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CULLMAN'S MONDAY NEWSPAPER

CULLMANSENSE

COMMUNITY MATTERS

$0.50 $0.50

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Wet weather doesn't dampen Celebrate Christmas p6

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LOCAL

CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES

Rain fails to sink County Christmas Parade floats p2



HONORING LOST LOVED ONES

Lights of Love p7



The Parade of Christmas Trees

By: Natalie Bonner

CULLMAN — Along with the progressive play held at Desperation Church, the 11th Annual Parade of Christmas Trees Silent Auction was held. The event benefitted Brooks' Place, a child advocacy center. There were several festive wreaths decorated with seasonal additions, along with Alabama and Auburn wreaths, and a beautiful bevvy of Christmas trees to bid on.

Kim Bevis, executive director of Brooks' Place, said the event was usually held in November during the Christmas in Cullman Open House, but due to a loss of venue wasn't able to be held during that time.

Luckily, Desperation Church stepped in and said that they could hold their event at the Church during Celebrate Christmas.

"Basically we have people who donate the decorated wreaths and Christmas p6

ORNAMENTAL GOALS

West Point High School Senior Katelyn Abbott selected to display symbolic ornament at state capitol p6







Delivery by Drone Must Clear State Hurdles

By: Maggie Clark • Stateline

Not so fast, Jeff Bezos—before Amazon can deploy its fleet of delivery drones, the company will have to wait for the results of drone tests at six state-run sites, which the FAA will select later this month.

At least 24 states are competing to host these sites, which are expected to bring jobs and investment from a rapidly growing industry.

Congress has directed the FAA to safely integrate unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV), or unarmed drones, into the national airspace by 2015. Until then, the FAA has said it will grant flight privileges to UAV operators on a case-by-case basis.

Bezos, the CEO of the Seattle-based e- p7



Bentley emphasizes government efficiency in address to farmers

By: Mary Johnson

MONTGOMERY — Gov. Robert Bentley thanked farmers for their work and emphasized agriculture's impact to the state economy in a speech this morning at the Alabama Farmers Federation's 92nd annual meeting.

"Farming is vital to our state," Bentley said. "It is so major, we have 580,000 jobs related to agriculture or forestry. That's 20 percent of the jobs in Alabama. Anything I can do to help agriculture and forestry, I'm going to do that."

Bentley said he is dedicated to making government more efficient by consolidating agencies, including the former Department of Public p6

Alabama ABC adds link to Drink in Moderation website

Contributed by: ABC

MONTGOMERY – Sponsored by the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States, the site provides information on alcohol and health including the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans, standard drink definitions, tips for responsible entertaining, as well as other resources and links to additional information on alcohol in the adult diet. The link is can be found on the Education Page of the Alabama ABC website: abc.alabama.gov/education.aspx.

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PRINTED LOCALLY @ PRINTING Alabama Web Press

Werner's Trading Co. named C.O.C Small Business of the Month

By: Jackie Moore



Susie Hood Ashley; City Economic Development & Chamber Retail Committee Chair, Rob Werner; Werner's Trading Co., Trey White; Asst. Mgr. Bella Faire' Day Spa & Salon

The Chamber's Retail Committee in partnership with Bella Faire' Day Spa & Salon presented the December Small Business of the Month award to Werner's Trading Co. The award is given monthly to a local small business that meets nomination requirements.

Eligible candidates are judged on such things as contribution to our community, outstanding customer service, unique ideas, (products, marketing, etc.) and inspiring success stories.

To make a nomination for Small Business of the Month, forms can be downloaded at www.cullmanchamber.org.

WSCC helps decorate State Capitol for holidays

By: Gail Crutchfield • WSCC Contributor

MONTGOMERY — The Rotunda of the State Capitol building will be a bit more colorful this holiday season with the addition of almost three dozen red poinsettia plants grown by students enrolled in horticulture classes at Wallace State Community College in Hanceville.

More than a dozen students gave up a day they were excused from class to travel to Montgomery to deliver 35 poinsettia plants to the State Capitol building, where they will be used as decoration during the Christmas holidays.

Julie Lindsey of Gov. Robert Bentley's office, said the poinsettias help transform the rotunda, providing bright pops of color against a backdrop of white marble. Students placed four plants at the corners of the monument dedicated to Gov. Lurleen B. Wallace. The remaining plants will be placed around the live Christmas tree at the entrance to the Capitol building and in other rooms of the Capitol building.

Students in Wallace State's Agriculture/Horticulture department began thinking about Christmas this past summer when they received the cuttings for the poinsettia plants. They grew more than 1,000 plants in three different varieties: red, white and marbled. Several times, the students said, they had to move the plants to larger containers as they grew.

The students will return to Montgomery in December to deliver more poinsettias to government offices and lawmakers.

Along with providing poinsettia plants to the State Capitol, the Agriculture and Horticulture Department is also selling poinsettia plants. The plants are offered for $10 and $12 and are sold at the Agribusiness Center on the back side of the campus from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. each Monday through Friday when the campus is open.

While in Montgomery, the students also visited the Embassy Suites hotel to see their indoor gardens and water features. Anthony Hilliard, director of the Agriculture/Horticulture Department, said he stayed at the hotel recently while attending a conference and wanted to show his students the gardens so they could see the different job opportunities they can look for after completing their courses at Wallace State.

For more, call Anthony Hilliard at 256-352-8035 or visit wallacestate.edu.

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Reception to honor two new Deacons at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church

By: Barbara Ragsdale

CULLMAN – Sacred Heart Altar Society hosted a reception honoring their parish's newly ordained permanent Birmingham Diocesan deacons Ken Kreps and Peter Nassetta following Church services Sunday, December 8. Held in the Family Life Center, the special event centered on Kreps and Nassetta following their ordination to Holy Orders by Diocesan Bishop Robert J. Baker on Saturday, December 7.

In order to arrive at this stage of their lives, the men, along with 16 fellow students, followed and completed a five year program which they started in 2009, intently studying to achieve their personal call to their new roles as Diocesan Deacons. While the new Deacons advanced through the lengthy program of study, their wives, Charlotte Kreps and Sondra Nassetta, were right by their sides as major supporters and contributors to the process.

Bishop Baker, during Mass at the Cathedral of St. Paul in Birmingham, ordained 18 new Deacons from 17 parishes in North Alabama. These 18 men joined over 40 other permanent deacons who currently serve the Diocese of Birmingham.

Ken Kreps and his wife Charlotte (Waldrep from the Crane Hill Community) celebrated their 47th wedding anniversary and are the parents of three children and have seven grandchildren. Both are Cullman natives and moved back to the local area following Ken's retirement from the U.S. Air Force as a CMSGT with many overseas duty stations. During his military years Ken completed various post-secondary studies at the Community College of the Air Force as well as at other institutions along the way.

Since their return to Cullman and Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, Ken and Charlotte have been devoted servant leaders in the parish's local St. Vincent DePaul Society, an outreach program for those in need in the Cullman area. Ken is a member of the Knights of Columbus and was instrumental in establishing the Fourth Degree K of C of the organization. Charlotte serves in the women's Altar Society. Both of the Kreps can be counted on to fulfill any necessary tasks in the work of both Parish and School operations.

During his studies for the deaconate, Ken completed his pastoral practicum in Rural Ministry, serving sick and shut-ins throughout Cullman County.

In their 43rd year of marriage, Pete and Sondra (Waters) Nassetta are the parents of two grown sons and grandparents to five. Their family was honored as 'Family of the Year' by the Knights of Columbus in Cullman in 1983.

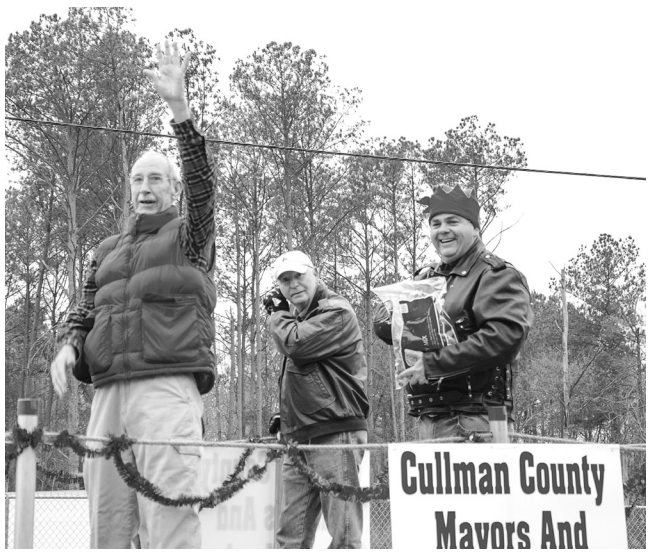
While Sondra is a Cullmanite, Pete is a native of Connecticut and graduate of St. Bernard College. He served as a co-founder of the present St. Bernard Preparatory School in Cullman in the early 1980s. Both Pete and Sondra are active in Sacred Heart of Jesus' parish's Cursillo Apostolate as well as numerous other activities that occur throughout the ordinary year in the life of the Parish. The couple serves as Eucharistic Ministers and lecturers for Mass. Pete fulfills the role of caretaker of the Catholic cemetery in addition to his many other tasks that benefit Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Pete's primary career has centered in public works administration and construction. Recognizing critical needs among Catholic immigrants, he completed his pastoral practicum in Hispanic Ministry this year.

These two newly ordained Deacons join three present Deacons serving Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church: Bill Roberson, Michael Branch, and Ramon Rodriguez.

The Parade Marches On

By: Noah Chandler
noahchandler@cullmansense.com



HANCEVILLE – Although the weather on Saturday was not ideal, hundreds of eager onlookers congregated alongside U.S. Hwy 31 in Hanceville to celebrate the 22nd annual Cullman County Christmas Parade, sponsored by the Hanceville Civitan Club.

The parade made its way down the main artery of the city, with one minor detour – the Hanceville Nursing Home. Each of the floats made its way in front of the main entrance so residents could enjoy the sights without being put out in the elements.

For more photos of the 22nd annual Cullman County Christmas Parade, visit CullmanSense.com.

What's Online

Wallace State exhibit spans Dersham's 50 years as photographer

The work of North Alabama photographer John Dersham is currently on display at Wallace State Community College, documenting 50 years of his life spent taking photos.

qrne.ws/131



Heritage Park recognized as USSSA Facility of the Year

The Cullman City Parks & Recreation department has not been a stranger to national recognition. However, the latest award certifies the bustling parks department as producing one of the nation's best facilities.

qrne.ws/132

Miscommunication at center of CP&R budget overage

Recently reports stating the Cullman City Parks & Recreation department was over budget by a half-million dollars, due to lost revenue in the special events portion of the vast department, prompted both the City...

qrne.ws/133

Alabama House Republican Caucus announces 2014 "Commonsense Conservative" Legislative Agenda

By: Rachel Adams

MONTGOMERY – Alabama Speaker of the House Mike Hubbard (R - Auburn) was joined by House Majority Leader Micky Hammon (R - Decatur), Agenda Platform Committee Chair Representative Randy Davis (R - Daphne) and several other House Republican Caucus Members on Thursday as they unveiled the bills and initiatives included in the Republican Caucus' 2014 "Commonsense Conservative" legislative agenda.

"Our agenda earned its label because each of these bills are commonsense measures that represent the conservative beliefs and principles that Republicans embrace," Hubbard said. "They continue the record of fundamental reforms, constitutional rights protections, and pro-business, job growth initiatives that Republicans have passed since taking control of the Legislature almost four years ago."

Hammon said that as the agenda took shape, it became apparent that Republican lawmakers had taxpayer relief foremost in their minds.

"As opposed to the tax and spend Democrats in D.C., a review of our 'Commonsense Conservative' agenda shows that House Republicans want to make 2014 the 'Year of Taxpayer Relief' in Alabama," Hammon said. "It also reflects our deep commitment to social issues like protecting unborn life and preserving personal religious and moral freedoms from federal mandates."

Davis, who chaired the House Republican Caucus Platform Committee that was responsible for crafting the agenda, said every GOP House member was invited to submit bills for consideration in order to gather the broadest selection from which to choose.

"When we brought the agenda before the full Caucus, it was approved unanimously because it truly reflects the bedrock conservative beliefs of most Republicans," Davis said. "I am confident that the bills in our 'Commonsense Conservative' agenda will secure quick approval when brought up for consideration on the House floor."

This year, business owners will receive immediate tax relief and will find their filing process made dramatically easier through the agenda's Small Business Tax Relief Act and the Business Tax Streamlining Act.

Working with Governor Bentley and the Department of Revenue, the agenda's Tax Elimination Act, will dissolve taxes that cost more to collect than they take in.

The Alabama Taxpayer Audit Protection Act will ensure that the Internal Revenue Service's targeting of individuals for audit based upon political beliefs cannot occur on the state government level, and the Taxpayer Bill of Rights will make the tax appeals process more balanced and fair for business and individuals alike.

The Revolving Door Act being proposed by Senate President Pro Tem Del Marsh (R - Anniston) has garnered widespread support from House Republicans and will prevent lawmakers from lobbying either legislative body for at least two years after leaving office.

The agenda also includes the Healthcare Right of Conscience Act, which prevents healthcare professionals from being forced to provide services that violate their conscience and moral beliefs, and an Adoption Tax Credit that will help provide more Alabama children with secure and loving homes.

State employees, officials, and education workers will receive clear cut and codified immunity from being sued while acting in their official capacity with passage of the Statutory Immunity for Teachers and State Employees Act.

The leaders also said that economic development and job creation remains the major focus for the Republican Caucus, and the details surrounding a major Workforce Development Initiative also included in the agenda will be announced as the session's January 14, 2014 start date draws near.

White House Makes Case for Extending Unemployment Benefits

By: Jake Grovum • Stateline

The White House is urging Congress to allow 1.3 million unemployed Americans who have been collecting extended jobless benefits to continue to receive them beyond a Dec. 28 end date.

In a report released recently, the Obama administration argued that a failure to continue the benefits might lead to the loss of an additional 240,000 jobs, since job seekers will have less money to pump into the economy. Last year, 2.5 million Americans were lifted out of poverty by unemployment insurance benefits, according to the administration.

Normal unemployment benefits, which the federal and state governments pay for jointly, last for 26 weeks. In June 2008, President George W. Bush approved an extension of benefits, and during the depths of the recession, unemployed Americans could collect for as long as 99 weeks.

The median number of weeks now offered by states is 28 weeks, with the length of time determined by a state's unemployment rate. A total of 24 million Americans have received extended benefits since 2008.

In addition to the 1.3 million Americans who would lose their benefits on Dec. 28, 3.6 million more people will lose their benefits by the end of 2014 without an extension.

The unemployment rate remains high nationally and especially in some states, but the fight over unemployment benefits is playing out amid broader federal budget concerns and efforts to avert another government shutdown next month. It also comes as some states have opted out of or pared back their own unemployment insurance offerings, enacting cuts some have called "historic and disturbing." The result is that a number of states now provide fewer weeks of jobless benefits than at any time since the creation of the program in 1935. In some of those states, the extended federal benefits have remained in place, sparing the jobless the immediate pain of losing their benefits.

Extending the program would cost the federal government $25.7 billion over the course of 2014 and 2015, according to a Congressional Budget Office estimate released this week. It would also increase federal revenues by $500 million in the next decade, the CBO said.

The amounts of money paid under the extended unemployment program already have been cut by the automatic federal budget cuts known as sequestration. Depending on when a state implemented those reductions, the cuts shaved as much as 25 percent off jobless Americans' unemployment checks.

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

Governor awards grants to assist low-income families with energy costs

By: Russell Sellers

MONTGOMERY — Grants totaling $39.3 million awarded by Gov. Robert Bentley will assist low-income families in Alabama with home energy bills.

The grants will enable 22 community action agencies throughout the state to provide temporary assistance with electric and gas bills. Priority for assistance is given to the elderly, people with disabilities, and families with young children.

"Paying for high home heating bills during the winter can be a significant challenge for low-income families or elderly residents living on extremely limited budgets," Bentley said. "This funding is intended to assist those with the greatest need."

Residents seeking assistance must apply through their local community action agencies. Eligibility is based on income, family size, and available resources. If applications are approved, payments are made directly to the utility companies on behalf of residents.

The Ala. Dept. of Economic and Community Affairs is administering the grants as part of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program. The funding was made available to the state by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Full contact information for each agency can be found at caaalabama.org/agency-list.php.

Community action agencies, counties served, and grant amounts

- Community Action Partnership of Huntsville/Madison and Limestone Counties Inc. (Madison and Limestone) - $2,358,610. Phone: 256-851-9800
- Community Service Programs of West Alabama Inc. (Bibb, Choctaw, Fayette, Greene, Lamar, Tuscaloosa, Sumter) - $3,331,190. Phone: 205-752-5429
- Walker County Community Action Agency Inc. (Walker) - $641,320. Phone: 205-221-4010
- Pickens County Community Action Committee and Community Development Corp. Inc. (Pickens) - $292,648. Phone: 205-367-8166
- Organized Community Action Program Inc. (Bullock, Butler, Covington, Crenshaw, Dale, Lowndes, Pike) - $2,331,889. Phone: 334-566-1712
- Community Action Agency of Northwest Alabama Inc. (Colbert, Franklin, Lauderdale) - $1,149,014. Phone: 256-766-4330
- Community Action Agency of Northeast Alabama Inc. (Blount, Cherokee, DeKalb, Jackson, Marshall, St. Clair) - $3,104,685. Phone: 256-638-4430
- **Community Action Partnership of North Alabama Inc. (Cullman, Lawrence, Morgan) - $1,799,536. Phone: 256-355-7843**
- Montgomery Community Action Agency (Montgomery) - $2,128,337. Phone: 334-263-3474
- Mobile Community Action Inc. (Mobile, Washington) - $3,911,329. Phone: 251-457-5700
- Marion-Winston Counties Community Action Committee Inc. (Marion, Winston) - $588,062. Phone: 205-921-4224
- Macon-Russell Community Action Agency Inc. (Macon, Russell) - $858,631. Phone: 334-727-6100
- Jefferson County Committee for Economic Opportunity (Jefferson) - $4,192,094. Phone: 205-327-7500
- Human Resource Development Corp. (Barbour, Coffee, Geneva, Henry, Houston) - $1,900,283. Phone: 334-347-0881
- Hale Empowerment and Revitalization Organization Inc. (Hale) - $361,343. Phone: 334-624-0842
- Community Action of Etowah County Inc. (Etowah) - $894,701. Phone: 256-546-9271
- Elmore/Autauga Community Action Committee Inc. (Autauga, Dallas, Elmore, Perry) - $1,746,532. Phone: 334-567-4361
- Eleventh Area of Alabama Opportunity Action Committee Inc. (Chilton, Shelby) - $968,856. Phone: 205-755-1204
- Community Action Committee Inc. of Chambers-Tallapoosa-Coosa (Chambers, Tallapoosa, Coosa) - $863,929. Phone: 256-825-4287
- Community Action Agency of South Alabama (Baldwin, Clarke, Conecuh, Escambia, Marengo, Monroe, Wilcox) - $2,730,940. Phone: 251-626-2646
- Alabama Council on Human Relations Inc. (Lee) - $1,337,444. Phone: 334-821-8336
- Community Action Agency of Talladega, Clay, Randolph, Calhoun, and Cleburne Counties (Calhoun, Clay, Cleburne, Randolph, Talladega) - $1,864,982. Phone: 256-362-6611

Learning from the Pros: 2nd Annual Vinemont Baseball Camp brings the Big Leagues to local children

By: Josh McBrayer
joshmcbrayer@cullmansense.com

VINEMONT – The trees are trimmed, the gifts are wrapped, and the stockings are stuffed. What does that mean?

Baseball of course, at least in Vinemont.

Head baseball coach and Athletic Director Chad Shannon, along with the Vinemont Eagles are gearing up to host the 2nd Annual Vinemont Baseball Camp on December 27th and 28th.

"I have been involved with baseball camps every year I have been a head coach which has been 10," said Shannon. "This is my third year at Vinemont and our second year to have the camp here."

Vinemont's skipper has enjoyed a marked success with every baseball program he has been involved with, most recently bringing a county championship to Vinemont in 2012.

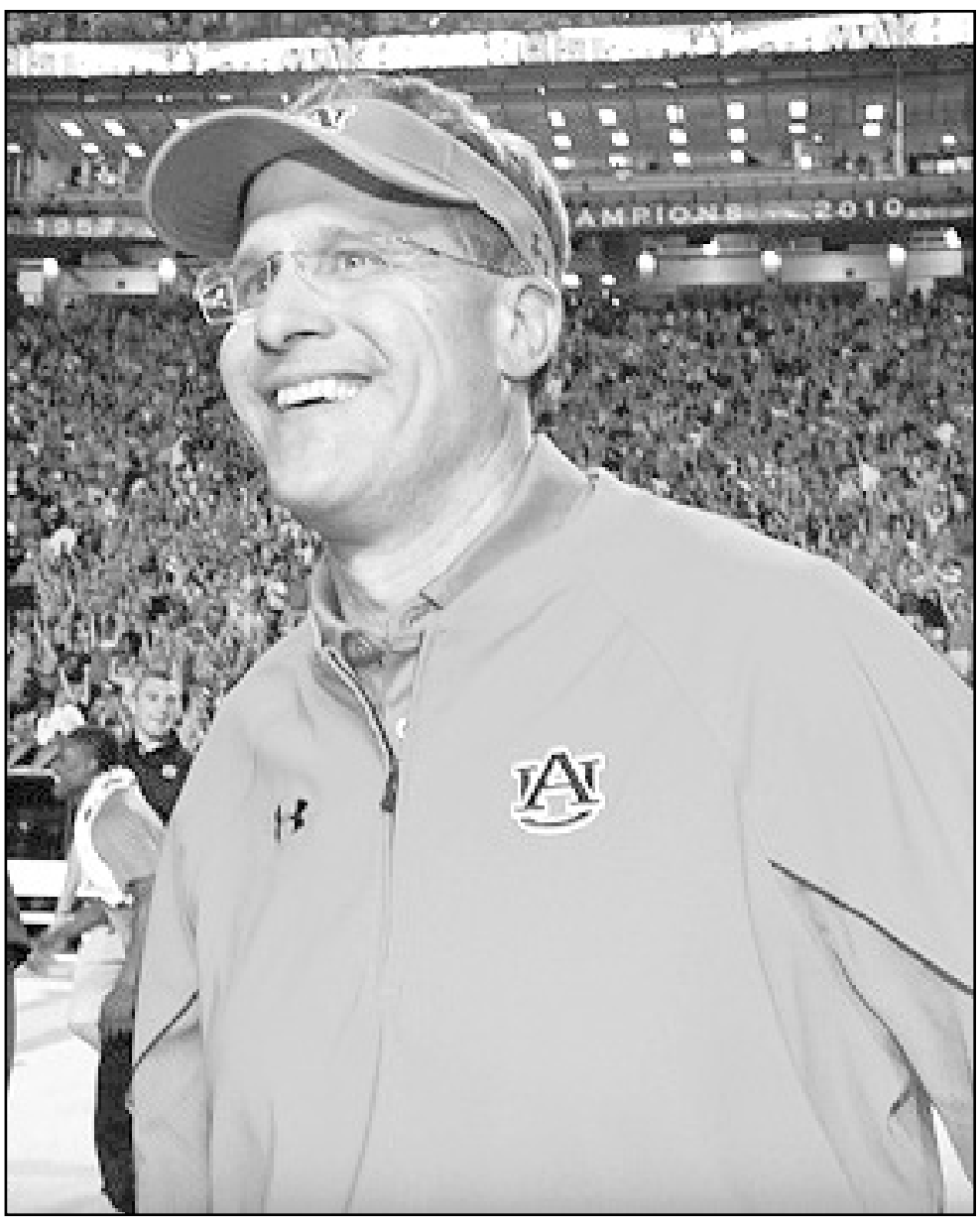
Children from ages 6-14 will be able to attend the camp and will receive instruction from top tier players such as Cleveland Indians prospect and current Carolina Mudcat, Grant Sides, Andrew College standout Judson Sullivan, and, of course, former Vinemont Eagle and current Auburn Tiger, Izaac Yarbrough.

"I enjoy doing the camps each year because I get the opportunity to teach the game and watch some of my former players work with the younger players and pass on their knowledge of the game," Shannon said of the fondness of the Christmas camp.

The camp will run from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m. on December 27th and 28th. The cost is $50 per campers and is open to ages 6-14.

Auburn's Gus Malzahn Receives Contract Extension, Raise

By: Jason Matheson



AUBURN – Auburn University Director of Athletics Jay Jacobs announced today that he extended the contract of Coach Gus Malzahn for a six-year period in recognition of the Auburn football team's success in his first year as head coach.

"As I've said before, we want Coach Malzahn to be at Auburn for a long time," Jacobs said.

"The new contract includes a raise and extension and is our statement that Auburn is committed to Coach Malzahn for the long haul. While this season has been remarkable, I'm equally excited about the future of our program under his leadership. The future of Auburn football is very bright."

"I couldn't be more pleased with our student-athletes and our coach," Jacobs added.

Auburn University President Dr. Jay Gogue expressed his support for Jacobs' action.

"Jay made a good recommendation, and I support it. A lot of programs would love to have Coach Malzahn, so this is a good move that allows him to continue taking Auburn football where our fans want it. I've consulted with the president pro tem of the Auburn Board, and he let me know that he supports it as well."

Jimmy Rane, the president pro tem of Auburn's Board, added his sentiment to the extension. "What began as a new day has turned into a great day for Auburn and the Auburn family."

The contract extension increases Malzahn's annual salary to $3.85 million next year with a $250,000 increase for each subsequent year.

Weekly Local Basketball Wrap Up

By: Josh McBrayer
joshmcbrayer@cullmansense.com

Another week is in the books as we move closer to the Christmas holiday and the heart of area play and the week was full of action.

From blowout to nail-biters and Cold Springs own Haley Freeman scoring her 1,000th point, the past week was a can't miss. Here is the CullmanSense featured game of the week and scores from around the county.

GOOD HOPE vs. WESTMINSTER CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

GIRLS

GOOD HOPE - The first quarter of action saw the Lady Raiders jump out to an early lead but the Lady Wildcats hung tough thanks to the play of Jess Gonder and Sydney Ison.

The duo combined for all of the Westminster points in the first quarter.

The second quarter saw Good Hope open up a seven point lead on the strength of hot shooting by Kaitlyn Scott. Kaitlyn Bishop and Sierra Kinser each added a pair to give Good Hope a 19-12 advantage at the half. Good Hope extended their lead to as much as 10 in the third but Gonder again came up big for Westminster with seven points and keeping the Lady Wildcats within eight heading to the last quarter of play.

Westminster started the fourth on a 5-0 run but Good Hope's presence inside with Celeste Whisenant quickly evened the run out.

The Lady a Wildcats again pulled close, within five, but found themselves in a position of having to foul as the time ticked away.

It was Kacy Thomas who found herself at the line, knocking down four big free throws to seal the game and give Good Hope the 37-30 victory.

BOYS

The Wildcats looked like a team on a mission recently as they came out with a flurry, jumping on Good Hope 14-4 in the first on the strength of a 9-2 run to start the quarter.

The Wildcats shooters went cold in the second quarter but as they say, defense never goes cold.

Westminster proved that holding Good Hope to just 11 points, allowing the visitors to take a 26-16 lead to halftime.

Following a third quarter that was dead even at 12 points each, Good Hope started to feel it from three point land, hitting a trio of trifectas to pull to within five, the smallest gap of the night, with 40.9 remaining in the game.

Unfortunately for Good Hope, this was as close as they would get as they fell to the Westminster Wildcats 48-42.

OTHER SCORES

TUESDAY

GIRLS

Cold Springs 79 vs Fairview 42
Cullman 58 vs Gardendale 48
Hanceville 57 vs Corner 48
Holly Pond 54 vs JB Pennington 27
Vinemont 22 vs Danville 47

BOYS

Cullman 73 vs Gardendale 74
Fairview 46 vs Cold Springs 50

FRIDAY

GIRLS

Cold Springs 61 vs Holly Pond 68
Cullman 51 vs East Limestone 62
Good Hope 54 vs West Point 39

BOYS

Good Hope 47 vs Wdst Point 72

NOTE: Some scores were unavailable at print.

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No. 16 WSCC women's basketball explodes for 100 points

By: Russell Moore
WSCC Contributor

HANCEVILLE – A 12-day layoff didn't affect Wallace State's women's basketball team at all recently. The 16th-ranked Lady Lions exploded for one of their largest offensive outbursts in years, cruising to a dominating 100-77 victory over Chattanooga (Tenn.) State at Tom Drake Coliseum.

Multiple Wallace State players finished with career performances. Sophomore Morgan Pearson poured in a career-high 27 points off the bench, freshman Morgan Smith scored a career-high 21 points in only her seventh collegiate game, and Jaylan Snowden added 12 points and dished out a career-best 14 assists.

"It's good to get a win like this coming off Thanksgiving because we've had to sit on that East Mississippi loss for more than 10 days. You have to be pleased when your team scores 100 points. Everyone contributed, so that makes it a happy locker room. I told the team to enjoy this one because we've got to get back work Wednesday," said Wallace State third-year coach Ron Burdette.

The Lady Lions, who led 49-45 at halftime, hit the century mark behind a steady dose of 3-pointers, nailing 15 as a team. Pearson connected on four 3s, freshman Amber Carey scored all 12 of her points, a career high, from behind the 3-point arc, and six different Lady Lions accounted for at least one trey.

After averaging 8.2 points as a freshman, Pearson has provided a spark off the bench for Wallace State (5-2) during the young season. She had 14 points at the half against Chattanooga State and appropriately hit the final bucket for Wallace State to crack the 100-point mark.

"I feel that Morgan (Pearson) plays a whole lot better coming off the bench than when she starts because she can see the flow of the game. Morgan can shoot it as good as anyone on the team," Burdette said. "I feel like we are very versatile offensively. We have confidence in almost anyone to step out and hit a 3-pointer. A girl like Amber Carey can also light it up like she did in this one."

"We've got to work on improving in the post even though Morgan Smith did a great job defensively on their top post player. Morgan is so smart and can do many different things that a normal post player can't."

Clinging to its four-point halftime lead, Wallace State opened the second half on a 19-7 run to pull away. Smith and Pearson then connected on back-to-back 3-pointers to extend the cushion to 74-54 with 13:04 remaining.

Chattanooga State only closed the gap to as little as 12 points the rest of the way.

Smith collected a team-high eight rebounds for Wallace State, while Jasmine Coleman contributed seven points and Brandee Busenlehner had six. Simone Smith led Chattanooga State with 23 points.

For more on WSCC athletics, visit wallacestate.edu.

Wallace State volleyball's Kianna Delaney earns NJCAA honorable mention All-American recognition

By: Russell Moore • WSCC Contributor

HANCEVILLE – Wallace State volleyball middle hitter Kianna Delaney has been named a National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Division I honorable mention All-American, in the list released today by the national office.

Delaney, a Chattanooga, Tenn., native, led the Alabama Community College Conference (ACCC) this season in three categories, tallying 485 kills, 137 blocks and 3.03 kills per set, guiding Wallace State to its sixth straight ACCC regular season championship and fifth consecutive tournament title. Delaney, who added a .334 hitting percentage and 266 digs, was also named the conference's Player of the Year for her regular season work and was the conference tournament MVP.

"Kianna had a great season for us. She was a leader statistically in many categories, but she was also a team leader on and off the court and a team captain. She basically led us to another championship," said Wallace State coach Randy Daniel. "Above all, Kianna is a good person and has a chance to play Division I volleyball. She deserves all the accolades."

Wallace State finished 30-17 in 2013, making its fifth consecutive national tournament appearance and 14th overall.

Delaney was a part of 53 wins, a pair of state championships and two national tournament appearances in two seasons, compiling 846 kills, 515 digs and 225 blocks during her impressive career with the Lions.



Kianna Delaney

Wallace State volleyball has produced an honorable mention selection the last five seasons. Erica Baker earned the recognition twice (2012 and 2011), along with Lesley Bemis in 2011, Taulise Dunklin in 2010, and Cassie Daniels in 2009.

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

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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":

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- Seniors with exceptional circumstances, let us show you how to help ensure that all of your additional opportunities are utilized!


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Catoma Mart
Cullman Civic Center
Cullman County Courthouse
Cullman Wellness & Aquatics Center
Deb's Bookstore
Fairview Superette
Good Hope Grocery
Graves' BP 157
Hanceville Chevron
High Quality Fuels - Dodge City
Holly Pond Cafe
Holly Pond Supermarket
Jet Pep - Hwy 157
Joe's Freeway Exxon
Johnny's Bar-B-Q
Lowry's Discount Mart - Hwy. 157
Piggly Wiggly - Hwy. 157
Rumors Deli
S&S Foods
Southmart Chevron - Hwy. 278
The Hutch
Vinemont Super Saver
Wendy's / Texaco
West Point Superette

The Weather Outside is Frightful

By: Natalie Bonner

Just as that beloved Christmas song "Let it Snow" says, the weather was, indeed, frightful this past Friday night when Celebrate Christmas was held. The harsh winds and freezing rain pelted onlookers and attendees who weren't underneath the shelter of the Festhalle.

The unfortunate weather did not close down the event, but some activities simply had to be cancelled such as the Nighttime Parade. Several of the planned activities were carried out though, with Santa Claus and his reindeer in attendance, along with live musical acts and volunteers handing out warm drinks.

Greta Bishop, 12, is a student at Fairview Middle School and a volunteer with Desperation Church at the event.

"It's really cold. We are handing out free hot chocolate and some cards to go Desperation Church," she said.

The fake snow spewing out from overhead had some a little confused. With the crazy cold weather of the night, a couple of patrons were jokingly overheard asking if that was real snow coming in from outside.

The furry reindeer were decked out in their Christmas garb complete with jingle bells and a red bow to celebrate the fact that they can, in fact, fly. The children enjoyed the reindeer and visiting with Santa Claus.

"Well, someone told me there was no such thing as reindeer," Rene Ingram teasingly said. Ingram was taking her younger sister Lexus out to enjoy the event.

"The weather almost stopped us from coming out. It was pouring. We took a chance though and came out. She's newer to Cullman so I wanted her to get to see all of the activities and things that we have here."

Atlanta band Unknown Lyric made the three-hour trek out to Cullman to perform at the Festhalle. The two-person band consists of Jeremiah Turner on acoustic guitar and Kevin Grayson on violin. The duo adds other members to the set if needed, such as a drum or bass.

Many different types of classical and contemporary music inspire Unknown Lyric. They draw inspiration from everyday life, as well as everything from Michael Jackson and Beethoven to John Mayer and musical theatre. Their performance left people comparing them to the renowned Trans-Siberian Orchestra in terms of performance, energy, and instrumental sounds. The full-time musicians enjoyed their time spent in Cullman.

"We would come back in a heartbeat. The city of Cullman is amazing, the people are friendly, the town is warm, and the food is great. Anytime y'all want us back, you got us," Turner said.



Watching the duo perform, they certainly didn't appear cold or uncomfortable as they rocked out a very entertaining set, to which generous applauding confirmed their appeal and success.

"My fingers are freezing. It's really not so bad, but when you are playing an instrument you have those joints and the cold wind, anything, can affect your joints," violinist Grayson said.

The collaborative duo agreed the weather was icy cold and a little difficult to perform in, but that having the opportunity to play overrode any type of discomfort.

Of course, Santa Claus was in attendance. Gregg Turk who played the Christmas saint said he normally brings his sleigh out to the festival, which is 14 feet long, 7 foot tall and 6 feet wide, but because of the rain he decided to hold off on the sleigh.

"My toes are frozen and my fingers are cold. I'm used to a cold nose and bright red cheeks obviously, but you know we've had a great turnout. The spirit of people in Cullman is as positive as it has ever been, especially considering the temperature and the things they've had to go through. I think they've done very well," Turk said.

"You know a lot of people could have just cancelled everything but the CDMA and all of these other people have done a fine job so we all make the best of it."

Ornamental Goals (from Front)

By: Natalie Bonner

WEST POINT - A local, talented artist will see her latest creation on display at the state capitol.

Senior Katelyn Abbott from West Point High School has been selected to create a special ornament that represents the West Point community.

This work of art will be a commemorative decoration on a Christmas tree in the rotunda of the state capitol building in Montgomery.

Abbott is a 17-year-old senior and was chosen to create the ornament due to her outstanding artwork during her fours years as a student in the art department at West Point High School. She is the daughter of Bart and Stephanie Abbott of West Point. She only had three days to complete the project, but luckily Abbott works quickly and efficiently.

The ornament was done on time and truly captured the spirit of West Point. "My ornament had different things on it, but mainly warriors and that represents my community in many ways to me," Abbott said.

"The main reason the warrior means a lot and represents us well is because we are a small community, but we work together and make great things with what we have. And a warrior is someone who doesn't usually have a lot, but makes a lot out of what he has."

When Abbott is not busy with her artwork, she enjoys art activities and hunting. She is president of the Art Club, co-editor of the Yearbook Staff, and also takes part in Beta Club, National Honor Society, Science Club, Spanish Club, FCA, FFA, and the FFA Extemporaneous Speaking Team. She plans to major in art and minor in a science in college, while pursuing a medical degree.

"It was an honor being chosen to do the ornament," Abbott said of being chosen to create a work of art that truly captured her community's spirit. "I enjoy living in West Point. It is a very friendly community and you always feel at home no matter where you are."

Address (from Front)

Safety.

He said he is extremely proud of work accomplished by the Agriculture and Rural Crimes Unit, which was formed in June.

Following Bentley's comments, the Federation held an awards program. The Cherokee County Herald and its editor, Terry Dean, received the Federation's Agricultural Communications Award for the newspaper's outstanding farm coverage.

The Houston County Farmers Federation was honored for Outstanding Local and Community Service.

Federations in Pike, Russell and Talladega counties were recognized for outstanding work by their respective Women's Leadership Committees.

Senior Leader Awards, honoring Federation members for long-time service to the organization, went to James Powell of Autauga County, Gerald Willis of Calhoun County, Jimmie Harrison Jr. of Chilton County, and James Brady of Perry County.

Federations in Baldwin, Blount, Dale, Lee, and Mobile counties were honored with the organization's Award For Excellence for overall achievement in organization, agricultural programs, governmental programs, and Young Farmer and Women's Leadership programs.

At the conclusion of the morning session, farmers also observed finalists in the Young Farmers Discussion Meet.

This afternoon, 500 voting delegates representing members throughout Alabama will meet to consider policy recommendations and elect two regional vice presidents and three district representatives to the state board of directors. Delegates also will elect chairmen of the State Women's Leadership Committee and State Young Farmers Committee.

The conference ends tonight with a special recognition of former U.S. Congressman Jo Bonner and announcement of the Young Farmers contest winners.

Parade (from Front)

trees, and then we put them up for silent auction. Many people donated to us. All year long, people will donate ornaments, wreaths, etc. to us and then we just kind of bring it in, look at it, and see what we can do," Bevis said.

Among the people who donated were many board members, school classrooms, Wal-Mart Distribution, Wal-Mart Transportation, Tyson Foods, Welti Cumberland United Methodist Church, Welti Cumberland Presbyterian Women's Ministry, Westminster Assisted Living, Dumas Home Store, Mental Health Care of Cullman, several individuals, and anonymous donors, to name a few.

"Brooks' Place conducts forensic investigation of child sexual abuse for the city and the county of Cullman so any child who has experienced any sort of sexual abuse will come to us for an investigation and possibly counseling later on," said Bevis.

For those who won their bids, they showed up on Sunday to pay their money and receive their shrink-wrapped items to take home.

The bids were affordable and there were a variety of themed items that would fit almost any style or taste.

Bevis said that the weather was a small let-down, but that they were still getting lots of people coming in and asking questions, happily bidding, and ready to win their prized item.

"I was hoping for better weather because I felt like the parade and all the events that were going to go on down here would have brought a lot of traffic, but we are still getting traffic because of the play. That is something that we were excited to find out was happing and it was a wonderful thing," Bevis said.

For more photos visit CullmanSense.com.

Hometown vendors offer unique Christmas gift ideas



By: Noah Chandler • noahchandler@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Hundreds of eager spectators/buyers took to the floor of the Cullman Civic Center over the weekend as the Cullman City Parks & Recreation hosted its annual Arts & Crafts Fair.

Vendors from across the state brought their wares just in time for the Christmas Season.

Local artist, Leldon Maxcy displayed his ornate ornaments and other skillfully designed, hand-crafted wooden decorative pieces.

Lights of Love

By: Natalie Bonner

CULLMAN - The 22nd Annual CRMC Foundation's Dr. Herman C. Ensor Lights of Love Tree Lighting Ceremony was held this past Thursday, December 5 at 5:30 in the Colonel Cullmann Room at CRMC.

The late Dr. Ensor dedicated his life's work to helping others around him. Dr. Ensor created the Lights of Love Tree Lighting Ceremony in 1991 to honor and remember our community's lost loved ones.

This cherished event allowed people to purchase a light in honor or in memory of someone dear to them. The lights were sold for $20, $40, $60 or more dollars each. Donations may be contributed throughout the entire holiday season though. All proceeds benefit Hospice of Cullman County.

Director Jennifer Smith of Hospice for Cullman County said, "[This event] is a time for us to remember patients who have passed, loved ones who have passed, and people who are special to us in our lives."

For every light that is given in honor or remembrance of someone, the family of this person receives an invitation to the event and an acknowledgment card that shows who gave the donation so that they may see whom their loved one was special to.



"It's always a touching ceremony, and our community looks forward to it every year," Smith said.

This year's event honored Hospice Physician and founding board member Bill Peinhardt, MD. It also honored beloved resident and former CRMC Foundation board member Chester Freeman. These two men have left an indelible print on Cullman County and the CRMC Foundation.

Donations may be contributed throughout the holiday season. As mentioned on the CRMC website, your tax-deductible gift will help support CRMC's Hospice of Cullman County in its continuing effort to provide excellent end-of-life care to everyone in our community. Call 256-739-5185 for more information.

Drones (from Front)

commerce giant, said in an interview broadcast Sunday on CBS's "60 Minutes" news program that Amazon hopes to use drones to make same-day deliveries within five years of FAA approval. "It will work, and it will happen, and it's gonna be a lot of fun," Bezos said.

Amazon's plan is yet another example of how drones could transform everyday life. Manufacturers tout the machines' ability to carry water to a wildfire, monitor storm systems, locate missing persons or even deliver pizza.

Governors are well aware of the technology's job potential for engineers, programmers and pilots. Already, Oklahoma's Republican Gov. Mary Fallin has a cabinet-level secretary dedicated to attracting drone companies to the state.

New Mexico, which has a long history of testing military aircraft, has already secured a site.

In promotional materials, Utah boasts that it is "one of the few states with unified executive and legislative support for UAV testing."

The Association of Unmanned Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI), the trade association for drone manufacturers, estimates that integrating drones into the national airspace will generate at least 70,000 engineering, manufacturing and piloting jobs within the first three years of FAA approval.

The states that win the test sites also will be charged with developing privacy policies for drones, to protect the public from surveillance by drones performing all sorts of tasks, including delivering packages.

During this past legislative session, eight states put limits on how law enforcement officers can use drones, and set guidelines for how long data collected from a drone can be stored in a database.

Still, those concerns haven't stopped the majority of states from moving ahead to attract drone businesses.

Even in Virginia, where tea partyers and civil libertarians worked together to pass a two-year moratorium on drone use by anyone other than the military, the economic temptation of aerospace jobs and an FAA test site convinced the legislature and the governor to all but gut the moratorium in a special session.

"Not only would future job prospects dim, but current businesses and those they employ would be at risk," warned Peter Bale, chairman of the AUVSI, in a letter to Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell, a Republican.

"More than 50 companies that manufacture UAVs have a footprint in Virginia. A moratorium would create an unfriendly environment for these companies, which as a result might look to take their business, as well as jobs, elsewhere."

In response, McDonnell added exemptions to the moratorium for researchers and companies to test drones, so long as they are not armed or used for surveillance.

Virginia and New Jersey are teaming up to apply for a joint drone test site, competing against 22 other states vying for one of the spots.

Republican Gov. Paul LePage of Maine also refused to sign a bill limiting drone use. "This bill will harm any opportunity Maine has to create new jobs in the aerospace industry," LePage wrote after vetoing a bill limiting law enforcement use of drones. "It is the wrong message to send if we want these jobs."

Instead, LePage directed the state Department of Public Safety to create guidelines for law enforcement use of drones.

A model drone policy from the Aerospace States Association, the Council of State Governments and the National Conference of State Legislatures urges states to require a warrant for drone surveillance of an individual; prohibit the re-use of video or photos collected by a drone for other investigations; and ban weapons from domestic drones.

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

Love Nativity

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Kids' Carnival Area
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- Carousel Ride
- Carriage Ride
- Pictures with Santa
- Christmas Hayride
- Games, Games, Games

Music/Entertainment
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CHS Drama Team
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– 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.

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

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.

Knifty Knitters Weekly Meeting
Members of the Cullman Knifty Knitters group meet each Tuesday afternoon at 3 p.m. in the Cullman County Library. Everyone is invited to come learn how to knit yarn and needles are free. This group is open to all ages, both accomplished knitters and those wishing to learn the art form. Crocheters also are invited to take part in these weekly meetings. Please call Lesia for more info 256-734-2720, ext. 23.

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.

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

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.

American Legion Post 4 Meeting
All members of American Legion Post 4 are reminded of their monthly meeting (second Thursday of each month) which starts at 6 p.m. with dinner followed by the 7 p.m. meeting session. Veterans gather at the VFW building for this event. Please invite veterans who do not already belong to this organization.

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.

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.

Retiree & Senior Citizens Christmas Party
Cullman County Commission on Aging once again is sponsoring its annual Retiree & Senior Citizens Christmas Party. This event starts at 9 a.m. and concludes following lunch. This is a free event and will take place at Cullman's McGukin Civic Center. This holiday offering features music, educational booths, exhibits, speakers and giveaways, including the newly printed Senior Guide magazine. So come enjoy the holiday spirit with all your friends and pick up your new Senior Resource Guide available for the first time to the local public. For further information please call 256-734-1241.

2013 Cullman County Sheriff's Office Jimmy Arrington Memorial Rodeo
The annual 2013 Cullman County Sheriff's Office Jimmy Arrington Memorial Rodeo will take place this weekend at the Cullman Ag Center on Highway 31 N. Gates open at 5:30 p.m. both nights. Advance tickets are available at Jack's Western Wear (their new location in Good Hope), Traditions Bank and at the Cullman County Sheriff's Department. For additional information please call 256-734-0342. This is great family entertainment so y'all come.

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.

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Cullman Golf Course's 'Two-Man Tournament'
Cullman Golf Course's 'Two-Man Tournament' will start at 10 a.m. and consist of 6 holes of best ball, 6 holes of scramble play and 6 holes of shamble play. Cost to join this event is $55.00 for each player. This money covers green fee, cart fee, prizes, hole prizes and lunch. Call the golf shop at 256-739-2386 for more information. Come enjoy a great morning of golfing with your friends.

Christmas Festival & Outdoor Market
Come ready to play, shop, eat and celebrate the wonders of the Christmas season. Free admission, so come shop with more than 30 vendors at our outdoor "Dinckelburg Market." Have fun with the family in our "Candy Cane Lane Kids' Carnival" area. Enjoy the sights and sounds of Christmas in our stage area with entertainment for everyone. Featured musical guests will be the Wallace State Singers, CHS Jazz Band and Drama Team, St. John's Praise Band, Shirley's Dancers and more. Come rain or shine for this spectacular event. No admission charge. Invite your family and friends to be a part of fun with us from 1-6 p.m. We are located at 512 2nd Avenue, SE Cullman, Alabama. This event presented by St. John's Evangelical Protestant Church and Christ Lutheran Church in downtown Cullman. Santa will be waiting to see you.

Town of Baileyton's Christmas party at the Baileyton Senior Center
Everyone is invited to attend the Town of Baileyton's Christmas party at the Baileyton Senior Center tonight from 5 p.m. until 8 p.m. Free food and drinks, bags of candy, Santa (at 5:30 p.m.) and loads of fun for all. Each child will receive a free photo of themselves with Santa as a keepsake.

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.

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CULLMANSENSE
Community Matters

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To tip or not to tip: that is the holiday question



(BPT) - When the holiday season arrives, so too does the enigma of holiday tipping. What's supposed to be a sign of gratitude for great service, can quickly turn into stress as you try to decide if and how much you should tip the handyman, mail carrier, babysitter, and many more.

Lizzie Post, co-author of "Emily Post's Etiquette, 18th edition" and great-great-granddaughter of Emily Post, knows the finer points of tipping during the holiday season, including who to tip, how much to tip and how to stay on budget doing so. Post has teamed with up Bank of America, and here are some of her suggestions:

Make a list - The key to holiday tipping is to plan ahead so nobody gets overlooked. A tip is appropriate for people who have provided their services throughout the year, like your dog walker, housekeeper, personal trainer, hairstylist, doorman, and trash collector. Don't forget to think of the entire family in the process, as well - it's always good to recognize babysitters, day care providers and nannies.

Scale appropriately - The general rule of thumb for holiday tipping is up to the cost of one instance of service. However, this does not ring true for everyone on your list. Individuals who provide service on a more regular basis, such as an au pair or housekeeper, may require additional recognition, such as one week's pay. Some people who may appreciate a gift, but most likely cannot accept cash, include your child's teacher, health care professionals, and government employees, like your mail carrier. By making gift purchases for these individuals with a rewards card, such as BankAmericard Cash Rewards(TM) card, you can earn cash back on every purchase, so when the holidays conclude, you have extra money in your pocket.

Leverage technology - The holiday season is a hectic time of year for many people, so leverage technology to make life easier. Using easy-to-use tools, such as Bank of America's mobile application, you can stay on top of account balances for gift giving and set up alerts to get balance notifications.

And, with advances in mobile technology, gifting money is easier and more convenient than ever. For instance, using Bank of America's online or mobile banking you can send money to another person using only their email address or mobile phone number, saving time, energy, and effort. Prefer to send a check? No problem. Customers can simply access Bank of America's mobile banking app on their smartphone or tablet to securely deposit checks on their schedule.

Express gratitude - It's important to remember that above all else, holiday tipping is really holiday thanking, extending a courteous gesture as a result of service throughout the year.

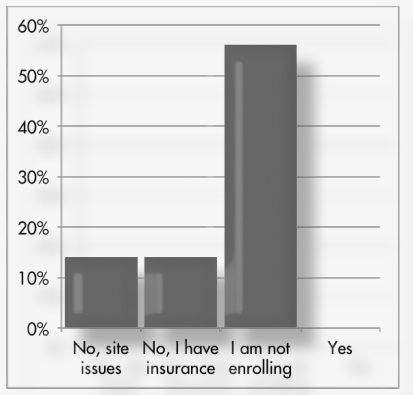
No matter how much or what you decide to give, it's always important to offer your thanks with a hand-written note or holiday card. After all, it's the thought and sentiment behind the gesture that matters most, not the gift itself.

Consider these holiday tipping guidelines from Post:

- Barber/hairstylist - cost of one salon visit or a gift
- Babysitter - one evening's pay and a small gift
- Handyman - $15 to $40
- Au pair or live-in nanny - one week's pay and a gift from your child(ren)
- Garage attendants - $10 to $30 or a small gift
- Day care provider - $25 to $70 for each staff member or a gift
- Personal trainer - up to the cost of one session or a gift
- Dog walker - up to one week's pay or a gift
- Housekeeper/cleaner - up to the amount of one week's pay and/or a small gift
- Personal caregiver - between one week to one month's salary or a gift
- Doorman - $15 to $80 cash or a gift
- Trash/recycling collectors - $10 to $30 each
- Pet groomer - up to the cost of one session or a gift
- Yard/garden worker - $20 to $50 cash or a gift

Poll

Have you enrolled in Obamacare?



This Week's Poll

Have you finished your Christmas shopping?

Vote Today at CullmanSense.com/Poll

Reflections of History

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



Arnold Peindhardt - Ponder Ratliff building

Contrib. by Cullman County Museum

This Week in History

December 9th
- 1907 – First Christmas Seals sold in Wilmington, Delaware post office
- 1963 – Frank Sinatra, Jr. is kidnapped

December 10th
- 1986 – Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel accepts 1986 Nobel Peace Prize

December 11th
- 1906 – U.S. president Roosevelt attacks abuses in the Congo

December 12th
- 1787 – Pennsylvania becomes second state to ratify U.S. constitution

December 13th
- 1843 – "A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens published, 6,000 copies sold

December 14th
- 1995 – AIDS patient Jeff Getty receives baboon bone marrow transplant

December 15th
- 1961 – Adolf Eichmann convicted of crimes against humanity in Israel

cullman city parks & recreation

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

www.cullmanrecreation.org
256-734-9157

- **Christmas Arts & Crafts Show:** The annual Christmas Arts & Crafts Show will be held at the Cullman Civic Center on Dec. 6-7 from 9am-9pm on Friday and from 9am-5pm on Saturday. Admission is free to enter, and over 70 vendors with homemade items will be present. Call 256-734-9157 for details.
- **FREE Phone Calls from Santa Program:** Sign your child up to receive their FREE phone call from Santa. Sign-ups begin on Dec. 2nd on a limited, first come-first serve basis. Your child will receive their phone call from Santa on Monday, Dec. 23 at your requested time. Be sure you are at home and do not miss out on your call! Call the Civic Center at 256-734-9157 for details.
- **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.
- **Ballroom Dance Classes:** Ballroom dance classes will be held weekly at the Cullman Civic Center on Thursday nights with beginners at 6:30pm and advanced class at 7:30pm under instructor Mack Wilson. Cost is $10 per person per class. Call the Cullman Civic Center for details at 256-734-9157.
- **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.
- **Card Making Class:** A card making class will be held at the Cullman Civic Center on Wednesday, November 20 from 10am-2pm. Cost is $15 per class with instructor Shirley Ross. Call the Civic Center for details at 256-734-9157.
- **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.





WANTED: Kris Kringle, The Terrible Toymaker

By: Natalie Bonner

The long-awaited progressive Christmas play brought to you by CHS Choir Director Joshua Agnew and CHS Theatre Director and Writer Dillon Lee was an enjoyable performance. The talented young crew at Cullman High School kept everyone engaged and entertained throughout the entire play.

The play called "The True Story of Kris Kringle" had people waiting over an hour to catch the limited performances. The play had two marked show times but was also crowd dependent. Other groups were brought in to "progress" through the play even after the defined time. So long as the crowd was steady, the actors were performing.

Clever fliers were distributed for the event, with several bearing Wanted signs. One of which read - Wanted: Kris Kringle, The Terrible Toymaker. These handy signs certainly stirred up curiosity and interest, enough so that despite the wintry weather, the turnout was still a success.

"It's been surprisingly good given the weather and the turnout for the other events. Some of the events were cancelled. We had a solid 20-30 person group moving through every 10 minutes up until about 7:15 p.m. And we are still getting people coming in," Lee said.

The weather didn't seem to be quite a hindrance considering the events took place inside Desperation Church. The play itself, as well as a silent auction, kept everyone busy until the next show time.

Agnew agreed with Lee, stating, "Well, honestly judging by the weather, I don't think we could have asked for better. We had the choir out soliciting for us, driving traffic down this way."

The play was originally supposed to take place at Depot Park, but the weather changed that plan. Luckily, Desperation Church stepped in and gave them a place to perform. Of course, with a change of venue came some necessary changes to the play itself.

"As far as the play coming together technically and with a complete change of venue, we had to make some changes. We were lucky enough and cannot stress enough how kind Desperation Church was to give us use of their facilities. They did let us set up early, but we did had to completely reformulate how we were doing things," Lee said. Agnew added, "We reconfigured how everything was going to go in a day." The duo said this was due to many factors. They explained that when you have half a park to work with versus one large auditorium, the logistics of how to set up a scene are going to be completely different because of scene overlap.

And as far as getting distracted as you literally moved throughout the play, that wasn't necessarily a concern for Lee and Agnew.

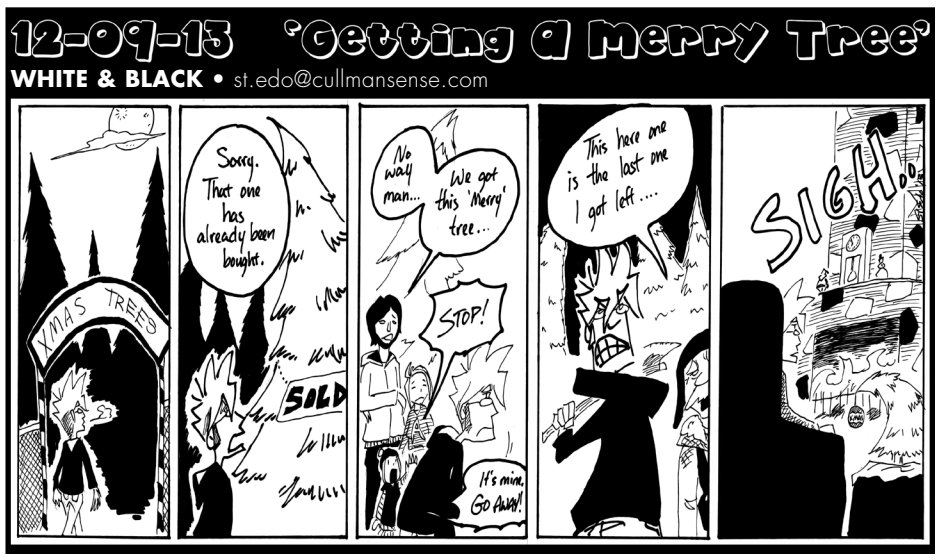
"Really after that first scene you are locked in, you are really focusing on the scene you are watching, not what's going on around you," Lee said.

Crowds of people ventured through the wondrous settings and listened to the entertaining tale, which only took around 20 minutes to tell.

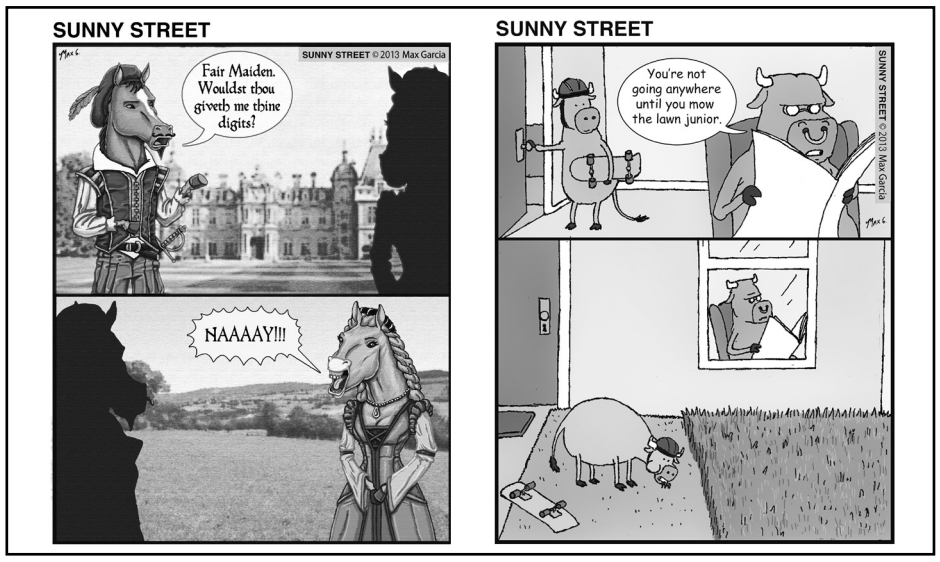
Each scene lit up and came to life with actors as patrons progressed through the play. "I thought it was very authentic. It was really good," Hanna McCravy said, who came with her mother, Tonya, to watch the play.

The mother and daughter said the play was very enjoyable and that they had a full night of activities that they had been to. "The weather hasn't stopped us from doing anything. I appreciate that [Desperation Church] opened their doors for the kids to come and do their thing here. It made it much nicer," Tonya McCravy said.

Comics







Art After Hours

By: Natalie Bonner

Chamber for Charities recently held their Second Annual Art After Hours event on December 5 from 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. at the Chamber. The event allows local artists to showcase their artwork and garner donations through a silent auction. The artists whose pieces were honored in the show had the choice to either donate all or half of their proceeds to the Cullman Caring for Kids Food Bank. The event had a great turnout with lots of local professionals coming out to support the arts, enjoy heavy hors d'oeuvres, live music, and networking, all in one place. The cost for Chamber members was $15 and $20 for future members.

Jackie Moore, director of Business & Workforce Development at the Chamber, said she enjoyed the event.

"I think it's been a great turnout. A lot of the artists have been able to come out. Everyone seems to be having a great time," Moore said.

Art After Hours is in its second year and is getting bigger each time. The art on display was certainly not average. From intricate paintings and smaller creations to mixed media pieces and beautiful woodworks, there was something for everyone.

Artist Adrian Scott had two larger, intricate pieces of art in the show. His pieces provoked thought and awe among guests as they attempted to decipher and understand the art's message.

One of Scott's creations was a yellow-orange bus outfitted with bold yellow numbers all over its body, with the banner "United Fates of America" running along its side. Scott explained that the bus was a great symbol for the role of education, picking up our student clients and moving them to a brighter future.

"The Totemic Bus art is a symbol or a metaphor for the hope of education, to be able to help as many people as possible. The bus is a double-decker to increase capacity as well," Scott said.

Another of Scott's versatile works of art featured a swirl of green, yellow, blue, and red, with the figure of a deer whose head was rendered as a shopping cart. The piece was made out of painted food packaging to relay its message. It's a dynamic work of art that not only captures your interest, but also your curiosity, Scott also examined the reason behind his piece called "Eyes Seek, Eyes Hunt, Eyes Gather."

"The piece is about when humans used to be hunters and gatherers and how we are today. It shows the idea of how we hunt in society. The creature is a combination of a shopping cart and a deer – one is how we shop and eat and the other is what we hunt," Scott said. "The ideas are still the same today, capturing that competitive nature of people. We used to forage for nuts and berries and track small game, now we track sales and root through Wal-Mart. It's all the same."

Art After Hours featured pieces from many local artists: Laura Walker and Pam Willingham with Shop Around the Corner; Charlotte Heatherly; Marion Frey with the Cullman Art Guild; Cindy Phillips; Southern Accents; Rebecca Branch with the Pilot Club; Clifford Messer; Jennifer Prybyla; Adrian Scott with Wallace State Community College; Emily Siek; Justin Shubert; Stacie and Steve Carter with 3rd Street Promenade; Leldon Maxcy; Jessica Peeples; Donald Walker; S.A. (Mandy) Phillips; Teresa Daniel with Vintage West; and Deonne Ludwig with the Chamber.

"I think people underestimate what art can bring to a community. The commerce that comes as a result of the art benefits the community, but it is also an experience," President Leah Bolin of the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce said. "We are trying to promote events through our partnership with the Cullman Art Guild to help make locals aware of the importance of these events and art as a whole."

Country Time of Year

Colt Ford added to RTS 2014 lineup



By: Noah Chandler • noahchandler@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Keeping in line with the southern sounds of country music, Rock the South promoters announced Colt Ford will take the stage in June as part of the 2014 list of artists.

"Colt is not only one of the top song writers in country music he's also one of the best entertainers. RTS is pleased to add him to the 2014 line up," Shane Quick, organizer, said. "We know thousands of fans will be very happy about this announcement as well."

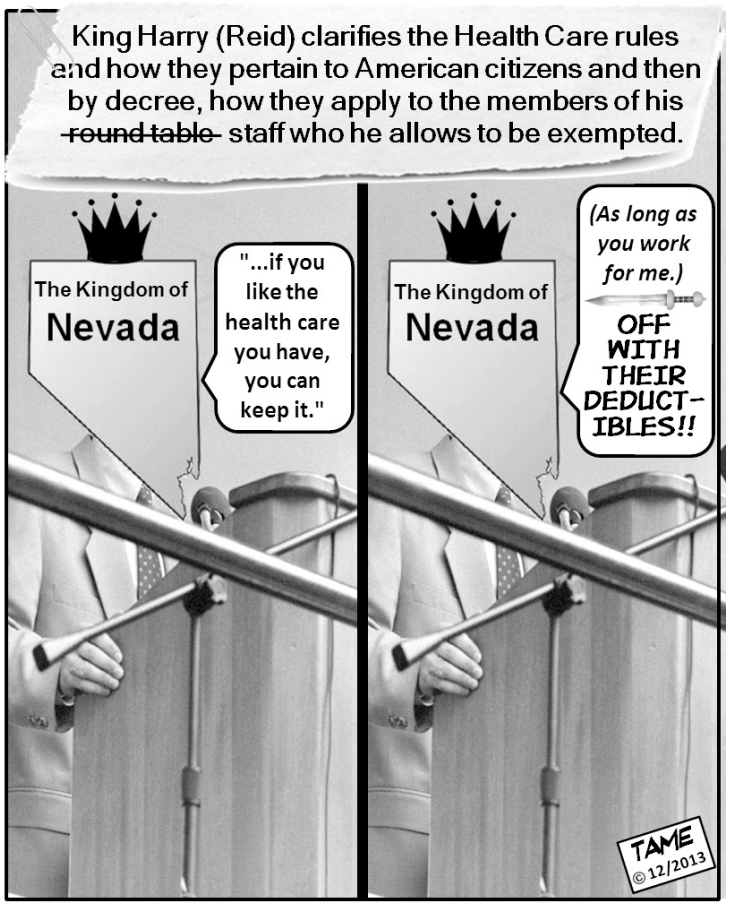
RTS tickets will officially go on sale beginning at 10 a.m. Friday, December 13.

"The tickets are going to go quick, so you need to get online early to make sure you get the tickets you'd want," he said.

The sections will be split into Platinum, VIP, and General Admission – with pricing increasing with the higher level of ticket selection.

For more on Rock The South 2014, visit the music festival's Facebook page located at facebook.com/RockTheSouth.

– Voice –



Why Can't Congress Aim Higher?

By: Lee H. Hamilton

Congressional budget negotiators are moving to meet a December 13 deadline to produce, well, something. For weeks, we've been told to keep expectations low. There'll be no "grand bargain," negotiators say. Commentators believe that even the narrowest agreement will be a signal achievement. So here's my question: Doesn't that seem like an awfully low bar to you?

Yes, I know. The atmosphere on Capitol Hill is poisonous. The two parties — even the various factions within the parties — can barely stand to be in a room with each other. Expecting a sizable budget accomplishment from Congress right now is like expecting water from a rock. It would take a miracle.

Yet there are consequences to not producing an agreement capable of clarifying fiscal affairs. Right now, government agencies cannot plan ahead; they can't consider long-term projects; they have trouble with staffing; they can't set priorities; they're forced to fund programs that have outlived their usefulness and cannot fund programs they know are necessary. And that's just the federal bureaucracy.

Things are not wholly bleak. Republican Paul Ryan of Wisconsin, the lead House negotiator, and Democrat Patty Murray of Washington, who heads up the Senate team, have been working at least to address the sequester. As you'll recall, this is the draconian set of across-the-board budget cuts put in place in 2011. At first, many agencies were able to defer maintenance, spend money they'd squirreled away, and cut staff by attrition. This next year will be much tougher: agencies are out of easy options, and defense spending faces an immense, $21 billion cut. That will be felt in every congressional district in the country. Not surprisingly, pressure is coming from both sides of the aisle to ease the impact.

The sequester is a cleaver, cutting good and bad government spending without rhyme or reason. If congressional negotiators can take a smarter approach, that's all to the good.

But if they're going to do that, shouldn't they address the real problems? The country needs gradual deficit reduction that avoids disrupting the economy or harming the vulnerable. It needs reforms to Social Security and Medicare that will put them on a solid footing for decades to come.

These are daunting challenges, but Congress's toolbox is hardly empty. It could limit itemized tax deductions, increase Medicare premiums for the well-to-do, place caps on spending, shave federal employee benefits to bring them in line with the private sector, increase government fees, sell public assets, increase the Social Security contributions of higher-income earners.... There are literally scores of possibilities, none of them easy, but all of them offering adroit negotiators the chance to craft a long-term solution to problems that have beset Capitol Hill for years and held economic growth far below its potential.

By addressing these issues head on, Congress could move beyond the political machinations that have deeply frustrated so many Americans, and play a constructive role in the economy: promoting growth by investment in infrastructure and basic research, providing incentives for entrepreneurship and job creation. It could create a responsible framework for reducing spending as the economy grows. It could reform a tax code that everyone agrees is broken.

At some point, Congress will have to put the federal budget on "a sustainable path for the long term," in the words of the CBO. So long as it does not, the economic consequences hurt everyone. Congressional leaders seem blissfully unconcerned about this and aim only for low-hanging fruit, but Americans know that Congress can and should do better, and are rightly tired of careening from crisis to crisis.

As members of Congress continue to make politically attractive suggestions that don't come close to achieving a lasting solution, let's urge them to get real. It's time for Congress to go big.

'Best military in the World' – Yeah, Right

By: John LaForge

John LaForge is a Co-director of Nukewatch, a nuclear watchdog and environmental justice group in Wisconsin, edits its quarterly newsletter, and writes for PeaceVoice.

In response to regular reports of atrocities by US soldiers, drone controllers, pilots, and interrogators, the White House routinely tries to help. Every president promises to honor our armed forces and says ours is the finest military of all, etc. At last year's Veterans' Day ceremony, president fill-in-the-blank boasted, "America is and always will be the greatest nation on Earth." This Nov. 11th, Mr. Obama said that since 9/11 the US is "defining one of the greatest generations of military service this country has ever produced," and, of course,"[W]e have the best-led, best-trained, best-equipped military in the world."

Really? On Veterans' Day 2001, one headline blared: "American Soldier is Convicted of Killing Afghan Civilians for Sport." US aggression, occupation, torture of prisoners, massacres, drone attacks, offshore penal colonies, and sexual assaults against our own service members, take the luster from our official self-image of 'exceptionality.'

In a bold invitation, Human Rights Watch has called on 154 parties to the UN Convention on Torture to bring charges against US officials under explicit language in the treaty, ratified by the US in 1994. The treaty requires such action when reputable allegations are not prosecuted by the accused governments, and ours doesn't need any more evidence, just some of which may be found in these mainstream US media stories:

• "US Practiced Torture after 9/11, Nonpartisan Review Concludes" (Apr. 16, 2013)
• "Afghans Say an American Tortured Civilians" (May 13, 2013)
• "CIA Drones Kill Civilians in Pakistan" (Mar. 18, 2011)
• "GI Kills 16 Afghans, Including 9 Children, in Attacks on Homes" (Mar. 12, 2012)
• "Libya Effort is Called Violation of War Act" (May 26, 2011)
• "NATO and Afghan forces killed 310 civilians over the same period, mostly from airstrikes, the UN reports" (Aug. 3, 2009)
• "100,000 Iraqis killed since U.S. invasion analysis says" (Oct. 29, 2004)
• "U.N. Chief Ignites Firestorm by Calling Iraq War 'Illegal'" (Sep. 17, 2004);
• "Iraq Says Blast in Baghdad Kills Dozens of Civilians: U.S. Blamed" (Mar. 29, 2003)
• "U.S. Presses for Total Exemption from War Crimes Court" (Oct. 9, 2002)
• "Pentagon Says U.S. Airstrike Killed Women and Children" (Mar. 13, 2002)
• "Bombing Necessary Despite Toll on Civilians, U.S. Envoy Says" (Jan. 9, 2002);
• "U.S. helicopters fire on women, children in Somalia" (Sep. 10, 1993)
• "US forces buried enemy forces alive" (Sep. 13, 1991)
• "200,000 died in Gulf War, and counting" (May 30, 1991)

The Military's Dirty War on Women

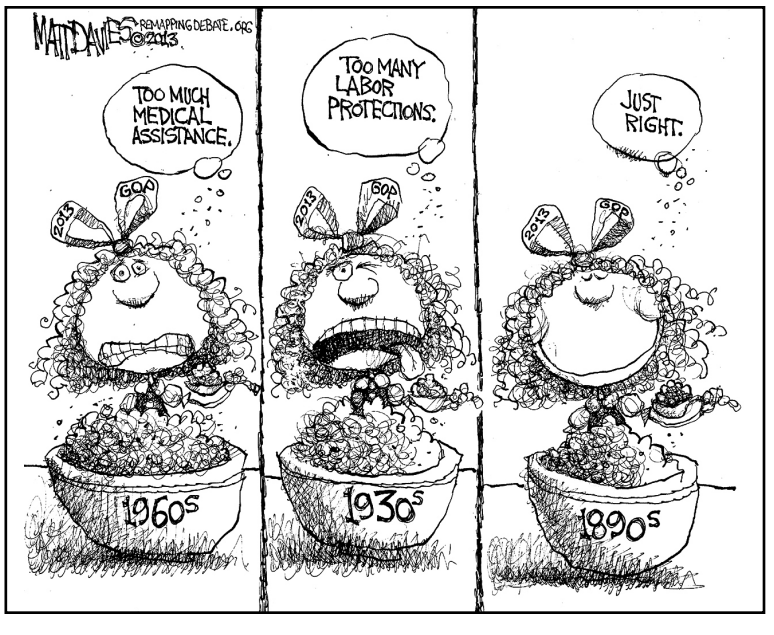
Atrocities against people of occupied or targeted countries aren't the only ones accumulating. According to a July 2012 report by the Pentagon, over 25,000 sexual assaults occurred in fiscal year 2012, a 37 percent increase from FY 2011. About "500 men and women were assaulted each week last year," USA Today reported July 25. See: "Reports of Military Sexual Assault Rise Sharply," NY Times, Nov. 7; & "Sexual Assaults in Military Raise Alarm: 26,000 Cases Last Year," May 7, 2013.

Throughout the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines, according to the Pentagon, 74 percent of females report one or more barriers to reporting sexual assault. In addition, 62 percent of victims who reported sexual assault indicated they experienced some form of retaliation. This is why, according to US Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Wisc., more than 85 percent of all military sexual assaults go unreported. In fact, Sen. Baldwin says, "overall rates of reporting dropped from 13.5 percent in 2011 to 9.8 percent in 2012."

In view of the staggering numbers, and to help end the cover-up and suppression of sexual assault reporting, US Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-NY, has proposed removing investigation and disposal of such allegations from the military chain of command and place these cases with military prosecutors. Currently, commanders — superior to victims and perpetrators — decide whether or not to prosecute an accused G.I. Commanders even have the power to reduce or overturn a judge or jury's conviction.

Gillibrand's Military Justice Improvement Act of 2013, S. 967, would give military prosecutors, instead of commanders, the independent authority to decide whether or not felony cases go to trial. The proposal has earned broad bipartisan support. It would reform the Code of Military Justice to make the system independent at the felony level.

A related bill, the Military Sexual Assault Prevention Act — S. 548 — sponsored by Sen.s Amy Klobuchar, D-MN, and Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, would prevent those convicted of sexual crimes from serving in the military, improve tracking and review of sexual assault claims in the military, and help ensure victims have access to criminal justice. Presidential speeches can't permanently obscure our record of military outrages. Some Congressional reform could at least confront the ones committed against women in uniform.



Bill Smith

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