's Kori Benson, last season's ACCC Tournament MVP and the 2013 Most Outstanding Defense Player of the NJCAA Division I National Tournament, has hooked on with Shorter College in Rome, Ga.

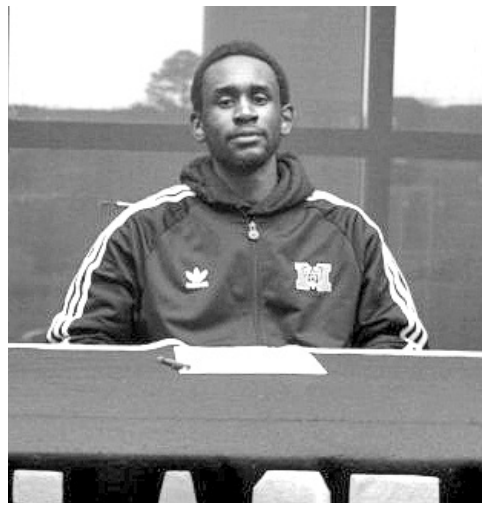
Benson, an Oak Grove native, was one of the stars on Wallace State's softball team, which won its second national championship last season, adding to the one previously achieved in 2008. Benson clubbed a school-record 23 home runs and finished with a .352 average, 62 RBIs and a .802 slugging percentage.



Wallace State pitcher Izaac Yarbrough signed with Auburn University on Wednesday. Pictured are, from left, Wallace State assistant Adam Scott, Yarbrough and Wallace State baseball coach Randy Putman.

Other Wallace State sophomores, including women basketball's Jaylan Snowden, volleyball's Kianna Delaney, softball's Madeline Lee, Maria Mitchell and Ashleigh McClure and men's basketball's Quinterian McConico are still mulling four-year opportunities and should commit as their respective seasons progress.

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



Jestin Lewis signed with the Mercer Bears.



Wallace State sophomore Patrick Twesme signed with UNA during Wednesday's early signing period.



Kori Benson, a huge part of Wallace State's 2013 national championship softball team, signed with Shorter College, located in Rome Ga.



Aksel Olsen, last season's Arnold Palmer Award winner as the NJCAA Division I national tournament low medalist, has signed to continue his golf career at the University of South Florida.

Quality Batteries For Every Need
SINCE 1979
A-1 Battery Supply
Office: (256) 734-9438
Bobby J. Brock - Owner
Joe Brock - Salesman
2172 Co. Rd. 1169
Fromhold Road N.W.
Cullman, AL 35055
"WE BUY JUNK BATTERIES"

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

Reading (from Front)

sociation released a report urging governors to take five policy actions to improve reading by the third grade.

Approaches To Reading Proficiency

The strategies vary widely, including working with parents of young children and improving access to pre-kindergarten.

Retention policies, which typically require third graders to pass reading benchmarks before being promoted to fourth grade, are among the most controversial approaches.

Fifteen states and the District of Columbia have strict retention policies on third grade reading, which often call for schools to help students who are struggling before they reach third grade, according to Emily Workman, a policy analyst for the Education Commission of the States.

Many of the states followed the path of Florida, where reading scores jumped after 2003, when the state started requiring third graders who did not meet reading benchmarks to be held back.

This year, Mississippi adopted a law requiring third graders who can't read proficiently to be retained, and third graders in Ohio and Arizona are facing similar reading mandates for the first time. In Arizona, officials estimate 1,500 third graders could be held back if they do not pass the new reading requirement, the Arizona Republic reported.

Michigan and Nebraska lawmakers are also considering similar laws.

A handful of states this year have adopted other kinds of laws aimed at improving early reading, Workman said, including:

- Connecticut expanded its statewide reading plan to include oral language and pre-literacy proficiency for children moving from pre-kindergarten to kindergarten. Lawmakers also approved legislation requiring elementary school teachers to take surveys on reading instruction to help improve their teaching of reading.
- Virginia approved legislation requiring school districts to provide early intervention services to students from preschool to third grade who are behind in reading.
- Ohio will require school districts to submit reading achievement improvement plans every year beginning in 2016 if too many students fail to meet certain reading benchmarks. Beginning in 2017, most new teacher licenses will require teachers to pass tests on reading instruction.
- Utah will require schools to improve the percentage of third graders reading on grade level or risk losing state funds.

'Reading to Learn'

Experts call third grade a critical turning point for learning.

"It is the transition point between learning to read and reading to learn," said Susan Neuman, an expert on early literacy at the University of Michigan. "If these children don't have the (reading) skills, they are really going to fall behind not only in reading but in all the other subject areas."

But reading scores are notoriously difficult to improve. While math scores on tests such as NAEP have improved substantially since testing began in the early 1990s, reading scores have increased only by slim margins. Experts believe that's because children learn math mostly at school, while they learn most of their language skills at home, much of it before they even enter school.

Neuman said that means states wanting to make significant improvements in early reading need to target parents before their children reach school, or even preschool.

"Universal pre-k is terrific, but it starts at age four," Neuman said. "We know these disparities begin as early as 12 months. What we need are parent engagement policies that work with parents very early on to promote what we know are really good language strategies."

Despite Florida's apparent success, the research on retention policies is mixed. Smith, of the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, said the intermediate steps before either promotion or retention, including intervention for struggling readers and providing incentives and instruction to teachers, may prove most useful.

Neuman said the research shows parents can also be taught simple interventions that can help the youngest children develop early language skills.

"We'll start very early with a hug and a smile and a focus on getting that parent to do eye-to-eye contact with the child, to talk to them, to sing to them," Neuman said.

"There are things we can do very early on that can promote and really change the trajectory of learning."

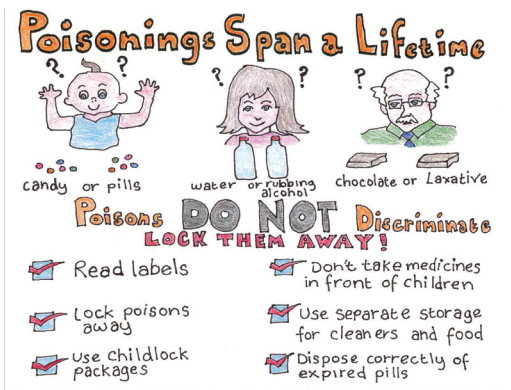
Stateline is a nonpartisan, nonprofit news service of the Pew Charitable Trusts that provides daily reporting and analysis on trends in state policy.

Young Student Receives National Poison Prevention Awareness Award

By: Natalie Bonner

CULLMAN - A sixth grader at Cullman Christian School recently won a nationwide poster competition. Chandan Makwana placed first in the Poison Prevention Awareness poster contest, which was open to all students.

Chandan's mother, Amy Makwana, explained that the contest is very similar in structure to the Farm City contest. Students may enter if they wish, but the contest is not mandatory. Adding that in recent years, Chandan has also won the Farm City poster contest several years in a row.



Makwana explained that the purpose of the Poison Prevention Awareness poster contest is to help make the public become aware of accidental poisonings and how such accidents can be prevented.

"The initial contest for the statewide competition began last spring of 2013. He was notified at the end of the school year last year that he had won first place in the state of Alabama. He was awarded a certificate and gift card. He was also given a laminated copy of his poster," Makwana stated.

The national competition is comprised of three different divisions based on grade levels. Young Chandan took home first place in his division nationally. The Makwanas were notified of his national award placement in October of this year.

"His poster will be printed in March of 2014 and will appear across the nation in schools, doctors' offices, human resources departments, military bases, and daycare centers, along with many other places," Makwana said. Chandan's age division was given a specific topic – "Poisonings Span a Lifetime" with which to work. His poster was to depict how any person, at any age, could be accidentally poisoned. The precocious young boy spent hours researching accidental poisonings and discussing the topic with his father, a high school science teacher.

"He researched household items that people can get confused with medication. He told us he wanted to make a point in a way that people would stop, look, and think about what the poster said," Makwana stated.

Chandan worked on his poster for several weeks. Makwana said he made a few sketches and rough drafts, but kept changing things as his ideas expanded. Chandan worked on it every single chance he could – even after school and on weekends.

"He wanted to also include a checklist on how to protect yourself and your loved ones. He added and changed things according to the guidelines and rules for the contest," his mother said. The topic itself is one of supreme importance as deaths due to accidental poisoning can be alleviated through education of poison prevention, which is a topic relevant to everyone. Poison Prevention Awareness Week has been in effect since 1961.

Makwana stated, "This week is designed to help communities gain awareness about poisonings and its dangers, while also encouraging people to take preventative measures to prevent such accidents."

Chandan's poster, along with the other two national finalists, will be displayed across the country on the 2014 National Poison Prevention Week posters. Their informative posters will help children and adults alike become more aware of how poisonings may occur and illustrate certain preventative measures that can be taken to avoid this event.

Local businesses may purchase the poison prevention posters at poisonprevention.org/poster.htm.

National Honor Society induction ceremony held at St. Bernard Prep

By: Joyce Nix • St. Bernard Contributor

CULLMAN – Seventeen students were inducted into the National Honor Society recently at St. Bernard Preparatory School in Cullman, AL. Honor Society advisor, Mrs. Margaret Hinson welcomed all parents, students, and faculty in attendance and congratulated each student for their achievements.

Following the welcome, Chaplain Bede Marcy opened the ceremony with a prayer before turning the program over to Zoie Wilson, President of the National Honor Society program at St. Bernard.

Wilson explained the criteria to being inducted into National Honor Society. "To become a member of Honor Society one must have completed one semester as a junior or senior at St. Bernard Prep, must maintain a grade average of 90 or higher in math, science, and foreign language; exhibit leadership, service, and character, and participate in meeting and chapter projects."

Students recognized the four qualities exemplified in NHS—Scholarship, Leadership, Service, and Character—with the lighting of candles. Jacob Mynatt spoke on scholarship—the commitment to learning; Logan Ayers spoke on service—establishing a routine to work for those in need; Mrs. Hinson spoke on leadership—having the initiative to train and aid others; and John Gurtowski spoke on character—distinguishing individuality with respect for others. Each student was awarded a membership certificate and pin by Headmaster John Tekulve and Zoie Wilson. After accepting this honor, students pledged to maintain high scholastic standing, to hold as fundamental and worthy an untarnished character, to endeavor intelligently and courageously to be a leader, and to give of themselves freely in service to others.

Following the ceremony, lunch was served for Honor Society members and their parents in the Dining Hall.

Waters (from Front)

Mr. Waters to meet the current and emerging workforce demands in our community," said Dr. Vicki Karolewics, President of Wallace State Community College.

Waters, a resident of Tuscaloosa, is a native of Maryville, Tenn. He graduated from the University of Tennessee in 1971 with a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering. During a 38-year career with Alabama Power Co., he served in many leadership capacities, including at 15-year stint as its Western Division vice president. He retired from Alabama Power in 2010 as senior vice president, marketing, and customer service. Waters has been very active in business organizations and has worked extensively to help recruit new business and industry to Alabama. He has served both as chairman and executive director of the Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama and as chairman of the Tuscaloosa County Industrial Development Authority. Additionally, he served for several years as the chairman of the Region 3 Workforce Development Council as well as the chairman for workforce development on the state's Rural Action Commission - Region 3.

"I have talked extensively to Terry about this assignment and know he is excited to accept the challenge," Heinrich said.

"He understands it is critical that Alabama's postsecondary system is properly positioned to encourage business location and expansion by being able to deliver skilled workers. I know he will work hard in collaboration with our partners in other organizations and agencies to help advance economic and workforce development in Alabama."



"I believe Terry will lead our economic and workforce development efforts to new heights."

Mark Your Calendars for Celebrate Christmas in Cullman

By: Natalie Bonner

CULLMAN - We may not have freshly fallen white snow on the ground and the turkey may not yet be carved for the grand feast of the year, but we do have some cheer and some shopping to do! Just as Thanksgiving is right around the corner, so too is Christmas, and all of the holiday festivities that accompany it.

To get ready for the season, the Cullman Downtown Merchants Association (CDMA) is featuring a Christmas Parade on December 6 at 7:00 p.m.

This will be the first nighttime parade to be held in over 30 years. The event is hosted by the CDMA, CP&R, and Cullman Savings Bank. The parade is sponsored by CullmanSense, entertainment is sponsored by Bill Smith Buick GMC, and Cullman Savings Bank is the title sponsor.

Cullman Downtown Merchants Association President Nathan Anderson said, "Celebrate Christmas is a brand new event with familiar traditions. We moved the annual Christmas Parade to align with Cullman City's Tree Lighting Ceremony. Celebrate Christmas will be an event full of great music, shopping, and activities for all ages."

Certainly a family friendly event, Celebrate Christmas will feature a variety of activities to accompany the always-favored Tree Lighting Ceremony and now the first nighttime Christmas Parade in a very long time. Activities include: music by the Atlanta band Unknown Lyric, Christmas carolers dressed as Dickensian characters, live reindeer, a variety of kids' activities and, of course, Santa and Mrs. Claus, to name a few.

Mark Aderhold says the event should be a lot of fun for everyone.

"We've done the fair parade during the day for many years now. I don't think having it at night will be that much different. I think it will be more enjoyable for the crowd because of the Christmas lights and lights downtown," he said.

Aderhold said that in coordinating with the other events, which begin at 4:00 p.m. that day, having the annual parade at night was really the way to go since it would be dark anyway.

Interested parties who wish to have a float in this year's parade need to call or go by Lee Powell Insurance Agency.

Participants must fill out a form. There is no entry fee.

"We are all very excited about a nighttime Christmas parade and with the excitement of the event and the lights that the parade will bring, it is just one part of a large event that will help feature downtown Cullman," Aderhold said.

Making Strides towards Awareness (from Front)

By: Noah Chandler
noahchandler@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – In order to raise awareness sometimes, well most times, those reaching out must put themselves in positions they would normally not find themselves in. Case in point, on Saturday the weather was sloppy, with a fresh layer of rain topped by a thick cover of fog throughout the overcast day.

However, none of these weather factors were a consideration for the handful of dedicated men and women who came out to Cullman's Heritage Park to take part in the annual Strides: Walk for Diabetes Awareness Day.

"This is our second annual Strides Walk for Diabetes Awareness Day event and we are just happy to be here. We are trying to promote awareness and help find a cure for especially juvenile diabetes," Janice Osborne, President Cullman Community Lions Club, said.

"Cullman County has so many children, so many families, affected by diabetes. We are trying to focus our club on diabetes awareness."

Rainy weather kept many from venturing outdoors on Saturday, a fact all in attendance picked up on.

"We are a little disappointed," Osborne said. "But we are going to keep trying, keep working at it and each year we are going to get better."

The Vinemont High School Junior ROTC Color Guard came out to lend a patriotic measure to the event.

Steve Hogland is a CCLC member, but is also grandfather to 9-year-old Cody Bales, a young man who sufferes with diabetes.

"Nash alerts us when Cody's blood sugar is getting out of balance," Hogland said. "It's amazing what a dog can do."

Hogland said Nash has a long track record of beating electronic devices designed to alert irregular blood sugar readings. The bond between the boy and his dog is one easily noticed whenever the pair are seen out.

"He (Nash) will alert us about 30 minutes before any device will," he said. "They have a special bond and we're grateful Cody has Nash."

Nash has been Cody's companion for just under two years, which Cody described simply as "awesome!"

On Tuesday, November 12, 2013, in recognition of the upcoming event, Cullman Mayor Max A. Townson proclaimed November 16, 2013, "Strides: Walk for Diabetes Awareness Day" in the City of Cullman. Cullman Community Lions Club members Ron and Karen Seybold, J.J. and Patty Miller, Charles and Janice



Osborne, Joyce West, and Catherine Haggard were present to accept the official proclamation from Mayor Townson.

If you were unable to attend the event on Saturday, the CCLC will be at Walmart on Saturday, November 23 selling mops and brooms to help raise funds for diabetes research.

Winter Weather Awareness Week

HUNTSVILLE – The National Weather Service will observe the week of November 17th through November 22nd, 2013 as Winter Weather Awareness Week in Alabama and Tennessee.

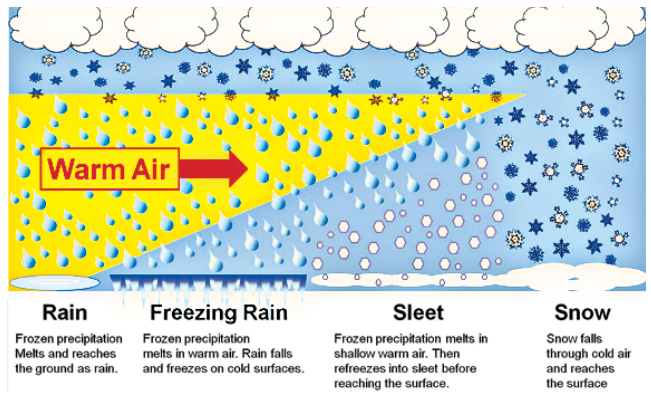
While the frequency of extreme winter weather events is relatively small in north Alabama and southern middle Tennessee, winter weather can cause significant property damage, injury, and even death. With the start of each new season, preparation is the key to lessening the dangers and hazards associated with winter weather. Please join us in promoting winter weather safety during this year's Winter Weather Awareness Week.

Winter Weather Safety and Preparedness
Travel Safety
Many people travel throughout the winter months (around the holidays) so it is very important to check the weather ahead of time and be aware of any potential hazards. In addition, having a travel safety kit could save your life!

Below is a list of suggested items to consider in your travel safety kit.

- Batteries
- Sand/Cat Litter
- Blankets
- Ice Scraper
- First Aid Kit
- Water/Non-Perishable Food
- Pocket Knife
- Road Maps/GPS Equipment
- Tow Rope
- Mobile Phone/Charger
- Shovel
- AM/FM Radio

What are the differences between freezing rain, sleet, and snow?
The challenges of winter weather forecasting go beyond predicting when it will snow or how much snow will fall. At times, determining the type of precipitation is an even bigger forecast challenge! Precipitation type with winter weather is largely related to the temperature profile in the atmosphere (basically between the ground and ~ 20K feet up). Typically, it gets colder as you go up in elevation but sometimes there can be a "warm layer" of air that gets wedged between the ground and the clouds. This will have an effect on the melting/freezing processes of precipitation. Refer to the graphic that explains how you can get freezing rain versus sleet versus snow or just all rain.



Local Winter Weather Products and Criteria

- **Winter Storm Watch** - At least a 50/50 chance that warning criteria (>2 inches of sleet/snow and /or ice accumulations of 1/4 of an an inch or greater) will be met in the next 12 to 24 hours.
- **Winter Weather Advisory** - 1" to 2" of snow and/or sleet in less than 12 hours
- **Freezing Rain Advisory** - Ice accumulations up to 1/4"
- **Wind Chill Advisory** - Wind chill readings between -10°F and 0°F
- **Winter Storm Warning** - Greater than 2" of snow and/or sleet in 12 hours or greater than 4" of snow in 24 hours
- **Ice Storm Warning** - Ice accumulations of 1/4" or greater
- **Blizzard Warning** - Greater than 2" of snow and/or sleet in 12 hours or greater than 4" of snow in 24 hours AND sustained winds of 35 MPH or greater AND considering blowing and drifting snow reducing visibilities to 1/4 mile or less for 3 or more hours
- **Wind Chill Warning** - Wind chill readings at or below -10°F
- **Freeze Warning** - Temperatures at or below 32°F for 3 or more consecutive hours during a climatalogically significant time of the year (first widespread freeze of the Fall or a freeze after the growing season has started in Spring)
- **Frost Advisory** - Temperatures between 33°F and 36°F are forecast. (widespread frost in the Fall or after the growing season has begun in Spring.)

Medicaid (from Front)

sas, Georgia, and Mississippi – to manage pharmacy costs in their respective Medicaid programs.

On October 24, the Commission heard presentations on use of three different approaches, to include a pharmacy benefits management (PBM) organization, a state-based joint venture with existing vendors and a preferred provider system.

"Now that we have heard from these states and organizations, our next step is to have Medicaid's actuary take the results of these presentations and try to give us some assessment of how much money we would potentially save," said State Health Officer Dr. Don Williamson, commission chair.

"After that, we would attempt to determine the economic consequences of those options."

The second meeting of the Commission was held on November 14 at the Montgomery County Health Department.

The commission was created in June 2013 by Governor Robert Bentley to identify potential opportunities to save money for the state Medicaid program.

Commission members are specifically charged with analyzing the current system, comparing Alabama's program with other states' operations, identifying alternative pharmacy systems that could maintain quality and save money for Alabama and the estimated savings and economic impact for each described system if implemented.

The commission is to report its findings to the Governor no later than December 1, 2013.

– 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.

'Food for Fines' at Cullman Public Library
The Cullman Public Library is once again offering their 'Food for Fines' program this month. They will forgive $1.00 in overdue fines for every non-perishable food items (canned or boxed) brought in. Food cannot be used to pay for lost or damaged items. Call Lesia for additional information 256-734-2720, ex. 21, 22 or 23.

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.

'Food for Fines' at Cullman Public Library
The Cullman Public Library is once again offering their 'Food for Fines' program this month. They will forgive $1.00 in overdue fines for every non-perishable food items (canned or boxed) brought in. Food cannot be used to pay for lost or damaged items. Call Lesia for additional information 256-734-2720, ex. 21, 22 or 23.

Cantanti della Donna Concert at Grace Episcopal
Cantanti della Donna will give a performance beginning at 7 p.m. at Grace Episcopal Church in Cullman. Director is Charlsa Perdew charlsaperdew@gmail.com Everyone is invited to attend this free event.

City Board of Education Meeting
Members of the City Board of Education are scheduled to meet at 6 p.m. in the Central Office building. All members are urged to attend.

AARP Driver Safety Class
A 'Safety Drivers' class will be offered at First Baptist Church in Cullman. This event is sponsored by AARP and often those who take the class can see a reduction in their auto insurance. Cost of the class is $12.00 for AARP members and $14.00 for non-members. This class is open to all interested persons. Registration is required - please contact Richard Gurley, 256-739-9883 or 256-318-4997 or at rg1st@earthlink.net Class will begin at 9 a.m. and while it is a 6 hour, one day class, there will be a break for lunch. Numerous topics that are of interest to drivers 50 and older will be discussed, sort of like a 'refresher' course.

Beginner Line Dance Lessons
Beginner Line Dance Lessons for 6 weeks each Tuesday night starting October 15 at 6:30 p.m. These lessons will take place in the basement of the Col. Cullmann Museum. $5.00 per lesson per person, with Patricia Quick as instructor. Open for all.

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.

'Food for Fines' at Cullman Public Library
The Cullman Public Library is once again offering their 'Food for Fines' program this month. They will forgive $1.00 in overdue fines for every non-perishable food items (canned or boxed) brought in. Food cannot be used to pay for lost or damaged items. Call Lesia for additional information 256-734-2720, ex. 21, 22 or 23.

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.

Southwest Cullman County Historical Society Meeting
Everyone interested is invited to attend the Southwest Cullman County Historical Society gathering at 6 p.m. This event is held at the Brushy Pond Community Center. Joan Calvert is contact person for additional information at 256-747-3144.

'Food for Fines' at Cullman Public Library
The Cullman Public Library is once again offering their 'Food for Fines' program this month. They will forgive $1.00 in overdue fines for every non-perishable food items (canned or boxed) brought in. Food cannot be used to pay for lost or damaged items. Call Lesia for additional information 256-734-2720, ex. 21, 22 or 23.

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.

Chamber for Children
Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring their 'Chamber for Children' collection of new, unwrapped items such as toys, clothing and general needs with all donations going to Cullman area families in need. Play 'Santa' this year and help those less fortunate. Deadline is December 12.

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.

'Food for Fines' at Cullman Public Library
The Cullman Public Library is once again offering their 'Food for Fines' program this month. They will forgive $1.00 in overdue fines for every non-perishable food items (canned or boxed) brought in. Food cannot be used to pay for lost or damaged items. Call Lesia for additional information 256-734-2720, ex. 21, 22 or 23.

Vinemont Band Boosters Holiday Arts & Crafts Bazaar
Everyone is invited to come shop at the annual Vinemont Band Boosters Holiday Arts and Crafts Bazaar this weekend at McGukin Civic Center in Cullman. Friday hours are from 9 a.m. until 9 p.m. and Saturday hours are from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. There will be homemade loaded potato soup and taco soup for sale during lunch. Come get great gifts for the holidays, enjoy lunch and support a good cause! Shop locally this year and enjoy the crafts of local vendors. For additional information please contact Jeri at 256-339-1841. Also vendors can email vbbcraftshow@gmail.com. Over 60 vendors will be onsite.

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.

'Food for Fines' at Cullman Public Library
The Cullman Public Library is once again offering their 'Food for Fines' program this month. They will forgive $1.00 in overdue fines for every non-perishable food items (canned or boxed) brought in. Food cannot be used to pay for lost or damaged items. Call Lesia for additional information 256-734-2720, ex. 21, 22, or 23.

Vinemont Band Boosters Holiday Arts & Crafts Bazaar
Everyone is invited to come shop at the annual Vinemont Band Boosters Holiday Arts and Crafts Bazaar this weekend at McGukin Civic Center in Cullman. Friday hours are from 9 a.m. until 9 p.m. and Saturday hours are from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. There will be homemade loaded potato soup and taco soup for sale during lunch. Come get great gifts for the holidays, enjoy lunch and support a good cause! Shop locally this year and enjoy the crafts of local vendors. For additional information please contact Jeri at 256-339-1841. Also vendors can email vbbcraftshow@gmail.com. Over 60 vendors will be onsite.

Annual Spaghetti Supper at Sacred Heart of Jesus Family Life Center
Everyone is invited to attend the Annual Spaghetti Supper sponsored by the Altar Society of Sacred Heart of Jesus Church. The supper runs from 5 p.m. until 7 p.m. in the Family Life Center. Children's plates are $4.00 and adults are $10.00. Homemade sauce and meatballs, German slaw, bread with dipping oil, desserts and drinks will be served on the 'eat-in' side, with a separate take-out line available. Bring the family and enjoy a great meal then stay for the Knights of Columbus Annual Turkey Bazaar which starts around 6 p.m. in the same Center. Come win a turkey, ham, bacon and eggs, cheeses, and various other prizes with the spin of the legendary 'wheel'. All are welcome.

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.

'Food for Fines' at Cullman Public Library
The Cullman Public Library is once again offering their 'Food for Fines' program this month. They will forgive $1.00 in overdue fines for every non-perishable food items (canned or boxed) brought in. Food cannot be used to pay for lost or damaged items. Call Lesia for additional information 256-734-2720, ex. 21, 22 or 23.

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.

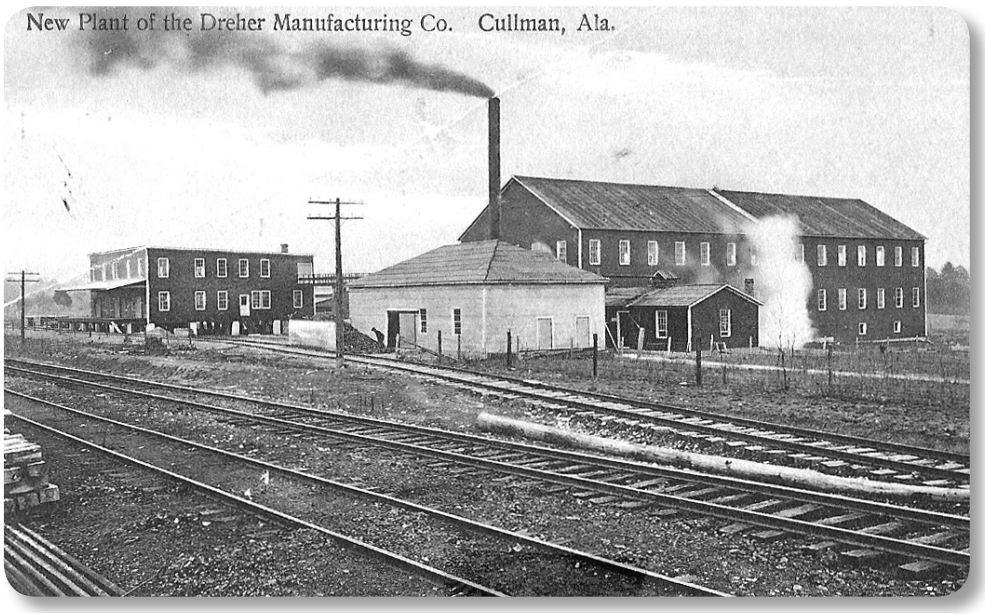
GED Classes at Desperation Church
GED learning classes are held each Monday night from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Desperation Church. For additional information please contact Ed Oaks at 256-737-9564 or 256-735-6811. These classes are open to the public and everyone who wants to obtain their GED is welcome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

Reflections of History

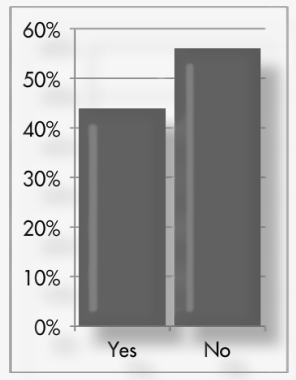
Share your historic photos with us!
E-mail history@cullmansense.com



Dreher Furniture Wagner Post Card — Contrib. by Cullman County Museum

Poll

Are you already in the mood for Christmas?



This Week's Poll

Who are you pulling for in this year's Iron Bowl?

Vote Today at CullmanSense.com/Poll

CULLMANSENSE
Community Matters

Publisher: Noah Chandler

Editor: Dustin Isom

Sports Josh McBrayer

Entertainment Dillon Lee Jackson Hogan

Cartoonist Anthony Saint

Address: 101 1st Ave NE, STE 230 Cullman, AL 35055

Visit thecullmanpaper.com for our full digital archives.

Phone 256-297-1847

Tips: news@cullmansense.com

E-mail issues@cullmansense.com to order printed back issues.

Practical Applications for Feeling Well

Kristie J. Williams • LMT # 3237
State Board Certified Instructor #I-281
NCBTMB Approved Provider #298

Sciatica

Did you know that your symptoms of Sciatica could possibly been fixed in an hour session of Neuromuscular Therapy? In this article I will cover how we assess, address and help eliminate the pain from sciatica.

Let's first take a look at what the American Massage Therapy Association has to say about Sciatica

> "Sciatica is a set of symptoms that may be caused by general compression and/or irritation of one of the five spinal nerve roots. Piriformis syndrome, while related and many times confused with sciatica, points more to a specific origin of dysfunction. Sciatic nerve dysfunction affects nearly 40 percent of adults at some point during their lifetime. Among the many possible causes of nerve compression, spinal disc herniation leads the list of much research material, but spinal disc herniation accounts for only 5 percent in sciatica cases. The condition can cause extreme pain and numbness and in some cases, the syndrome has no specific cause. Traditional medical treatment is beginning to be replaced by alternative therapies such as specialized massage with amazing results." www.amtamassage.org

Massage Therapy For Sciatica

The sciatic nerve is the longest nerve in your body, and when you've experienced pain from your lower back down through your leg, you understand.

Sciatica pain usually subsides on its own within two months, but there may be ways to alleviate the pain sooner.

While it may seem like exercise will only make the problem worse, in fact the Mayo Clinic recommends low-impact exercise, like water aerobics or stationary bike riding, as a way of releasing the endorphins which act as natural painkillers.

Another way of releasing those endorphins is massage.

Proven Effective

Massage can be highly effective in treating the pain of sciatica. WebMD describes a study of 400 people with low back pain who received either weekly massages, or permission to try whatever they liked. (Alternatives to massage therapy included medication, seeing a chiropractor, doctor or physical therapist, or taking no action at all.)

Ten weeks later, the massage recipients reported better functioning and less pain.

In fact, more than a third of them said their pain was completely or nearly gone, while only 4% of those in the other group reported such improvement.

Massage, concluded Dr. Daniel Cherkin of the Center for Health Studies in Seattle, "does help a significant chunk of people who have not benefited from other treatments."-Massage Envy

Neuromuscular Therapy for Sciatic Relief-The Different Approach

The in-depth assessment we use at Alabama Therapeutic Massage, LLC., tells us what modality will be best utilized to address the cause of the Clients' symptoms.

Each client is given a unique assessment for his/her pain symptoms.

After the assessment the CNMT, used specific release techniques to address the problems.

For example, during the assessment it was discovered that Client (A) has nerve impingement near the sacroiliac crest causing the pain to radiate down the lower extremity into the foot.

The CNMT, would then address the problem to release the Fascia and Muscle tissue around the SI joint and crest, releasing the QL muscles and stretching out the fibers.

Through assessment Client (B) has an impingement inside the piriformis muscle causing the sciatic pain to radiate down the lower extremity into the foot.

The CNMT would address this situation completely different, using a specific set of modalities to release the piriformis, gluteus muscles, hip flexors, and more.

The first step is to look at the perpetuating factors that are creating of prolonging a patient's pain.

Age, stress, response to prior therapies, pre-existing conditions, family history, nutrition, diet, and exercise all play a role in the patient's ability to work in partnership with the therapist.

The therapist determines which specific tool or tools will be utilized by assessing postural distortion and biomechanical dysfunction, the presence of ischemia and trigger points, and by determining the presence of nerve compression and or entrapment in the soft tissue(s).

If either Client A or B received opposite treatment, the outcome for pain relief would not be the same.

As Neuromuscular Therapists, we are trained to determine where the pain is stemming from and address the cause not the symptom.

This is where Neuromuscular Therapy for sciatica pain can enable a person to carry on with daily activities.

Your Neuromuscular Therapist may begin by assessing the lower back and buttock area to see if the pain stems from compression in the lower back, sacral area, or buttocks.

They will then concentrate on the piriformis.

At this point, the Neuromuscular Therapy will depend on your particular pain. Your therapist may use gentle vibrations or deep Neuromuscular to relieve the pressure and pain. Your Neuromuscular Therapist can also give advice on exercises that you can do at home to relieve pain.

The neuromuscular therapist places the symptoms in context, and then works specifically to resolve the underlying structural pattern.

Neuromuscular therapists use massage techniques, but they're delivered in a different package than the general therapists use.

NeuroMuscular Therapy is the cutting edge technology for soft-tissue therapy today. Superior in efficacy to standard Physical Therapy and Chiropractic manipulation, NMT is lauded by many as a miracle therapy that has helped them so rapidly, it is hard to believe. –NMT Centers of America

Seek out a CNMT today for your Sciatic Pain and use this Practical Application to Feel Well!

cullman city parks & recreation cpr&

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

www.cullmanrecreation.org
256-734-9157

- **Kill the Couch: Get Out and Live!** CP&R will host a "Kill the Couch" program to help you train to run your first 5K beginning on Tuesday, Nov, 5 at the Cullman Wellness & Aquatic Center. Classes will be held on Tuesday nights at 6pm in preparation to run the Cullman Savings Bank Frosty 5K in January. Cost is $85 for the course; registration will be at the Wellness & Aquatic Center. Call 256-775-SWIM for details.
- **Christmas Arts & Crafts Show Deadline:** The deadline to purchase a booth for the annual craft show held at the Civic Center on December 6-7 has been extended to Wednesday Nov. 3. Call 256-734-9157 to register.
- **CWAC Thanksgiving Hours:** The Cullman Wellness & Aquatic Center will be closed on Thursday, November 28, 2013 for Thanksgiving. The center will be open from 7am-5pm on Friday, November 29, 2013. We hope you have a great Thanksgiving!
- **Zumba Classes:** Held at the Civic Center Mon., Wed., and Thurs. 5:30-6:30pm. $40 for 10 classes or $6 per class with instructor Monica Kugler.
- **Nia Dance & Ageless Grace Fitness Classes:** Includes yoga stretching, anti-aging tips, and more with instructor Ann Caretti. Nia class is held Tuesdays at 10:00am at the civic center, and Ageless Grace is held on Thursdays at 5:30pm.
- **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.
- **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.
- **Fall is the best time to visit Hurricane Creek Park!** Hurricane Creek Park has scenic hiking trails that are a great place to see the autumn leaves! Bring a picnic lunch and bring the whole family! Park is open from 12pm-sunset on Fridays and 9am-sunset on Saturday and Sunday.
- **Fall/Winter Activity Guides:** New Activity Guides featuring all of our Fall & Winter programming are now available at all of our parks & facilities! Get your FREE guide today to keep up with everything going on at Park & Rec!

FIRST COMMUNITY INVESTMENT PROFESSIONALS
Securities & Advisory Services offered through Investment Professionals, Inc. Member FINRA & SIPC

www.fcbcullman.com

Heather Branch

Financial Advisor —— 256-734-4863



First Community Investment Professionals • 420 2nd Avenue, SW • Cullman, AL 35055

Lighting the Darkness: A Review of *Thor: The Dark World*

By: Dillon Lee
Entertainment Editor
dillon@cullmansense.com

The first *Thor* film took on a challenge as powerful as the Norse gods of myth-making a character as seemingly anti-quated and utterly fantastical as Thor and making him work in the reality created by the first *Iron Man* film. Obviously, *Iron Man* was full of inexplicable science fiction, but there was a certain reality to it. The other iconic Marvel characters like the Hulk and Captain America are also based in a semi-plausible conceit of science making super-men. Thor is almost pure magic. He's a being of myth from the utopian world of Asgard where men and women are superior and nigh-immortal. He also carries all the trapping of the Norse Pantheon, character like Odin, Loki, and Heimdal. Even more ridiculous to the modern sensibilities are the Norse concepts of the "World Tree," the other realms (like Midgard, our Earth), and, the gateway to Asgard, the "Rainbow Bridge."

So, the creative minds are Marvel built an Asgard that was more science than magic wherein parallel universes exist and the Rainbow Bridge, also referred to in myth as Bifrost, is actually a spectacularly animated teleportation device. The Norse gods and Thor are reimagined as "magic," if magic is actually just science that Earth cannot yet fathom. In service to building a Marvel film universe that has room for Thor, Iron Man, Hulk and Captain America, *Thor* was a success with its almost Shakespearean dialog and tragic, yet fiendish, version of Loki. As an entertaining well-paced action film full of memorable and rich characters, *Thor* frankly failed or, at best, fell far short.

Happily, *Thor: The Dark World* does not. Much like the first film, the story seeks to deepen the roots of the Marvel film universe and Thor's slice of it. We are introduced to the race of Dark Elves, denizens of one of the "Nine Realms" of Norse Mythology. In the film interpretation, they are nihilists seeking the annulment of light with apocalyptic darkness. Like most of these films, it's a race and a struggle to control a mystical item, a Deus Ex Machina or McGuffin for all film and theatre buffs.

In The Dark World the" McGuffin" is the liquid power stone called the Aether which brings about destruction. The fight to control this Aether and the vessel in which it is contained is the central driving force of the story; however, that rather trite element provides a canvas for the film's more noteworthy elements.

The audience sees a much clearer picture of Thor's supporting cast in Asgard, notably Heimdal, play by the incomparable Idris Elba, and Frigga, Thor and Loki's mother, played by Rene Russo. While these characters, barely scratched in the first film, are investigated, other established personal conflicts are rekindled. The tense relationship between Odin, Thor, and Loki, now imprisoned for his crimes against Asgard and Earth, is as complex as ever. Tom Hiddleston's portrayal of Loki steals this film as it did the first *Thor*. Here Hiddleston can be more of Loki the trickster and less the clear cut villain he portrayed in *The Avengers*. This allows for a more complex dynamic between Thor and Loki, who are despite their differences brother in spirit if not in blood. This complication is obviously more interesting and, conveniently, more humorous.

To that end, *The Dark World* is stuffed with the levity that made The Avengers film work so well. While perhaps less subtle here, and occasional out of place, Loki's mischievous quips and Thor's earthbound friends are much more fun to watch. Kat Dennings makes a return as the bitingly sarcastic intern for Natalie Portman's character, Jane Foster. Swedish actor Stellan Skarsgard is becoming a staple as Dr. Eric Selvig, who is dealing poorly, and occasionally hilariously, with the aftermath of Loki's evil plot from The Avengers. So, the "dark" world is not so dark.

The weakest and perhaps most tragic element of both Thor films is still present. Jane Foster, Thor's mortal girlfriend played by Natalie Portman, is as weak as ever. In fact, her love-struck naiveté is even more pronounced in this film. Portman's character is a love interest and damsel in distress with no other agency or purpose. When he is away, she listlessly pines for Thor; when he is present she is helplessly in his thrall. While she at least acts like a scientist briefly in the first and third acts, she is largely there to serve the plot and fails to invoke any real emotion with the audience. This is a stain on this series and a poor usage of Portman, an Oscar winning actor.

The first *Thor* film reached its apex in the opening hour, leaving the remaining film flat and disappointing. While the original gave us a build-up to a lackluster third act fight, *The Dark World* delivers in action set pieces and sequences. It follows through consistently upping the ante on each conflict until a satisfying and appropriately dizzying climax.

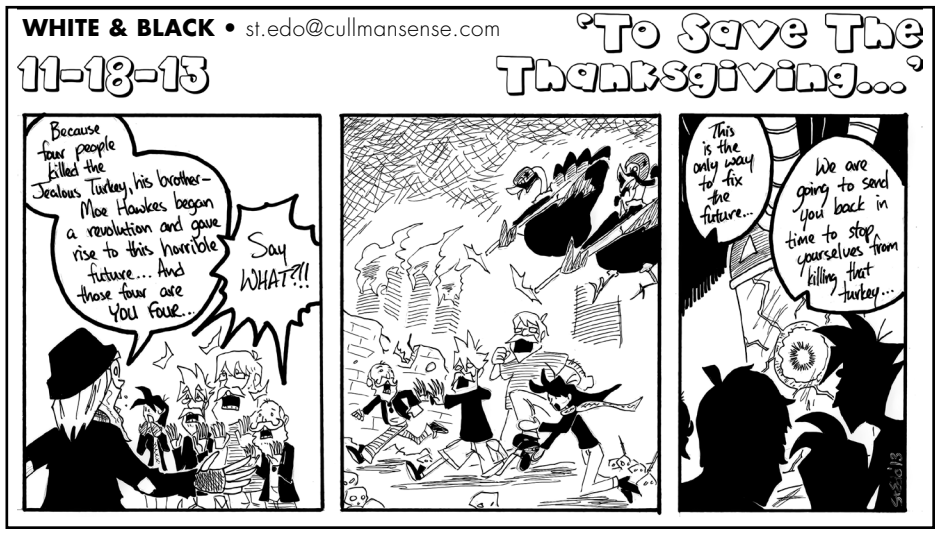
It also continues the Marvel movie tradition of feeding into the overall mythology of the interconnected films. The fiber and character of the Marvel Universe has begun to rest subtly on the *Thor* series. The first *Thor* film established the otherworldly energies that would influence *Captain America* and *The Avengers*.

In fact, *Thor* was better retroactively as small elements fed into a larger richer story by the time *The Avengers* was over.

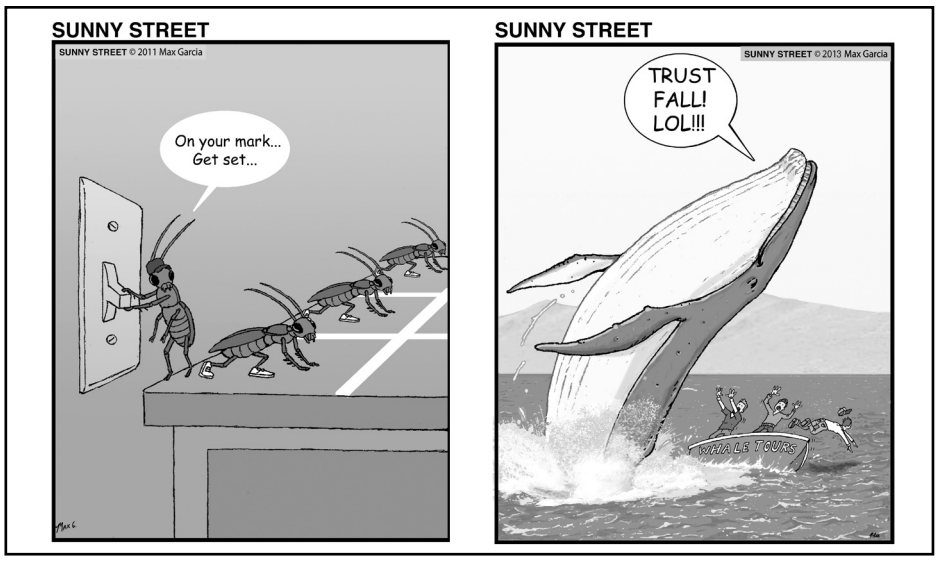
Thankfully, *Thor: The Dark World* does not need to be buoyed by future film installments. It is a vast improvement over the first.

It stands competently on its own while continuing to set up future Marvel and *Thor* films. In fact, the endings hold a great deal of promise. The mid-credits sequence also establishes the quirky space atmosphere that audience will see in the upcoming *Guardians of the Galaxy* movie. The proper ending of the film, before the credits, presents a devilish, if obvious, twist that is sure to make fans look forward to the promised return of Thor.

Comics







Charlie Daniels Band to rock out at Rock the South 2014



By: Noah Chandler
noahchandler@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – The classic hits keep rolling for the two-day Rock the South Music Festival lineup, as the legendary Charlie Daniels Band was announced to take the stage on Friday, June 20 at the growing annual country music festival.

Concert promoter Shane Quick said the goal of RTS is to make it the hub for country and southern rock music in the south.

""Charlie Daniels represents the South as well as anyone ever has. Most all of us have grown up to his music and have been affected by it in some way," Quick said.

"It's a dream come true to have this all-time legend grace the Rock the South stage. No doubt Rock the South is going to be bigger than ever."

In recent week, RTS promoters have announced country music sensation Little Big Town as one of the musical acts for Friday night's portion of the festival, along with classic southern rockers Lynyrd Skynyrd, who is set to take the stage on Saturday, June 21.

The two-day festival will take place at Cullman's Heritage Park on June 20-21, 2014.

Tickets will go on sale December 13.

Artist announcements will continue throughout the month of November, each taking place on Friday mornings at 10 a.m.

For more on Rock the South, visit www.rockthesouth.com, or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/RockTheSouth.

"Doonby" to Possibly Premiere in Cullman

By: Natalie Bonner

With 28,057 Facebook likes, "Doonby" the movie is doing something right. The indie thriller featuring John Schneider from "The Dukes of Hazzard" and Jenn Gotzon from "Hulk" is set to premiere at a theater near you – but not like you would expect.

Set in a small Texas town, an enigmatic drifter named Sam Doonby arrives on the scene and starts work at Leroy's Country Blues bar, and there his musical talent sets him apart, making him some friends and enemies. Before long the townspeople are questioning why Doonby ever came to their small town, let alone the startling information that is revealed and mysterious events that start to unfold around them, with the curious drifter always at the core.

"Doonby" is presented by Brandon Oliver and will be shown at the Carmike 10 in Cullman for a one night only viewing on Tuesday, December 3 from 7:30 – 9:14 p.m. with a $10 general admission price, but only IF they are able to reserve 59 more tickets by November 26.

The event is made possible by Tugg, Inc., a crowdsourcing platform that allows a film to be released theatrically in select markets, but only with a certain amount of tickets reserved first. The select markets span the countryside and Cullman made the map.

Tickets may be reserved at http://www.tugg.com/events/6475#.Unq8OGfesOU.facebook
and remember you are only charged if their quota is met. For more information on "Doonby" the movie, check out their Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/doonbythemovie.

Raise the Minimum Wage

By:

Lawrence S. Wittner

BRIEF BIO

Dr. Lawrence Wittner (http://lawrenceswittner.com) is Professor of History emeritus at SUNY/Albany and writes for PeaceVoice. His latest book is "What's Going On at UAardvark?" – a satire on the corporatization of higher education.

Some 47 million Americans live in poverty, and a key reason is the decline of the minimum wage.

First established under the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, the nationwide minimum wage was designed to lift millions of American workers out of poverty and to stimulate the economy. Unfortunately, however, it was not indexed to inflation, and big businesses -- hostile from the start -- fought, often successfully, to prevent congressional action to raise it. As a result, over the past forty years, the purchasing power of the minimum wage has fallen sharply. If Congress had kept the minimum wage in pace with inflation over this period, it would today be $10.74. But, in fact, it is $7.25 -- about two-thirds of its previous purchasing power.

A major consequence is that increasing numbers of workers and their families live in poverty. The annual salary of a full-time American worker employed at $7.25 per hour is $15,080 -- less than the official federal government poverty level for a family of two. The poverty level for a family of four is $23,550 -- considerably beyond what a minimum-wage worker earns.

At the same time, the rich have grown far richer. Between 1968 and 2012, as the minimum wage declined in value, the top 1 percent of households doubled their share of the nation's income. The typical CEO of a big business received a 16 percent raise in 2012 -- to $15.1 million.

That year, the pay of Wal-Mart's CEO, Mike Duke, rose 14 percent, to $20.7 million. By contrast, Walmart -- the largest employer in the United States -- pays its sales associates an average wage of $8.81 an hour. It is much the same story at McDonald's, which employs large numbers of the nation's low wage workers. In 2012, the CEO of McDonald's was paid $27.7 million.

Although his income roughly tripled in 2012, the income of McDonald's fast food workers remained abysmal. Thanks to this pattern, the United States now has the most unequal distribution of income in the industrialized world.

Another consequence of keeping the minimum wage low is that, by under-paying workers, corporations are shifting the real costs of doing business to the general public.

According to a study released this October by the University of California and the University of Illinois, 52 percent of America's fast food workers receive assistance from public programs like food stamps, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and Medicaid thanks to their poverty-level wages.

As a result, taxpayers are contributing $7 billion per year to pick up the cost of supporting these fast-food workers. The study estimates that public assistance to McDonald's workers alone amounts to $1.2 billion a year -- the equivalent of one-fifth of that corporation's annual profits. Taxpayers are also paying enormous amounts to support the impoverished employees of Walmart and other giant companies.

Many people have recognized the negative consequences of letting the minimum wage dwindle to insignificance.

Twenty states and the District of Columbia have raised their minimum wages higher than the $7.25 federal rate. Congress is currently considering the Fair Minimum Wage Act that would gradually raise the minimum wage to $10.10 in three steps and then index it to the cost of living. In addition, more than 120 cities across the United States have adopted "living wage" ordinances that require employers benefitting from publicly funded service contracts or economic development subsidies to pay wages higher than the state or federal minimums.

Taking matters into their own hands, desperate workers in low-wage establishments, such as Walmart, McDonald's, Burger King, and Wendy's have begun staging walkouts, demanding higher wages. This August, workers protested at nearly 1,000 fast-food restaurants in more than fifty cities, demanding $15 per hour. Polls also show that the overwhelming majority of the American people support raising the minimum wage.

So why not do it? The major objection trumpeted by the corporations and their apologists is that raising the minimum wage would lead to a loss of jobs. But sophisticated studies by economists have reported little or no effect on employment of raising the minimum wage.

Summarizing the studies earlier this year, Paul Krugman -- the Nobel Prize-winning economist -- declared: "The great preponderance of the evidence ... points to little if any negative effect of minimum wage increases on employment."

Why is this the case? One reason is that, with a higher wage, workers stay on the job longer, thus increasing labor efficiency and decreasing the cost of recruitment and retraining.

Another is that two-thirds of minimum wage workers are employed by large businesses, which can easily afford higher wages (though they'd rather not pay them). Walmart, for example, had $469 billion in sales and $17 billion in profits in 2012.

The number of jobs, however, is not really the crucial issue. What is the crucial issue is the kind of jobs. Americans could have full employment if they had a slave labor system.

But they don't want a slave labor system. They could have full employment if they had a sweatshop labor system. But they don't want a sweatshop labor system. Most Americans want a labor system that treats workers with fairness and respect.

Another objection is that low-wage workers are mostly teenagers, who don't have to support a family.

But people over the age of twenty constitute more than 88 percent of the 30 million American workers who would receive a raise if the federal minimum wage were increased to $10.10 an hour. These are adults -- many of them married and, also, parents.

Still another objection is that, in a struggling economy, raising the minimum wage would be bad for business. But, in fact, consumer spending drives 70 percent of the economy, and those at the lower end of the economic spectrum, out of necessity, spend a larger portion of their income than do the wealthy.

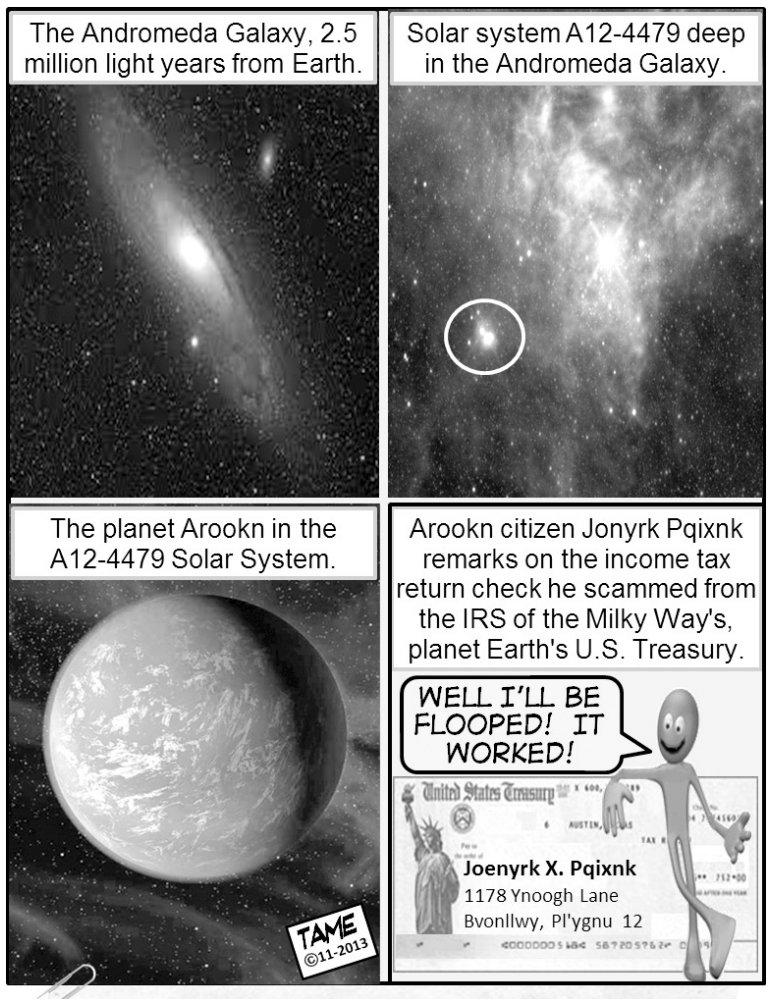
Therefore, raising the minimum wage would pump billions of dollars of consumer spending into the American economy.

And unlike the vast government subsidies to businesses, this would be at no cost to taxpayers.

And so it makes good sense to raise the minimum wage to a level that adequately supports working Americans and their families.

Until that occurs, we will live with the shameful fact that the richest nation on earth has millions of full-time employees earning poverty-level wages while giant corporations and the wealthy amass trillions of dollars at these workers' expense.

EDITORIAL CARTOON







Bill Smith

BUICK GMC

WE ARE PROFESSIONAL GRADE

#1 TRUCKS & BUCKS CONTEST



Bring us your Buck Deer photos for a chance to win prizes!

Photos will be judged on points earned for GMC and Bill Smith logo visibility (hats, shirts, etc). Earn extra points if your deer picture includes a truck bought from Bill Smith!

PRIZES INCLUDE: YETI COOLERS • GIFT CARDS
$500 CASH GRAND PRIZE & OTHERS

Upload your photo(s) on Facebook or bring it by the dealership. Pictures will be used on Facebook and local papers. Contest ends January 31st, 2014.

2013 EXT CAB GMC SIERRA

~~WAS $36,400~~

NOW ONLY

$28,997



ALL NEW 2014 GMC SIERRA

WOW



$27,950

2013 GMC REG CAB SIERRA

~~WAS $26,705~~

NOW ONLY



$19,995

DON'T MAKE A $3,000 MISTAKE

*All rebates applied, must have '99 or newer qualifying trade in. Prices are plus tax, title, & fee. Colors may vary.

Bill Smith BUICK GMC

BILLSMITHBUICKGMC.COM • 1940 SECOND AVE NW • CULLMAN, AL 35055 • 256-734-4472