SERIES 4, ISSUE 3 MONDAY, JANUARY 20, 2014

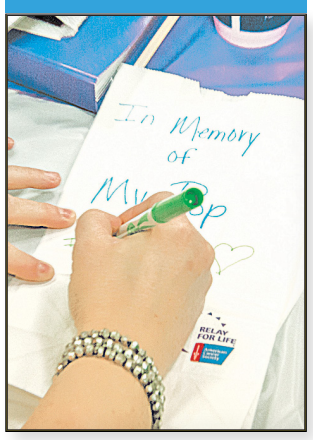
CULLMAN'S MONDAY NEWSPAPER

CULLMANSENSE

COMMUNITY MATTERS

$0.50 $0.50

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Pre-Filed Legislation Advocates for Military & Strengthens Ala.'s BRAC Defense

By: Katy Sulhoff

MONTGOMERY – Lieutenant Governor Kay Ivey recently announced the pre-filing of legislation aimed at supporting our military and strengthening Alabama's defense against any potential devastating cuts due to the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process.

The Military Land Use Planning Act (SB 80/HB 94) by Sen. Gerald Dial in the Senate and Rep. Jim Patterson in the House encourages cities and military bases to communicate about certain land use changes surrounding bases.

The bill requires local governments to notify military installations of proposed land use changes within two miles of the military installation and allows base leadership to provide their input on those proposed changes.

"During the last round of BRAC in 2005, the availability and condition of land near military bases were specifically cited as primary factors in deciding which bases to close. We're learning from the past to secure the future of Alabama's

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Fitness Favors the Brave

» Military Men Inspire with Local Photo Shoot p7



The Cold Springs Lady Eagles are Flying High

By: Josh McBrayer
josh@cullmansense.com

COLD SPRINGS – Midway between Dodge City and Jasper, on top of a mountain lays Cold Springs High School, a small 2A school that plays basketball in a big way. The Cold Springs Lady Eagles have been a perennial fixture in the 2A basketball state playoffs, including back to back state titles in '08 and '09. Now, head coach Tammy West has her team positioned for yet another run at a state championship.

The Cold Springs Lady Eagles are sitting at an impressive 16-5 record, beating most opponents by double digits.

The girls in blue are averaging 59 ppg while allowing less than 10 a quarter at 39. As most top tier coaches will tell you, a fast paced spread offense is the way to go in today's game and coach West is no different. Her girls rely on pressure and turnovers caused by a zone defense that takes full advantage of mismatches to turn opponents mistakes into easy points.

As far as the base offense of Cold Springs, they like to work the ball around the perimeter and take the open three point shot or pound the ball inside.

The Lady Eagles have just seven on the squad this year but all play crucial roles. From 1,000 point scorer Hailey Freeman to three point specialist Bailey West, the Lady Eagles own both ends of the court.

Cold Springs had an exceptional season last year but ran out of steam in the regional final, letting a game slip away in the waning minutes. "Our goal is to finish (this) season better than the

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Red Cross Issues First Aid App for Pets

By: Chris Osborne

» App helps dog and cat owners provide emergency care until veterinary assistance is available

HOOVER – Pets are an important part of many families, and a new Red Cross Pet First Aid App puts lifesaving information right in the hands of dog and cat owners so they can provide emergency care until veterinary assistance is available.

The 99 cent Pet First Aid app gives iPhone and Android smart phone users instant access to expert information so they learn how to maintain their pet's health and what to do during emergencies.

"Pet owners learn how to recognize health problems and when to contact their veterinarian," said Mark Beddingfield, Regional Executive Officer, American Red Cross Alabama Region. "The Pet First Aid App provides step-by-step instructions, videos, and images for more than 25 common first aid and emergency situations including how to treat wounds, control bleeding, and care for breathing and cardiac emergencies."

Additional topics include burns, car accidents, falls, and what to do for cold- and heat-related emergencies.

Other features in the app allow pet owners to:

- Create a pet profile including tag identification number, photos, list of medications, and instructions.
- Use the list of early warning signs to learn when to call their veterinarian.
- Use "click-to-call" to contact their veterinarian.
- Find emergency pet care facilities or alternate veterinarians with the "animal hospital locator."

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2014 State of the Community Informs and Entertains

By: Natalie Bonner
natalie@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - Last Thursday, the newly revamped State of the Community event was held at Terri Pines Country Club from 6 to 8 p.m., with a reception at 5:30 p.m. Cullman Chamber members and community visitors attended the event to hear an update on Cullman city and counties as their respective mayors and councilmen spoke about the state of each of their communities.

The State of the Community was arranged by Cullman Chamber staff on behalf of the Governmental Affairs Committee, with Freedom Insurance – Gloria Williams Agency and Premier Bank of the South sponsoring.

The intent of the program was to provide the county and each of the municipalities in Cullman County with the opportunity to share information on their community.

The forum roped in a great turnout with all municipalities' representatives present, minus Dodge City Mayor Tawana Canada and Colony Mayor Vernon Fields, whom were unable to attend the program. Governmental Affairs Committee Chair Brian Lacy introduced all of the speakers, while Melissa Cartee initiated the welcome and call to order. Representative Mac Buttram led the invocation and pledge of allegiance.

The following representatives spoke on behalf of their municipality: Commissioner Darrell Hicks for Cullman County; Mayor Herman Nail for Holly Pond; Mayor Kenneth Kilgo for West Point; Mayor Corey Harbison for Good Hope; Councilman Eric Laney for Fairview; Mayor Kenneth Nail for Hanceville; Mayor Melba Patton for South Vinemont; Mayor Tim Eskew for Garden City; Mayor Johnny Dyar for Baileyton; and Mayor Max Townson for Cullman.

Holly Pond Mayor Herman Nail said of the event, "This is an opportunity for all of the council members and mayors to get together in one place and discuss what each town is doing. That gives everyone an idea of what's going on in other people's towns besides their own, which is always great."

South Vinemont Mayor Melba Patton agreed, "I'm excited for the event. I think Cullman County's mayors work excellent together. And it's always good to be in a group and hear news of each small municipality."

Mayor Patton added that she was also especially excited to speak about South Vinemont's Sports Complex, a 1.3 million dollar project, that will be opening up debt free this summer. Mayor Corey Harbison touched on Good Hope's growing area with new businesses coming and other expansion projects, as well as the Bass Hall of Fame intersection.

Every municipality from tiny towns to Cullman city had something positive to say and news to be shared.

The forum was educational and inspiring as the apparent support and friendship of each town resonated in their representatives' relationships with one another.

Hanceville Mayor Kenneth Nail went so far as to spend a great chunk of his time speaking about what wonderful traits and characteristics his fellow mayors possessed.

The overall highlight of the program was that the mayors and councilmen really love their towns and are happy to serve.

Formerly, the State of the Community was broken down into two Fourth Friday Luncheons called the State of the City and County and the same-named State of the Community.

So, how did attendees feel about having a condensed program and the first nighttime program of its kind?

"I think it was a good idea to combine them. It'll be a lot easier for the mayors to get together like that instead of the other way. We can fellowship together and it's more personal. Everyone gets to see each other around and talk to each other, but nothing like what we are able to have here tonight," Holly Pond Mayor Nail said.

Cullman Mayor Max Townson agreed that it was a great idea, "I think this gave a lot of folks the opportunity to come out at night that usually couldn't make it during the daytime and condensed it down to one meeting instead of two meetings, which I like."

It seemed everyone appreciated the nighttime event and the opportunity to fellowship together. Hearing the most up-to-date news on each area from one of the leading officials in a comprehensive format was well received. "Everybody loves a one-stop shop. We are all limited on our time so we were looking for ways that we could make that meeting more meaningful, not only for the folks who normally attend such as the mayors and the commissioners, but for the citizens who want to come," Cullman Chamber President Leah Bolin said.



» The new consolidated State of the Community event gave mayors and councilmen a chance to provide updates on their communities

"We received very good feedback on having it in the evening and there were definitely folks who attended this time around who have not attended in the past because it was during the day and they either worked out of town or could not take off for a lunch meeting." The meeting was a success and people expressed a desire to have the forum in this same format next year. Of course, one of the best morsels of information that was exhibited on this night was how very well our county officials not only work well together, but seriously strive to help one another make Cullman city and counties the very best that they can be.

Cullman Mayor Townson stated, "And you can tell from the way we get along with the mayors and each county commissioner that there is some type of camaraderie in the county that is really hard to believe. And we all work together to make Cullman a better place to live, work, play, and worship."

Arrest made in murder investigation; CCSO dive team searches for evidence

By: Noah Chandler
noah@cullmansense.com

VINEMONT – The Cullman County Sheriff's Dive Team spent the morning hours on Friday combing a section of Lake George, located on County Road 1338 in Vinemont, for evidence that links two suspects to the murder investigation of 71-year-old Cullman County resident William Fredrick Galin.

"As Sheriff of Cullman County I am pleased to announce to you today that we have arrested two individuals in connection with the murder investigation of Fredrick William Galin. Fredrick Galin, age 71, was discovered murdered in his home located on St. Joseph Drive here in Cullman in the late evening hours of December 19th 2013," Cullman County Sheriff Mike Rainey said.

"Since that time the Cullman County Sheriff's Office has been diligently searching for the person's responsible for this heinous crime. At this time our department is still conducting additional interviews and trying to secure additional physical evidence related to this murder investigation."

Presently John Edward Cole has been charged with Theft of Property 1st degree which stems from the theft of a 1966 Chevrolet Super Sport stolen from the murder victim on Monday December 16, 2013 and Receiving Stolen Property 1st degree.

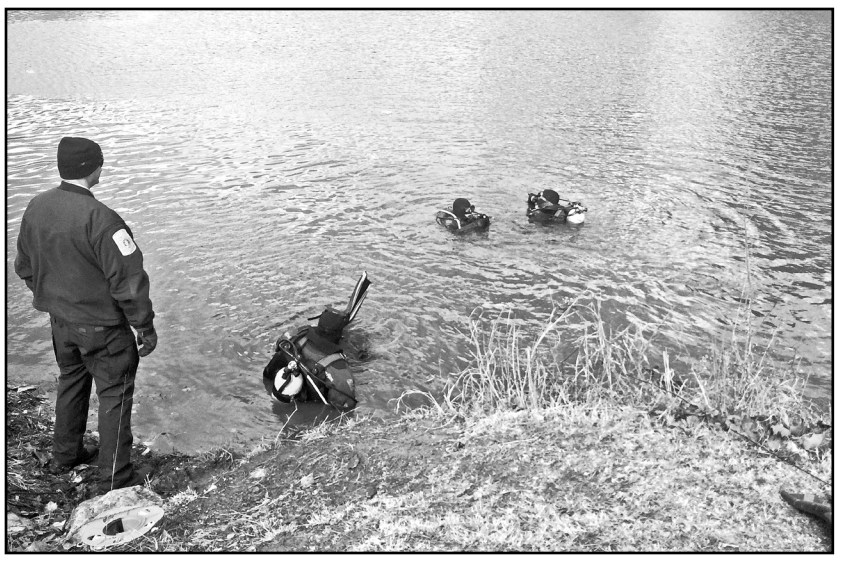
It is on this date that it is believed the victim was murdered.

Robert Espy Jr. has been charged with one count of Burglary 3rd degree and Receiving Stolen Property 2nd degree, both unrelated to the murder investigation.

However, Espy Jr. has been linked to this murder investigation.

Bond for John Edward Cole and Robert Espy Jr. has been set at $200,000.00 cash each.

The Cullman County Sheriff's Office anticipates filing additional formal charges against both John Edward Cole and Robert Espy Jr. in the near future.



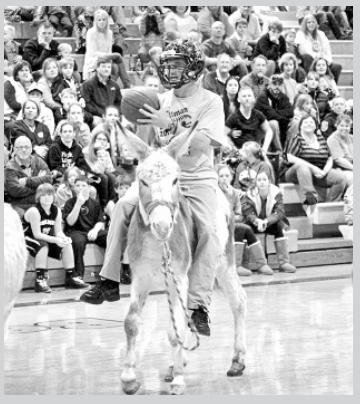
» The Cullman County Sheriff's Dive Team searches through a section of Lake George for evidence that links two suspects to the murder investigation of 71-year-old Cullman County resident William Fredrick Galin.

What's Online

The Art of Donkey Basketball

Donkey Basketball was a huge hit recently at the Cullman High School gymnasium. The Cullman High School softball team hosted the hilarious event and a portion of the profits raised will be donated to breast cancer research.

qrne.ws/149



The War on Poverty

On January 8, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson declared a war on poverty during his State of the Union address. This act was in response to the national poverty level rising to around 20 percent. At that time, about one in every five Americans were living in poverty.

qrne.ws/150

A Not-So Frosty 5K

The Frosty 5K was a huge success this year, although it was not so frosty. Cullman Parks & Recreation (CP&R) hosted this event at the Cullman Wellness and Aquatics Center this past Saturday on a strangely warm and sunny day.

qrne.ws/151

Alabama Becoming Mountain Bike Mecca of the Southeast

Contributed by: Alabama Forestry Commission

MONTGOMERY – In 2013, the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) designated the Forever Wild Land Trust's Coldwater Mountain tract near Anniston as a Bronze Level Ride Center, a large-scale mountain bike facility that offers a wide variety of ride options for riders of all skill levels.

The IMBA has also inducted Oak Mountain State Park's mountain bike trails into its Epic Ride Hall of Fame.

That makes Greg Lein very happy. Lein, former administrator with Forever Wild, is currently the director of the Alabama State Parks Division.

"Alabama is one of the fastest growing states in terms of mountain bike trail construction and ridership," Lein said.

"With dramatically varied terrain throughout the state and weather suitable for riding year-round, Alabama as a biking destination makes perfect sense both economically and geographically."

While Coldwater Mountain might be a focal point for mountain bike trail construction, it isn't the only part of the state courting mountain bikers.

Nine of Alabama's 22 State Parks and a handful of other Forever Wild properties offer mountain bike trails as well. For example, trail restoration and construction is currently a priority at Chewacla State Park in Auburn. The park now has many new miles of trail thanks in part to the Central Alabama Mountain Pedalers (CAMP).

CAMP President Philip Darden says that mountain biking and Alabama State Parks perfectly complement each other and create a benefit for all park visitors.

"Mountain biking and state parks go hand in hand because we both need each other," said Darden.

"So many parks around the state are searching for visitors just to stay afloat and many mountain bikers are looking for new, interesting places to ride. We can help each other out by volunteers coming into the parks and building multi-use trails. Not only do mountain bikers ride the trails that many organizations such as CAMP build, but hikers and walkers utilize the trails as well. It's truly a win-win for all Alabamians."

In addition to mountain bike and hiking trail construction, Alabama State Parks have branched out into new territory with biking attractions such as pump tracks and BMX tracks.

While Oak Mountain State Park's BMX and pump tracks are well-established, CAMP and other volunteers are helping construct a new BMX and pump track at Chewacla.

"As we enter the 75th year of Alabama State Parks, we will be expanding what is available to park visitors," Lein said. "In 2013, we saw the introduction of a zip line at Gulf State Park, a new gem mining facility at Cheaha, and other new park facilities across the state. We will continue to improve and expand the Alabama State Park experience in 2014 and encourage everyone to visit a park to see what's new this year."

Last year the Forever Wild Land Trust and Alabama State Parks received widespread media attention for their expansion of mountain biking opportunities across the state and Richard Edwards, IMBA Trail Solutions Manager, has named Coldwater Mountain the IMBA's Southeastern trail laboratory.

For a complete list of Alabama State Parks with mountain bike trails, visit www.alapark.com/Trails/.

For a list of Alabama Forever Wild Land Trust tracts with hiking and mountain biking opportunities, visit http://outdooralabama.com/publiclands/stateLands/foreverWild/.

Alabama's growing network of mountain bike and hiking trails would not be possible without the hard work of organizations such as the IMBA; CAMP; the Birmingham Urban Mountain Pedalers (BUMP), which helps build and maintain trails at Oak Mountain and other sites around the Birmingham area; and the Northeast Alabama Bicycle Association (NEABA), which has assisted in the construction and maintenance of the trails at Coldwater Mountain and other sites in northeast Alabama.

Currently, many other organizations and volunteer groups are investing countless hours in locations across the state to make Alabama a mountain biking mecca.

More information about the Alabama State Parks 75th Anniversary Celebration will be posted at www.alapark.com during the coming months.

Visit the website often for new trail openings, lodging, camping and dining specials, and event announcements.

The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources promotes wise stewardship, management and enjoyment of Alabama's natural resources through five divisions: Marine Police, Marine Resources, State Lands, State Parks, and Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries.

To learn more about ADCNR, visit www.outdooralabama.com.

Scale Back Alabama kicks off eighth year

By: Teresa Fair

MONTGOMERY – Gina McDonald, Esq., a Birmingham lawyer and a winner in the recent Bigger Loser contest, kicked off the 2014 Scale Back Alabama competition on recently.

"I have fought obesity all of my life," McDonald said. "I couldn't bend down to tie my own shoes. I was just existing before I won the 'life lottery' by being selected from a field of 300,000 applicants to be on the Biggest Loser program."

After losing more than 100 pounds and reversing her Type 2 diabetes, McDonald is leading the charge for Scale Back Alabama this year to let others know that anything is possible if you set realistic goals and stick to them.

"I encourage you to join Scale Back Alabama and to use the resources on the website," added McDonald.

She also encouraged participants to choose teammates who will be positive, and she stressed the importance of incorporating exercise into your daily routine, along with healthy eating.

Scale Back Alabama is a 10-week, statewide weight-loss contest designed to help Alabama fight its battle with obesity by encouraging participants to develop lifelong healthy habits.

The program, which is free and targeted to adults 18 and older, primarily focuses on the workplace and utilizes other local organizations as weigh-in sites. To enter the contest and be eligible for the cash-prize drawings, individuals must visit an official Scale Back Alabama weigh-in site during the week of Jan. 18 – 24 to register and do their initial team weigh in.

A list of sites is included at scalebackalabama.com.

Approximately one-third of all Alabamians are considered obese.

Obesity can lead to health problems such as increased risk of diseases, cancer and heart disease, as well as problems with bones and joints.

Obesity is also costly, with medical expenses for an obese employee estimated to be 42 percent higher than a person with a healthy weight.

The annual health care cost estimate is as high as $147 billion a year.

McDonald stated that losing just 10 pounds can make a big difference, and she promised to share her tips and experiences throughout the contest.

Last year 27,000 Alabamians participated in Scale Back and lost almost 130,000 pounds.

Scale Back Alabama is sponsored by the Alabama Hospital Association and the Alabama Department of Public Health, with generous underwriting from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama.

Governors Decry Federal Inaction

By: Elaine S. Povich • Stateline

Colorado's Democratic governor and Oklahoma's Republican governor agree: The lack of bipartisan agreement in Washington is hurting states.

Colorado's John Hickenlooper and Oklahoma's Mary Fallin, speaking recently in the capital as the leaders of the National Governors Association, said that despite the recent budget deal struck on Capitol Hill, many issues vital to states remain unresolved.

Among them: education funding, tax reform, water resources development, and Internet sales taxes.

"Washington's short-term thinking and continued inaction are hurting state economies, repressing job growth and, ultimately, hurting American families in every state," Fallin said.

"States are leading and we encourage our federal partners to work more closely with us... Above all, please do not get in our way."

Hickenlooper singled out infrastructure as the most important need.

"It is critical that we work with our federal partners to rebuild and invest in our roads, rail, bridges, airports, waterways, and energy infrastructure."

Fallin and Hickenlooper delivered the annual "State of the States" address a day after they and other governors met with President Barack Obama at the White House.

Obama pledged to work with the governors on "strategic investments in transportation and infrastructure," and on expanding access to early education.

Asked to comment on Colorado's recent legalization of recreational marijuana, Hickenlooper noted that he opposed legal pot but will "regulate the heck out of it" now that it is permissible in his state. He said marijuana sales should be regulated as alcohol sales are, with stiff penalties for those who sell to minors.

Hickenlooper also promised to crack down on driving while on marijuana. "If you are driving while high, we will lock you up," he said.

Fallin, whose state is among the most conservative in the country, said Oklahoma is unlikely to follow Colorado's lead on marijuana policy. Fallin and Hickenlooper noted the competition between states to attract business and industry to their jurisdictions.

Hickenlooper said most of that competition is "aboveboard and friendly and respectful—with certain exceptions, who are not in the room," he added to laughter. He may have been referring to Texas Gov. Rick Perry, a Republican, who has made a splash by traveling to states like Maryland and Connecticut to urge businesses in those states to move to Texas.

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

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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'!

County teams on quest of winning season area titles

By: Johnny Thornton
Sports Reporter

CULLMAN - Cullman County basketball teams are on a quest to be successful in regular season area play. In winning the regular season title in their respective area, the chance to play the area tournament at their campus is secured.

Going into the end of this week, one team had already locked up a regular season title in its area while eight other teams were on the verge of reaching a goal.

The Hanceville Bulldogs will get to host the 3A, Area 13 tournament at the brand new Lane Horton Gymnasium.

The Bulldogs got past Danville last Friday 47-43 to go 4-1 in the area with one game left on the schedule.

The Bulldogs host the Good Hope Raiders Thursday before shifting their attention to the Cullman County Tournament next week at Wallace State.

The Cold Springs Lady Eagles are 5-0 in 2A, Area 14 after a Tuesday night victory at Lamar County.

The No. 3 ranked Lady Eagles host Sulligent Friday at Jesse George Gym looking to complete a sweep of the area opposition.

The Eagles controlled their own destiny but lost to Lamar County Tuesday night.

That clinched the title for Lamar County who is 4-1 in Area 14 with the Eagles slipping to 2-3. Lamar County plays Oakman Friday while Cold Springs hosts Sulligent the same evening to close out the regular season area schedule.

The Holly Pond Lady Broncos and Broncos are 5-0 following wins in 3A, Area 12 at Blountsville Tuesday evening vs. J.B. Pennington.

The Lady Broncos, No. 3 in the 3A Top 10 while the Broncos are rated No. 2 in the poll, finish the area at Brindlee Mountain Jan. 27.

The Good Hope Lady Raiders need a win over Hanceville Thursday to go 5-1 in 3A, Area 13 and finish in a tie with Danville.

Both split their regular season meetings with a coin toss to determine who will be hosting this respective area.

In Class 4A, Area 13, Fairview is 4-1 along with St. Clair County.

The Aggies and Saints meet for the second time Friday at Joe Shults Gymnasium. The Saints beat the Aggies 58-50 in Odenville in early December.

Fairview will need to win and have the coin toss to take place in who will be the area tournament host. That can be the case for the Cullman basketball teams. Both welcome East Limestone to the Cullman Gymnasium Friday evening in 5A, Area 15 action.

East Limestone leads both divisions with 5-0 records.

Cullman lost to East Limestone in December with the Bearcats falling 69-63 in overtime and the Lady Bearcats coming up short by the score of 48-37.

The area host would in both divisions come down to a coin toss if Cullman can prevail in front of the home crowd.

Coin tosses if needed will have to be done in the respective area before Jan. 30.

That's when the brackets will be sent to the Alabama High School Athletic Association office in Montgomery.

Girls area tournament games will be February 6th & 8th while the boys will play their area tournament the 7th and the 10th.

If both schools host the area, they can play their championship games on the same night, Feb. 10, to offset travel situations.

The area champions will host Sub-Regional games with the girls to take place Feb. 13 and the boys to play on Friday, Feb. 14. Winners from there will move on to the regionals the week of Feb. 19-23.

The Final Four will be held in Birmingham the week of Feb. 26 - March 2.

The Tide is Out - McCarron skips Senior Bowl to prepare for NFL Draft

By: Josh McBrayer
josh@cullmansense.com

MOBILE – 96 college senior football players have developed a sweet tooth for the 2014 Reese's Senior Bowl. The annual game features the best of the best in collegiate seniors, including Georgia's Aaron Murray and the country's best LB, CJ Mosley from Alabama.

However, there is one senior that is not playing, and he is a Mobile native. Former Alabama quarterback AJ McCarron has declined his invitation to compete in front of NFL scouts, owners, coaches, and droves of loyal fans.

Most players jump at the chance, the last chance, to prove their worth and improve their draft stock before the NFL Combine, but not McCarron.

He has elected to skip the Senior Bowl in preparation for the NFL Draft.

"I really appreciate being invited to play in the Senior Bowl," McCarron told the media after making his decision.

"It is quite an honor and something I've dreamed about while growing up in the Mobile area. However, at this time, I am putting all of my focus and energy into preparing for the NFL Combine, pro day, and the rest of the pre-draft evaluation process. Therefore, I will not be taking part in the Senior Bowl."

The Alabama QB was 36-4 in his career starting for the Crimson Tide but the ride ended on a sour note.

The runner up to the 2014 Heisman Trophy, McCarron lost to his in state rival, the Auburn Tigers, on an improbable 100 yard missed field goal return, for the first time as a starter.

The loss kept the Tide out of the SEC Championship and kept them from a shot at the last ever BCS Championship and the opportunity to be the only team to win back-to-back-to-back championships in the BCS era.

Sporting a 12-1 record, the Crimson Tide accepted an invitation to play in the Allstate Sugar Bowl against the Oklahoma Sooners.

McCarron threw well in the Sugar Bowl, racking up 301 yards in the first half, but also threw two interceptions that led to Sooners touchdowns on their way to a 31 point first half.

This put Alabama in a hole that they could not climb out of, losing 45-31. This was the first time since 2008 Alabama had lost back to back games and the first time, also in 2008, they had lost a bowl game.

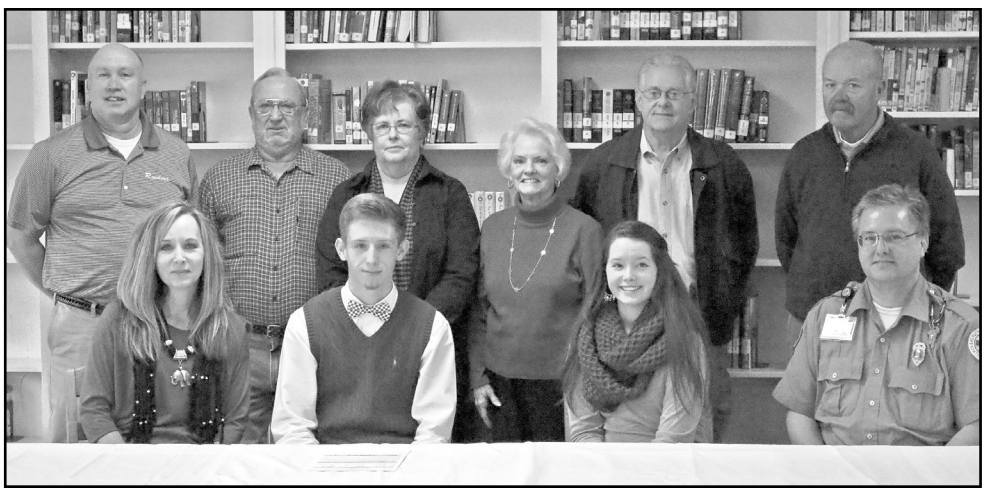
Following the two losses, fans and media alike assumed that McCarron would accept the Senior Bowl invitation, but everyone knows where assumption gets you.

Some media have questioned McCarron's decision to skip the Senior Bowl and that did not sit well with the QB. He took to Twitter to voice his displeasure.

@10AJMcCarron People will always HATE&DOUBT me which is fine. Keep doubting me & watch how I prove you wrong like I've always done in my career!!!

The strong words came from a QB who has proven he can win and manage a game but still people have doubts on how he will do in a pro-environment which is exactly what the Senior Bowl provides.

Good Hope's Marty signs with WSCC



By: Jim Stinson • Local Contributor

GOOD HOPE – Eli Marty will be taking his Golf game to the next level, as he signed his letter of intent with Wallace State.

Bottom row: Rhonda Marty (mother), Eli Marty, Emily Marty (sister), and Dennis Marty (father)

Top row: Good Hope Coach Hulsey, Grandparents Joe & Vivian Tubbs and Carolyn & Alva Ray Marty, and Wallace State Coach York



All Eyes on the Vinemont Eagles

By: Josh McBrayer
joshmcbrayer@cullmansense.com

VINEMONT – Things are looking up for the Vinemont High School boys' basketball program, and they have head coach Todd Johnson to thank. Johnson has turned the Vinemont program in the right direction as they attempt to get back to the glory days of Vinemont basketball.

The Eagles play a motion offense that tries to utilize the size of center Garrett Sipe on the blocks.

They also pick up easy buckets on penetration by Lace Stanley, Riley Foust, and Austin Hedgecock. Vinemont is also strong from the outside, with all three players hitting from downtown as well.

Vinemont utilizes man to man as well as zone on defense, depending on what players are on the floor at any given time.

Vinemont is putting up 58 points a game but are usually in a dog fight as they give up 56 points.

Even though the Eagles record stands at 10-12, in their minds, they are never out of a game and play to the final buzzer each and every night they step foot on the hardwood.

The Eagles are in the thick of things in their area and are looking to take down the area title. Vinemont is also looking to play deep into the county tournament and get to Wallace State for post season play.

"(These) are a great group of young men," Johnson said about his team.

"They have improved every year and they continue to improve. They play hard and give great effort. They are kids you are proud to have in your program and at our school. They are yes sir and no sir kids and they have pride in their school and themselves. We have won some close (games) and lost some too, but I wouldn't trade my players for anything."

The Vinemont program has had their shares of ups and downs over the last three seasons but with his players believing in him and his system, coach Johnson and the Vinemont Eagles are flying high.

Cold Springs (from Front)

last," West said.

When asked about her team this year she said, "This is a great group of hard working girls. They are fun to watch and have great attitudes."

If you enjoy well played basketball, you need to make plans to watch the Cold Springs Lady Eagles in action. It will be an evening well spent.

WSCC basketball teams look to continue collective success as conference play heats up

By: Russell Moore
WSCC Contributor

HANCEVILLE – Wallace State's basketball teams are on quite a roll as they prepare for their first Alabama Community College Conference (ACCC) doubleheader at home Thursday against Gadsden State.

Wallace State's men (15-4) opened league play last Monday night with an 80-66 victory over Marion Military behind Lee Moore's 23 points. Jestin Lewis added 18 points and Marcus Johnson pitched in with 15 as the Lions extended their winning streak to eight games under coach John Meeks, marking the program's longest streak since the 2009-10 season.

Meanwhile, the Wallace State women's team enters league play with a 15-3 record, having won 11 of 12 games.

Both Wallace State basketball teams have won state championships within the past five seasons. The men won the 2010 and 2012 state titles, winning four games in four days as a No. 6 seed in 2012 during Meeks' second season. The women accomplished the same four-day feat in 2011.

While both programs have experienced recent postseason success, the teams haven't collectively started conference play with such impressive resumes.

"It's the best start to a season for both teams that I can remember since I've been here," said third-year women's coach Ron Burdette, who has been around both programs in some capacity since 2002. "Both of our hot starts say a lot about the players we recruit. I know my players also had around a 3.9 GPA after the fall semester. We have good basketball players and good people, and I think that contributes a lot to our success."

Among its many assets, the Wallace State women can shoot effectively. And, then shoot some more. The Lady Lions lead the conference with 163 3-pointers made, shooting 32.8 percent from behind the arc. Lawson State is next in the conference with 101 3-pointers made.

The Lady Lions have also torched opponents with a balanced scoring attack. Morgan Pearson, a sophomore from Mississippi, leads Wallace State in scoring, coming off the bench with an average of 12.8 points per game.

The offense doesn't stop with Pearson. Morgan Smith, a 5-foot-11 freshman from Cullman, averages 10.3 points per game, Jasmine Coleman puts in 9.8 points along with collecting 7.6 rebounds per game, Jaylan Snowden averages 9.6, and Brandee Busenlehner scores 8.4 points, leading the team with a 44 percent clip from behind the 3-point arc.

Wallace State's offensive balance gives Burdette a luxury most coaches don't have.

"I know we are going to score points, but I don't know whose night it's going to be from game to game. I don't know who's going to be the leader or who's going to be as hot as a firecracker. I hope that makes us difficult to prepare for," Burdette said. "I knew we had some shooters on this team, but I didn't know we would be as good as of a shooting team as we are."

Wallace State's versatility at the forward position, whether it's Smith, Pearson, Coleman, or Ashley Rodgers, has also been a plus.

"Morgan Smith grew up in a basketball family with brothers, so she had no choice but to figure it out. She has been huge for us. She is strong inside, but also has the capabilities to knock down an outside shot just like many of our players do. Morgan creates so many mismatches and has a tremendous upside. She is going to continue to get better and better," Burdette said.

Wallace State has also limited eight opponents to less than 50 points.

"Our defense triggers our offense. The sophomores have done a great job of mentoring our freshmen and preaching with me that defense comes first. I think it's helped us tremendously that we have a lot of sophomore leadership to lean on and that our freshmen are willing to listen," Burdette said.

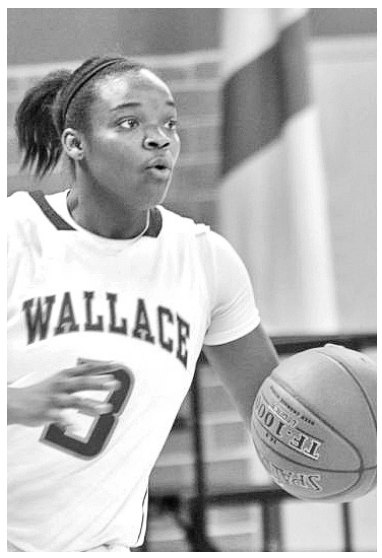
Sophomore leadership has been a key for the Wallace State men as well. The Lions knew the returning sophomore guard duo of Marcus Johnson and Jestin Lewis had potential to be an advantage at the outset of the season and neither has disappointed. Throw in freshman Lee Moore and the Wallace State backcourt is one of the best in the conference, with all three guards averaging double digits.

Moore pours in 18 points per game, Johnson averages 15.9 and Lewis, a Mercer commit, adds 15.6 a night. Those three have helped Wallace State compiled its best winning stretch during Meeks' four years at the helm.

"The focus for us right now is that every game is your championship and every day is your championship. We won a championship when we beat Marion and we have another championship game coming up against Gadsden State. We're not focusing on anything else," Meeks said. "We've had some strong stretches before Christmas in years past where we had reeled off five or six in a row, but the difference this season is we have played well after Christmas. We haven't had a letdown.



» Wallace State men's point guard Marcus Johnson and the Lions have won eight games in a row as they prepare to host Gadsden State.



» Wallace State women's guard Jaylan Snowden and the Lady Lions maintain a 15-3 record, winning 11 of their last 12 games.

"Our guys are starting to get things right. They are enjoying practice more and having fun. All of that is important for us to be where we're at."

During its winning streak, Wallace State has defeated a tough USC-Salkehatchie club twice, once-ranked Northeast Mississippi on the road, Cape Fear (N.C.) CC and Brunswick (N.C.) CC, among others.

Moore, a Kennesaw, Ga. native, also leads the team in rebounds, collecting 7.2 boards a game, and shoots 60 percent from the field, good for second in the conference. Pinson Valley grad Cody Farley has solidified the post for the Lions, averaging 9.1 points and 6.2 rebounds, after missing last season with a knee injury. Freshman guard Darius Joell has served as a scoring option on the wing, Sean Anthony is the team's sixth man for the second straight season, and Xkeem Jones and Marcus Burwell, a pair of transfers, have provided quality minutes off the bench.

Meeks is confident in his team's ability to post a crooked number on the scoreboard at any moment, but the Lions' defense has been the catalyst during the winning streak.

"We have the ability to score. We can hang a number any half. The key is we've made a lot of defensive adjustments since Christmas, and our guys are willing and able to make defensive adjustments during the course of a game," Meeks said. "If we can rebound and defend every night like we are capable, the sky is the limit for this team."

As Wallace State encounters the conference stretch run, Meeks believes his sophomores will carry the load more than ever.

"Marcus Johnson and Jestin Lewis promised me this season wasn't going to end like last season (when we lost to Shelton State in the quarterfinals). Both of those guys have been very coachable and have embraced a leadership role. They've got to continue to get the younger guys to come along and have everyone on the same page," Meeks said. "I'm really proud of our sophomores. Having eight sophomores should help us in tight situations and in tight games over the next two months. I think it makes us a better team."

The Wallace State women tip off Thursday's doubleheader at 5:30 p.m. The teams then return home on Jan. 27, hosting rival Shelton State in a doubleheader.

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

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Box Scores for the week of January 11

MONDAY, JAN. 11TH

GIRLS	Arab 53	Holly Pond 73	S. Moore 44	St. Bernard 31	Dora 32
	Cullman 40	West Point 27	Hanceville 41	Meek 20	Fairview 60
BOYS	Arab 74	Holly Pond 96	S. Moore 34	St. Bernard 57	Dora 55
	Cullman 72	West Point 75	Hanceville 72	Meek 41	Fairview 46

TUESDAY, JAN. 12TH

GIRLS	Cordova 41	Cullman 83	Good Hope 54	Lamar 29	JB Penn. 43	Vinemont 28
	Hanceville 35	Dora 18	West Point 29	Cold Springs 62	Holly Pond 65	Danville 67
BOYS	Cordova 34	Cullman 94	Good Hope 38	Lamar 71	JB Penn. 36	Vinemont 55
	Hanceville 67	Dora 60	West Point 66	Cold Springs 53	Holly Pond 96	Danville 40

FRIDAY, JAN. 17TH

GIRLS	Cold Springs 63	Cullman 64	Madison Academy 58	West Point 42
	Sulligent 36	East Limestone 68	Holly Pond 28	Hanceville 49
BOYS	Cold Springs 72	Cullman 85	Madison Academy 74	West Point 63
	Sulligent 36	East Limestone 70	Holly Pond 58	Hanceville 58

Loft 212: Cullman's New Premiere Event Space

By: Kate Mullaney
kate@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - Loft 212 is Cullman's hottest new event venue. Located in the heart of downtown, this beautiful space is perfect for weddings, parties, or corporate meetings. Owners Loni and Todd Floyd and Jodi and Jeremy Hopper are excited to offer this space to anyone hosting an event.

"We can host any type of event that you need, large or small," said co-owner Todd Floyd. "We host weddings and receptions, proms, fundraising events, class reunions, corporate events, Christmas parties, and much more."

This 12,000-foot venue offers a large ballroom that seats 600 people, bride and groom suites, a covered courtyard, and a conference room. It is located in the old G.W. Ponder Building. They have remodeled the space but kept some of the charming historic details such as the exposed brick walls, the original 1930s hardwood floors, and exposed rafters and beams.

"Loft 212 is a one-of-a-kind venue in Cullman," said co-owner Jodi Hopper.

These business owners decided to open an event venue as soon as they laid eyes on this adorable building, originally built in 1934.

"We're still somewhat surprised that such a neat place is right downtown and very few people knew about it," Floyd said. "The history of the building is fascinating and we wanted to share it with Cullman."

Although the venue is flourishing now, the process of restoring it was challenging and time consuming.

"When we bought it, the floors were in terrible condition and the brick had paint on it from the previous owners," Hopper said. "Luckily, it was a wide open space that didn't need a lot of demolition work so we could focus on just the improvements needed."

With the help of some friends, they pulled old screws and nails out of the floor, which took three weeks, just so they could sand it. They also had to sandblast a huge portion of the interior walls so they could expose the old brick.

They then added a kitchen, men's and women's restrooms, a conference room, and bridal and groom's suites with personal restrooms.

The bridal suite is a smoky blue with green accents. It is both elegant and charming and has those alluring historic details. The groom suite is more industrial with a red wall and wooden decorations. Its bathroom is complete with a whiskey barrel sink. Loni and Jodi decorated both rooms.

Finally, they wanted an entrance that resembled a courtyard, so they simply added one, hung up string lights, and placed a large gate out front. They started construction in March and opened in October 2013.



» The new event venue Loft 212 is suited for almost any purpose

"We're one of the only venues in downtown Cullman that can seat a large number of people. We can really make an event more profitable and successful with the parking deck across the street. It's new, it's fresh, and it's so convenient."

In addition to their venue, they also own the downstairs area of this building and are hoping to rent it out as retail space. They encourage anyone who is looking for a beautiful space for their business to contact them.

These co-owners' business goal is to aid in the revitalization of Cullman's downtown area. They would like to see Loft 212 become a destination that people are familiar with and a space where they can feel comfortable, safe and welcome.

"Additionally, we hope that with our opening we can spur on development nearby," Floyd said.

You can reach the Floyds and the Hoppers on Facebook at Loft 212 Events if you would like to use this new space for your next event. "Our passion is service," said Floyd. "We have lots of fun here. It truly is one-of-a-kind and a place you just have to see."

Restorations under way at St. Bernard

By: Joyce Nix • St. Bernard Contributor

ST. BERNARD – Restorations, repairs, and new construction have been underway for quite some time at St. Bernard Abbey and Prep School. Under the direction of Fr. Marcus Voss, who serves as the Director of Development, a capital campaign has been initiated to assist in these projects. Called "The Campaign for St. Bernard" the primary goal is the restoration of the St. Bernard Library. In addition, other projects have been undertaken for the betterment of the St. Bernard campus.

Abbey workers have been busy restoring the recreation house which sits to the south of the Monastery Building. The traditional stone-cut building has been sitting idle for the past thirty years, and is now being revitalized. The first phase has been the installation of a new roof and will soon be followed by new windows and doors. The classroom building is receiving a new roof as well. Workers from Thomas Roofing Company began the roofing project in December 2013. A gabled roof will replace the flat room which has had continued problems because of leaks. This work is expected to be completed by early March.

Abbey construction crews are in the process of adding covered parking areas to protect the vehicles used by the Abbey monks. The open-air garage has a cement foundation with a metal roof and provides much needed additional parking. All of these works are possible because of generous donations made by friends and alumni of St. Bernard. More information about "The Campaign for St. Bernard" will be made available throughout 2014. "The campaign is a vital program for the future of St. Bernard and sustaining the growth in our Abbey and School," said Fr. Marcus. "It's a special time in our history – one that presents us with unique opportunities. I will be grateful for everyone who helps us meet the challenges before us."

For more about "The Campaign for St. Bernard" contact Fr. Marcus at 256-531-2010 or frmarcus@stbernardprep.com.



RFL Kicks Off Fundraising Season

By: Noah Chandler • noah@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Eager teams joined together in the Fellowship Hall of First Baptist Church of Cullman last Thursday to kick off the fundraising season for the American Cancer Society's annual Relay for Life event.

For more on Cullman's Relay for Life event, visit us online at CullmanSense.com.

BRAC (from Front)

military. I continue to support our military because of all the sacrifices they've made. We can't do enough for them," said Sen. Dial.

The Military Pay Differential Act (SB 81) by Sen. Tom Whatley ensures that state government employees who are called into active service in the military do not experience a drop in pay due to deployment.

The bill provides that deployed state employees will receive the difference between their state salary and military pay, if the military pay is lower.

"As a member of the National Guard, I relate to the challenges of making sure everything is taken care of back home while our military members are deployed. We do not want deployment to be a financial burden on those who are in service to our country. I'm proud to sponsor this legislation and do all I can to support our military," said Sen. Whatley.

Lieutenant Governor Ivey assigned the bills to the Veterans and Military Affairs Committee.

"The closure of military bases in Alabama could have devastating effects on communities and our economy. The BRAC process is down the road, but now is the time to prepare. As Chair of the Military Stability Commission, I am proud to support these proposed measures and appreciate the bills' sponsors for bringing them forward," said Lieutenant Governor Ivey.

The bills were drafted and supported by the Military Stability Commission.

The purpose of the Commission is to strengthen Alabama's military installations, advocate for our military men and women, and prepare for the BRAC process as well as respond to the effects of sequestration.

Red Cross (from Front)

- Locate pet-friendly hotels.
- Test their knowledge with interactive quizzes and earn badges that they can share on their social networks along with their favorite picture of their pet.

History shows that people have not evacuated during disasters because they did not want to leave their pets behind. The Red Cross app contains resources to help owners include pets in their emergency action plans. Pet owners may also take a Red Cross Pet First Aid course so they can practice the skills and receive feedback. People can go to redcross.org/takeaclass for information and to register. The Red Cross has made great strides in making emergency information available whenever and wherever people need it. The Pet First Aid App and other Red Cross apps can be found by searching for American Red Cross or by going to redcross.org/mobile-apps.

Fitness Favors the Brave

By: Kate Mullaney
kate@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - The Cullman Wellness and Aquatics Center was excited to be the location for a photo shoot last Friday featuring two very special people. Jeremy Mooney, a fitness model and body builder, is from right here in north Alabama. Mooney served the country in the Navy and has recently gained a lot of publicity in the fitness world. Christopher Van Etten is a 23-year-old veteran who lost his legs in an explosion in Afghanistan. He is now dedicated to being an inspiration to others and has done so through fitness.

Local photographer Jennifer Tanner was there to photograph these two men for the cover of the book "Always Faithful, Always Yours" by author Lorraine Britt. The Aquatics Center was honored to welcome this group of people to their facilities.

Mooney grew up in Arab, Alabama. He served in the Navy for four years, which is where he really got his start working out. He said that he kind of became addicted to working out. When he got home from serving in the armed forces, Mooney said working out just became a light hobby for him. The opportunity to do some fitness modeling presented itself shortly after.

"I felt really good about myself and did some pictures of me and my son at the gym," he said. "And then some people from New York saw them. They contacted me to do some shoots, and the next thing I know they wanted to do fitness model photography, so I just kind of fell into it."

Mooney has been a fitness model for a little over a year now and is delighted to be doing something he loves. From magazines and book covers to calendars, he has accomplished a great deal in the fitness-modeling world and has even more in store this year.

"This year I plan on doing a lot of men's physique stuff and anything else I can do to try and get to Nationals and to do the Arnold's Challenge. I'm just going to try to go big this time."

With this much emphasis on his physique, Mooney must work out several hours a day to keep his body in top condition. He is at the gym every single day for at least three hours.

"It's crazy," he said. "Monday is national chest day, Tuesday I do arms, Wednesday legs, Thursday shoulders, and Friday I do chest and arms. It's hardcore. I usually work out six days a week but sometimes it's even seven."

Photographer Jennifer Tanner frequently photographs Mooney. And last Friday, the Cullman Wellness and Aquatics Center caught a glimpse into the world of fitness modeling. Also present for the shoot was Marine Corps veteran Christopher Van Etten. After the tragic loss of his legs during his service to our country, Van Etten has become the very definition of inspiration.

"I got injured in June of 2012 when I was in the Marine Corps. I spent a year in the hospital doing physical therapy, and as soon as I got out I moved to St. Louis, where I got into working out."

Working out became a form of therapy for Van Etten and he quickly discovered that he could use this to help other people.

"It became my outlet to help me cope with a lot of problems I was having," he said. "I started working out a lot and then one day someone posted on Facebook about this 27-year-old veteran who was an amputee who had been working out at her gym a lot. He was very inspirational and motivational for her. A friend showed it to me, and after that day it clicked that I could use my injury and working out to help motivate other people. So that was kind of my drive."

Since then, Van Etten has inspired people all over the country and his story has not ceased to gain publicity and popularity.

"In November I did a photo shoot with Michael Stokes to kind of get my message out there, and ever since then it's been a crazy experience. I get to travel and do photo shoots and meet people like Jeremy Mooney."

The road to Van Etten's recovery was a hard one and it is not over. Not only did he have to go through a physical recovery, he also endured the emotional strains of being injured in combat. He admitted that it was a crazy process.

"A roller coaster is the best way to explain it. The first couple of months were probably the easiest because I was so focused on walking again and trying to be back to normal in a sense. All the depression doesn't really hit you until later, and it all caught up to me at month three or four," Van Etten said.

"For a while there I was really having a tough time, but I was able to work past it for a little while, but as soon as I got out of the hospital, it all came back again. Now, I'm on the uphill. I started working out all the time, which has helped a lot. I do still have my bad days but everyone does. Now I have a smile on my face."

The Cullman Wellness and Aquatics Center is honored to have had the opportunity to host such uplifting people, and we sincerely thank both men for so bravely serving our country.

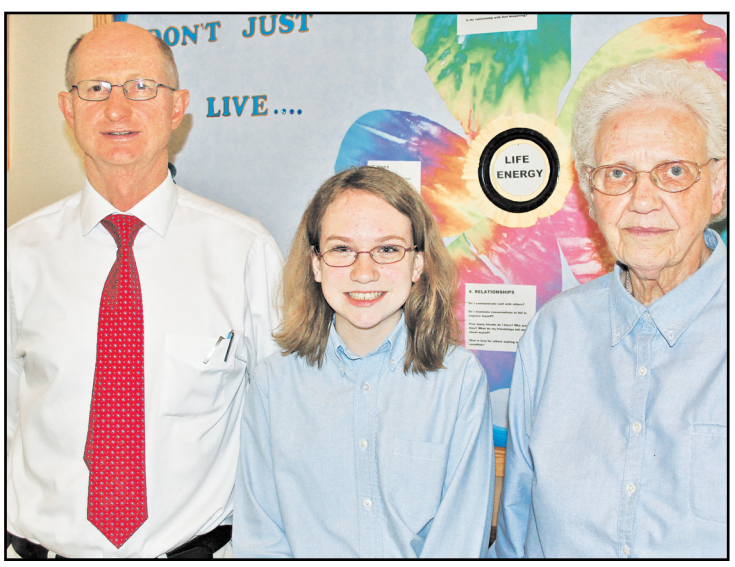


Barck wins St. Bernard Spelling Bee

By: Joyce Nix
St. Bernard
Contributor

CULLMAN – Eva Barck won the annual Spelling Bee at St. Bernard Prep Middle School by correctly spelling the words "shiatsu", and "lanai." The eighth grader will travel to Fairview High School to participate in the Cullman County Spelling Bee on Monday, January 27, 2014.

Eva is the daughter of Steven and Angie Barck of Cullman.



» St. Bernard Middle School Principal, William Calvert, and Spelling Bee Coordinator, Miss Martha Ann Warnke stand with Eva Barck after winning the school spelling bee.



– 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.

Joanne P. LaGanke MS Support Group Meeting
There will be a gathering of the Joanne P. LaGanke MS Support Group at the North-Central Neurology Associates office starting at 5:30 p.m. Special guest speakers tonight will be Phyllis Little and Leah-Patterson Lust. This meeting is open to all.

Upcoming Bosom Buddies Support Group Meeting Announced
Bosom Buddies Support Group offers support to individuals affected by Breast Cancer. The group will hold its next meeting beginning at 6 p.m. in Cullman Regional Medical Centers Ave Maria Room in the Community Education Center located in Professional Office Building 2 (1912 AL Highway 157, POB 2, Cullman, AL 35058). For more information, contact group coordinator Mary Dyer at (256) 734-8729.

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

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.

Free Meal for Those in Need at Cullman Church of Christ
Those in need are invited to take part in a free meal offered at 11:30 a.m. at Cullman Church of Christ. This meal will be served in the multipurpose room at the church.

Square Dancing lessons
The Friendship Square Dance Club of Cullman will be holding free lessons on square dancing from 6:30 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. Contact Rip Johnston at 256-347-7266 or Hulda Schaefers 256-734-3566

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.

St. Monica's Group
St. Monica's Group for those addicted to alcohol or drugs meets every Wednesday night at 7 p.m. in the Rectory Basement of Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church. All are welcome to attend who feel the need. For further information please contact Brian, 256-595-0515 or Rita, 256-507-0358.

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

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.

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

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
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RESIDENTIAL RECIPES

Banana Nut Bread Oatmeal Cookies

By: Chelsea Sparks • Local Contributor

These cookies are not only sinfully delicious, they're sinfully good for you.

Bananas, whole grain oats, and a little peanut butter make for one yummy and healthy cookie.

Eat a couple for a fast breakfast or just a wholesome snack. Your kids will be none the wiser.

My son and husband went crazy for these cookies. I'm confident you'll go bananas for them as well.

Ingredients:
- 2 ripe bananas
- 3 1/4 cup - oats
- 1 cup - brown sugar
- 1/2 cup - peanut butter
- flour - to your liking
- 1/3 cup - canola or vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon - vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon - baking soda
- 1 teaspoon - baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon - salt

Instructions:
- Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
- Get two mixing bowls out. In the first, mash up your bananas and add the oil, brown sugar, peanut butter, and vanilla extract. Mix well. In the other bowl, mix your flour, oats, baking soda, baking powder, and salt.
- Once both bowls are ready, combine the banana mix with the dry mix, stirring as you go.
- Once the two are thoroughly mixed together, line a cookie sheet with wax paper. Scoop out the mixture onto the pan. Be sure they aren't too terribly thick.
- Place in your oven at 350 degrees for about 10 minutes. Your house should smell wonderful. Let the cookies cool for a minute and then dive in.

Breakfast Quesadillas

By: Allison Robertson • Local Contributor

Eggs are an easy item to dress up any way you choose. They are quick to whip up and you can customize them to anyone's taste using whatever happens to be in your kitchen cabinets. This recipe will spice up any breakfast table and is sure to please the palate.

Ingredients:
- 2 corn tortillas
- canola oil - to liking
- salt - to taste
- 3 eggs
- 1/4 teaspoon - paprika
- 1 clove - garlic (crushed and minced)
- pinch - chili powder (more or less to taste)
- 1 tablespoon - heavy cream

Instructions:
- Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
- Brush both sides of your tortillas with canola oil and sprinkle both sides with salt.
- Place oiled tortillas on foil-lined baking sheet and put in the oven for 10 minutes. Turn them over and put them back into the oven for 10 more minutes or until crispy.
- Combine eggs, paprika, garlic, chili powder, and heavy cream together. Beat until fluffy. Scramble in skillet until done to your taste.
- Place one tortilla on plate and pile the eggs high on top. Sprinkle with shredded cheese and add a couple splashes of hot sauce. Place the remaining crispy tortilla on top and you have yourself a delicious breakfast to spice up your day.

GET YOUR RECIPE PUBLISHED

E-mail submissions to:

recipes@cullmansense.com

CHAMBER CHATTER

Morning Blend Wakes Up Community

By: Natalie Bonner
natalie@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - Recently, the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce played host to a morning meeting held from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. on one of the coldest days of January.

It was okay though – they had coffee – and lots of it.

The meeting, called the Morning Blend, had a steady, streaming amount of piping hot coffee from sponsor Starbucks.

Lots of conversation commenced and informative discussions were had as Chamber staff and members and visitors were able to meet in an informal setting and discuss the hottest topics in business and share tips, ideas and viewpoints.

Such hot topics discussed were what Cullman has to offer, tourism opportunities, and downtown and countywide projects, to name a few.

There was a great turnout for the first session and the Cullman Chamber looks forward to hosting the February Morning Blend meeting.

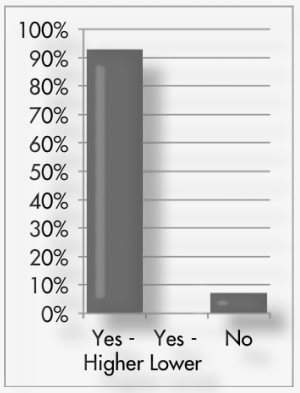
Everyone is invited. And do not worry – there will be plenty of coffee to go around.



» Cullman Chamber members, staff, and visitors talk about some of the latest hot topics while warming up with a cup of joe. Photo by Magan Fromhold

Poll

Have you noticed a difference in pricing since new regulations were implemented due to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA)?



This Week's Poll

Have you been involved in a crash this winter?
Vote Today at CullmanSense.com/Poll

Organize 4 Success Seminar Enables Productivity

By: Natalie Bonner
natalie@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - You know the drill. You are sitting at your desk, productively working away and engrossed in your work when your cell phone rings and your attention goes haywire. You lose your train of thought, wonder where that paper clip went, and then suddenly realize your phone bill is due tomorrow.

Welcome to this day and age where no one waits for anything anymore and fast food can't even deliver quick enough. People are chugging 5-Hour Energy shots, Monster and Rockstar energy drinks, coffee, and any other stimulants they can get their hands on to increase their mental awareness, focus, and productivity.

Well, Karen Sladick doesn't believe in any of that. But she does believe in something – the GO System. This system is an information packed, in-house course that teaches people how to get more organized, focused, and productive. It covers the seven key issues that are proven to significantly increase workplace productivity as explained in their course materials.

Organize 4 Success is an innovative business founded by Sladick and employs the use of the GO System, which was developed bearing your busy schedule in mind and keeping organization and productivity at the forefront. The program focuses on seven ways of increasing productivity by establishing strong foundational habits; processing incoming items; prioritizing; using time rationally; effectively managing projects; understanding personality issues; and understanding psychological issues.

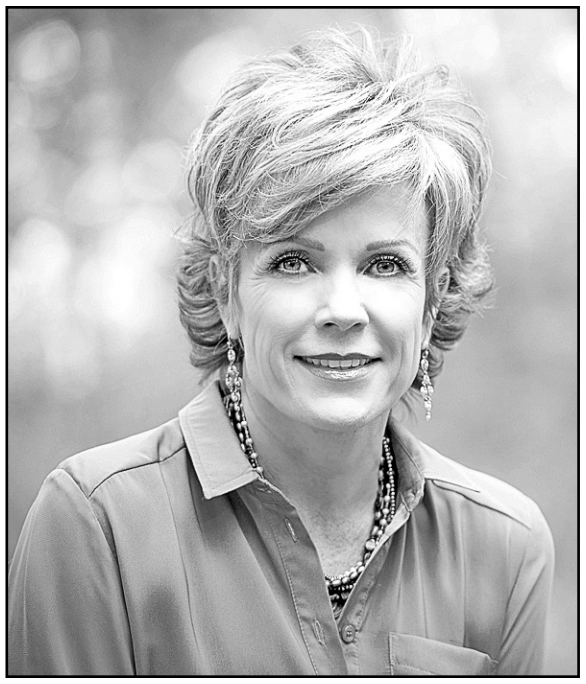
If you have your doubts, it's understandable, but the following companies have taken the gamble and the GO System has proven to be a success for them. Regions Bank, Children's Hospital, St. Vincent's Hospital, the University of Alabama, HealthSouth, Southern Research Institute, and so many more have signed on and found that the GO System changed their lives and careers.

As described on their materials, the GO System is a simple, step-by-step process for improving workplace productivity and can be customized for individual businesses. People who have gone through the GO System training are more focused and organized; better able to prioritize and handle interruptions; get more done in less time; feel relief from the stress of being overworked and overloaded; and feel motivated and productive, increasing the company's overall morale and bottom line.

If you are tired of being distracted and producing your work at only half-capacity while nursing a coffee headache, this seminar is for you.

On January 30, Sladick will be at the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce in the Freedom Insurance room teaching a four-hour session from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. on the GO System.

The cost is only $129 for Chamber members and $159 for future members. The course includes a hefty workbook that you keep and take home, and Sladick will be on-hand afterwards if you have any questions, need guidance, or just a second of her expertise, she is there to help you. And not just during and after the seminar, she is on-call thereafter. She wants to see your business succeed and continues contact with her seminar students even after completion.



» Karen Sladick

If you're over hearing your employees say, "There's just not enough hours in the day" or "I just feel overwhelmed," then it's time for you to sign up. Work smarter and get better results. Organize 4 Success is the answer to your work's crutches. Take away those excuses and empower your employees and yourself with this proven and effective method of organization, productivity and efficiency.

To sign up for this seminar, visit www.cullmanchamber.org, e-mail jdmoore@cullmanchamber.org, or call 256-734-0454.

You can also visit the Organize 4 Success website where the GO System is explained in greater detail at organize4results.com/about-the-go-system/.

Make an investment that will surely pay off by signing up for this work-changing and life-changing seminar.

cullman city parks & recreation

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

www.cullmanrecreation.org
256-734-9157

- **Cullman Savings Bank Frosty 5K & Polar Bear Plunge:** Registration is now open for this event to be held on Jan. 11, 2014 at the Wellness & Aquatic Center. Cost to register is $25 for the race, $30 for the plunge and race, or $10 for the plunge. Register now at active.com, the Cullman Civic Center, or CWAC. Great door prizes and cash prizes to winners of to $200 plus a chance to win a FREE one year membership to CWAC for participants in the Polar Bear Plunge. Call for details at 256-775-SWIM.
- **Youth Baseball & Softball Reg:** Spring youth league baseball and softball will register Jan. 15-Feb. 15 for ages 4-14. Games will start in March at Heritage Park and the Field of Miracles. Cost is $90 and includes a hat and jersey. Call 256-734-9157 for details.
- **Missoula Children's Theater:** Missoula Children's Theater will be making a stop in Cullman on Monday, Jan. 20 for auditions for Rapunzel. Practices for the show will take place all week long at the Cullman Civic Center after school, and the performance will be held on Sat., Jan. 25. Auditions will be held on Monday, Jan. 20 at 3:30pm at the Civic Center; there is no cost to audition. For details, call 256-734-9157.
- **Miracle League Basketball Reg:** Miracle League Basketball registration is now open through Jan. 20. Games will be played at Ingle Park Gym starting in February. All ages are encouraged to play, cost is $30. Call 256-734-9157 for details.
- **Dog Obedience Classes:** Dog Obedience classes will begin on Tues. Jan 14, 2014 at the Cullman Civic Center. The class will be 7 sessions and go through March 11. Registration is open now at the Civic Center for puppy and adult classes, call the Civic Center for details at 256-734-9157.
- **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.





At *Good People* with Good People

Cullman Brew Guild participates in competition at aptly named Birmingham brewery

By: Dillon Lee
dillon@cullmansense.com

The Cullman Brewers Guild are an ambitious bunch. From home brews to craft beer, they are committee to building a community of hobbyist. The ringleaders on the guild have to be the Blue Moose brewers, Gery Teichmiller, Mike Mulaney, and John Dean. Through their own will power and enthusiasm, they are building an organized community of brewers in Cullman. But they don't just stop in Cullman; this weekend they took their beverages on the road.

Birmingham brewery Good People held a brewing competition this past Saturday. Members of the guild were in attendance; in fact Teichmiller entered four of his own home brews- a vanilla porter, an American Amber, a Belgian style Dubbel, and a Belgian Tripel. Tripels and Dubbels are known for their high ABV (alcohol by volume). Teichmiller's brews were at 8.5% and 7% respectively.

The guild members in attendance were in a large crop of competitors, as the Good People taproom was packed. As they waited for the judging, they sampled Good People's selection.

When asked what he though of the offerings of Birmingham's craft brews, Cullman brewer John Dean said, "I've been spoiled by the Blue Moose," in reference to the consistent quality of Cullman's own brew pub. Blue Moose brewer Mike Mulaney said Cullman residents would get to sample one of Teichmiller's brews, the Vanilla Porter.

"It's going to be the Valentine's Day beer at the Blue Moose- 'Thrill Hill Vanilla," said Mulaney.

The Blue Moose Brewers always try to reference something distinctly tied to Cullman's history serving as an homage. "Thrill Hill" was once a popular hill and dip in North Cullman that would take your breath away and leave butterflies in your stomach.

Anyone in their late twenties or older probably remembers the spot, but now road adjustments have taken away most of the "thrill."

The vanilla porter is a perfect reference and a perfect beer to compliment the "sweetness" of Valentine's Day.

Most guild members left Good People to briefly visit Hop City before the 6 p.m. judging. Hop City is a hub for craft beer enthusiast in Birmingham offering 60 plus beers on tap and even more available in cans and bottles.

This stop is a must for craft beer fans. The remain contingent there supporting the Cullman Brewers Guild took a tour of Good People's sprawling brewing facility, housed in what was once a mattress factory.

Good People, like most craft brews started small, in a garage in Auburn. Co-founders Michael Sellers and Jason Malone, who can still be found pulling taps in the public serving room, never believed their hobby would be a thriving, critically acclaimed business.

However, in 2001 when Five Points Microbrewery The Mill closed its door, Sellers and Malone seized the opportunity, buying their equipment and making a college student's garage hobby into a career.

The first fermenter used by Good People is still in the now massive brewing facility. The operation has dramatically modernized.

Their canning machine produces 2 1/2 cases per minute, sealing the cans at dizzying speeds. Good People believes in canning their beer as cans protect the beer from "skunking" over time, allow their beer to be taken poolside or beachside where glass is not permitted, and provide an opportunity to be Eco-friendly as cans are more easily recycled.

They even recycle their hoppy mash and particulates that settle in fermenter and the quality controlling bright tanks. This is used by local farmers as fertilizer and feed for cattle and pigs.

The growth of Good People is about the beer itself. Almost all are hoppy, and many of their offerings are higher in gravity, meaning higher in ABV.

Before the Alabama Legislature raised the legal sellable ABV limit in 2008, Good People was experimenting with high gravity recipes.

They weren't selling it, instead they gave it away to local events and weddings as a type of viral marketing. When the ABV cap lifted, Good People became a boon to Birmingham eateries and bars looking for high gravity offerings. Sellers and Malone were ready to provide.

Soon, it was 6 p.m. and the winners were announced. Co-founder Jason Malone took the stage in a long haggard beard more appropriate for a moonshiner in Appalachia than brewer in downtown Birmingham.

Malone was surprised, almost overwhelmed, with the turnout for competition.

"We will do it again next year with more categories and more judges." The Cullman Brewers returned to hear the announcement, but failed to take any of the top 5 spots this year.

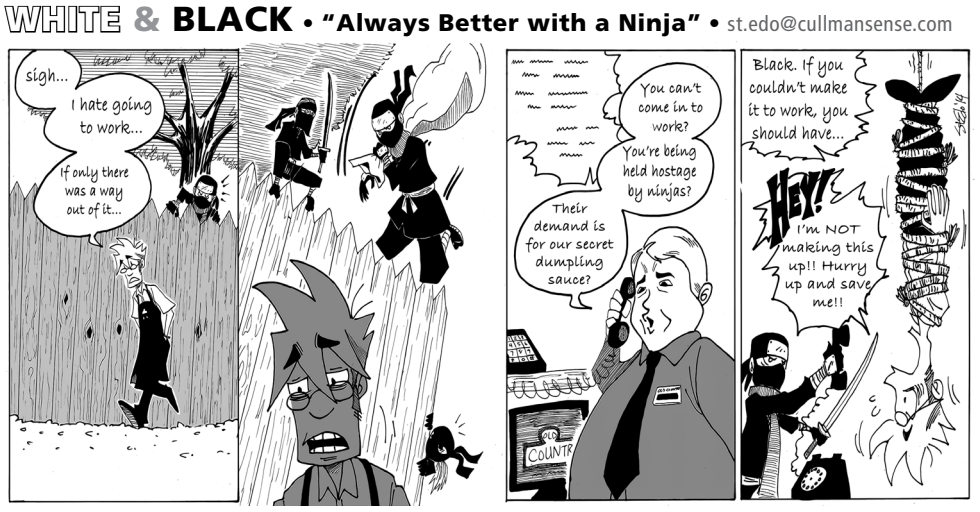
Still, no one in the competition left unhappy.

Brewing, at its heart and on its best day, is about a community- local, regional, and national- that supports a distinctly American hobby. In the world of craft brew, there aren't competitors, just collaborators.

Be sure to sample The Blue Moose Cafe and Brew Pub's Valentine vanilla stout, the "Thrill Hill Vanilla" in February.

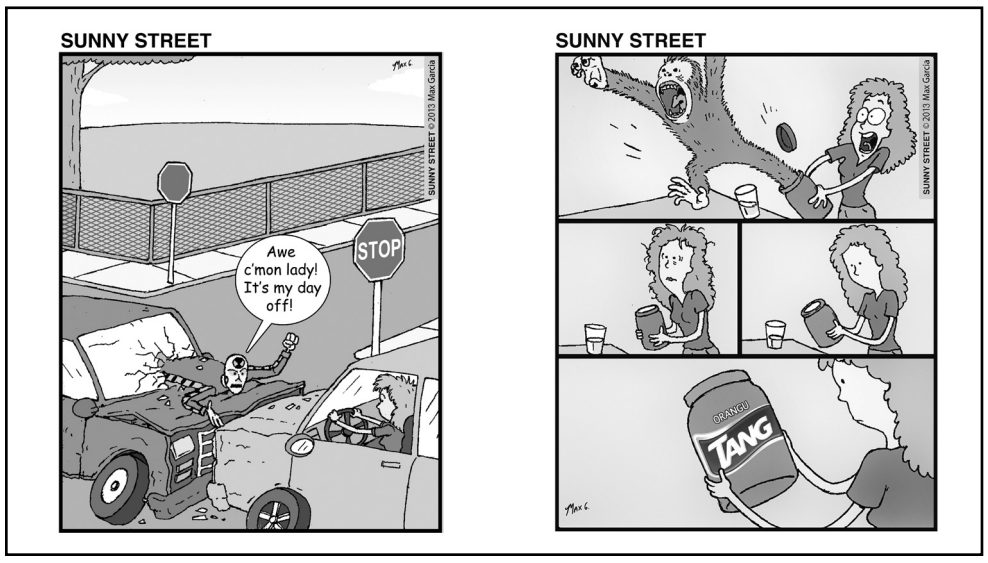
Comics

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MAMA'S BOYZ www.jerrycraft.net **JERRY CRAFT**





REVIEWING THE REBEL

Gateway IPA Beer is Well Liked

By: Kate Mullaney
kate@cullmansense.com

If you read last week's article on how to review a beer (http://qrne.ws/152), then I'm sure you've been reviewing beers all week. This week, I decided to review another IPA – Sam Adams Rebel IPA. I opted for another IPA because I wanted to compare it to last week's review of Stone IPA in the hopes of discovering a difference in the same style beers.

Rebel IPA is brewed by Samuel Adams out of Boston, Massachusetts. They chose the name "Rebel" because the brewers aim to go against the grain. They are not all about bitterness like most IPAs are. Instead, the brewers at Sam Adams have chosen to create a well-balanced IPA with a harmony of bitter hops and flavorful aroma. Due to this balance, Rebel is considered a gateway IPA. It's a good introduction to the IPA world if you are new to this style of beer. This is different from Stone IPA, which has a much stronger bitter flavor. Rebel is a West Coast style IPA, made with hop varieties including cascade, simcoe, amarillo, chinook, and centennial. It is also 6.5 percent alcohol.

This IPA has a very strong aroma and a moderate to heavy hoppy smell. Get yourself a Sam Adams Rebel IPA and take a big whiff of it. You will smell the delicious scents of flowers, pine, grapefruit, and oranges. Stone IPA had a sort of malty smell, if you remember from my review, and this is one way that these two IPAs differ. Rebel IPA also simply smells better and stronger than the Stone IPA.

The appearance of this beer was similar to Stone IPA. The biggest difference was the head. Although both beers had a small, creamy, white head, the head on Stone IPA mostly lasted, while the head on Rebel was basically diminished after just a few minutes. Both beers are a medium golden color, while Rebel IPA also has some beautiful hues of amber and copper. Although it is hard to compare any IPAs lacing to Stone IPAs lacing, which was absolutely excellent, Rebel IPA also displays a very good lacing.

Rebel IPA has a crisp flavor. It is a nice balance of bitterness and sweetness. The dry finish of this beer is also lightly sweet to moderately bitter. The difference between this beer and Stone IPA is the distinct bitterness. Stone IPA has a much stronger bitter flavor than Rebel IPA and has no sweet flavor at all. Another difference I noticed was the duration of the finish. The bitter finish of Stone IPA lasted a long time, unlike the duration of Rebel IPA's finish, which was much shorter.

Finally, the palate of Rebel IPA and Stone IPA is very similar. The body of Rebel IPA is light to medium, similar in nature to Stone, but the latter was just a bit thicker. Both beers have a lively carbonation and a bitter, dry finish.

Sam Adams Rebel IPA is a delicious beer. This West Coast IPA is smooth and crisp. Unlike other IPAs, it does not have a harsh bite or an overpoweringly bitter flavor. This balance makes it a great beginner IPA beer.

Missoula Children's Theatre set for auditions Monday

By: Waid Harbison

CULLMAN – Missoula Children's Theatre will be in Cullman with auditions Monday, January 20 beginning at 3:30 p.m. at the Civic Center for the show Rapunzel.

Auditions are open for children ages 5-18, with the performances on Saturday.

Cullman native and Wendy's spokesperson Morgan Smith will be making a special appearance, visiting with the cast.

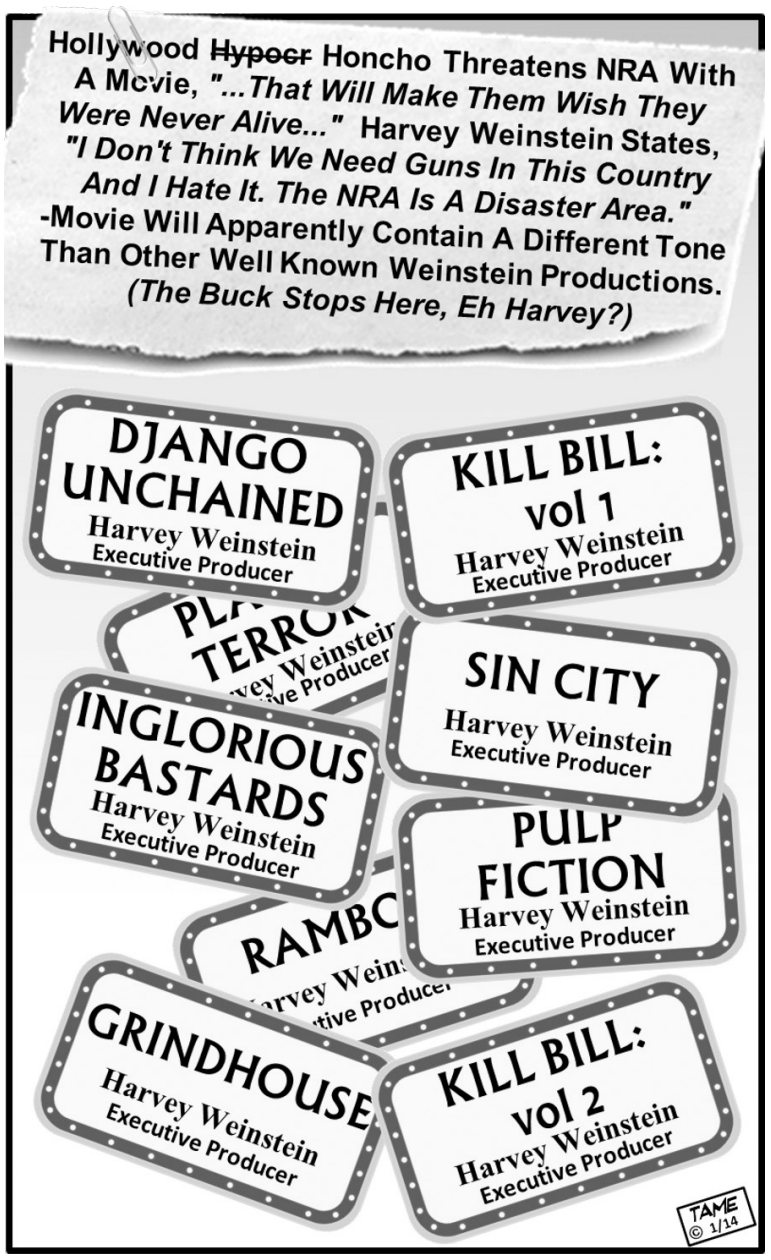
Smith, who has been the spokesperson on national TV for Wendy's restaurants in recent years, was a participant of Missoula Children's Theater when she grew up in Cullman.

Now as a professional actress, Smith will be on hand to talk to the local performers before their show on Friday.

She will also be signing autographs at both showings of Rapunzel, which are at 2 p.m. and 6 p.m.

For more information on the Missoula Children's Theatre auditions or performances, call the Cullman Civic Center at 256-734-9157.

Editorial Cartoon



Hollywood & Hypocrisy

By: Tom Esposito

In a recent interview of Hollywood, executive producer Harvey Weinstein by Howard Stern, Mr. Weinstein stated his strong, anti-gun violence position by threatening to take down the National Rifle Association. With rambling commentary, Weinstein said, "I shouldn't say this, but I'll tell it to you, Howard. I'm going to make a movie with Meryl Streep, and we're going to take this head-on. And they're (NRA members) going to wish they weren't alive after I'm done with them." This is oddly violent imagery from someone who is suddenly preaching non-violence.

Weinstein went on to tell Stern that he was teaming up with Meryl Streep to make "The Senator's Wife" which will presumably carry a strong anti-gun theme. Of course, this theme would run very contrary to the heavy gun violence that can be found in many other Weinstein productions such as *Inglorious Bastards, Rambo, Kill Bill: Vol 1, Kill Bill: Vol 2, Grindhouse, Pulp Fiction, Planet Terror, Django Unchained,* and *Sin City*. No appearance of a double standard here. Stern, who has publicly stated that he owns several weapons, may have found it humorous to hear from Weinstein, the purveyor of celluloid mayhem and murder, that the only time it would be permissible to use a weapon would be, "...When you're marching a half of a million people into Auschwitz." He then added using a gun would be fine if, "(I) found a gun, and if that was happening to my people." Apparently, Weinstein feels that at this point, you could simply call in a movie-set Propmaster to provide the weapons or that magical unicorns will drop them off under CGI gumdrop trees for the persecuted to pick up and defend themselves.

While he may be well versed in the art of movie making, these comments by Weinstein indicate that he was most likely not a history major. Weinstein seemed oblivious to the fact that the Nazis had such an easy time marching millions of Jews to the concentration camps with virtually no resistance, was because from 1928 through 1939 the Nazis formulated and implemented a confiscation policy that left the Jews and many others without weapons to defend themselves. In fact, an analysis of the major genocidal wars that have killed millions of people since the beginning of the 20th century, have the common factor of prior gun registration and/or outright confiscation of weapons from those who were soon to be massacred. It began in Ottoman Turkey where up to 1.5 million Armenians were slaughtered from 1915-1917. Next in line were the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany where strict gun control laws were in place from 1929-1953 for the Communists and from 1928-1938 for the Nazis. During these time frames, an estimated 33 million anti-communists, anti-Stalinists, Gypsies, anti-Nazis, and Jews met their ends in concentration camps, gulags, as well as by outright executions. Not to be outdone, Mao Tse Tung implemented China's gun control policy from 1935-1957 and 20 million anti-communists, rural inhabitants, and reformists were killed.

Recent history shows Guatemala, Uganda, and Cambodia murdering 100,000 Mayan Indians, 300,000 Christians, and 1 million educated citizens respectively. These are just the major cases of gun control laws followed by confiscation followed by the deaths of millions in the 20th century. These facts do not imply that the predators would not have exacted such large numbers of murders had there been no gun control laws in place but it surely means that the victims would have at the least had a fighting chance to defend themselves. After looking at these numbers, the sheer volume of death becomes almost unfathomable. To put it in perspective, it would be as if the entire populations of California and Florida were just wiped out. Throw in Wyoming for good measure.

The day after making these comments on Stern's show, Weinstein followed up with Piers Morgan on CNN. Morgan questioned the possibility of hypocrisy on Weinstein's part due to his history of making some of the most gun-violent movies in the annals of cinema and then railing about the NRA. As the producer of these movies, Weinstein noted that he will be moving in a different direction in the future. "I have to choose movies that aren't violent or as violent as they used to be."

If he is sincere, perhaps future non-violent movies that Mr. Weinstein will produce will come with names like, *Kiss Bill: Vols. 1-2, Inglorious Fellows, Sunny City, and Django On Vacation*. Or maybe he can donate some of the hundreds of millions of dollars that he has made from his pistol packing cinema or the $500,000 that he raised for Barack Obama's presidential re-election campaign, to the victims of gun violence. Violence that many feel plagues our society because of the massive body counts found in movie theatres and in video games. Who knows? Maybe if Weinstein did follow up with these types of actions, it could be the basis of a good Hollywood screenplay.

Dr. King's Lessons for the Climate Justice Movement

By: José-Antonio Orosco

José-Antonio Orosco is associate professor of philosophy at Oregon State University, where he directs the Peace Studies Program. He writes for PeaceVoice and is the author of Cesar Chavez and Common Sense of Nonviolence.

Fifty years ago, Martin Luther King, Jr. won the Nobel Peace Prize. One of the most striking aspects of his acceptance speech is the hope he expressed in humanity's ability to overcome war. This was no mere idealism on his part. Less than five years earlier, the world had come to the brink of thermonuclear destruction because of Cuba.

The United States and Soviet Union eventually diminished their threats and, in 1963, signed and ratified an agreement to end the open-air nuclear testing that was blanketing the planet with radioactive fallout.

These were small steps, but to King, they indicated that human beings were capable of cooperation, even in the face of something as horrendous as the suicide of the human race.

Today, the annihilation of humanity looms again as a possibility because of climate change. In 1964, King could not have imagined the particular features of global environmental destruction that we now face.

Yet, he had reflected carefully on the forms of action needed to avert mass extinction before, so his work can still be useful today in thinking about directions for the climate justice movement.

First, King reminds us to think in terms of the "beloved community" in which we are all interconnected.

That means that the injustices that we experience are also intertwined.

For many climate activists, thinking about racism, sexism, or poverty are side issues; after all, if there is no habitable earth, then those problems won't really matter. King cautioned against the view that injustices could be divided into neat isolated silos. The world, he said, faces the danger of the "evil triplets": racism, militarism, and materialism. These are inter-related features, he thought, that are at the root of wars of aggression, such as Vietnam, against distant peoples for control of natural resources needed to maintain the luxuries of a few.

Climate change activists today need to acknowledge the overlapping systems of injustice that make some people vulnerable to climate damage much more immediately. It will be poor countries, largely in the Global South, that will suffer the most from environmental degradation of air, water, and soil.

In the US, extreme weather--as we have already seen with Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy--will disproportionately affect economically fragile areas, usually made up of historically marginalized communities: indigenous people, people of color, immigrants, the elderly, and LGBTQ people.

Climate justice activists will need to build alliances around these diverse issues, and develop the ally capabilities to listen to, and lift up, the voices of disenfranchised people.

In his last years, King wrote about the forms of activism that were needed to confront the evil triplets.

He warned activists not to get trapped by the usual mix of demonstrations and protest that were hallmarks of the early Civil Rights movement. With these forms of direct action, King believed the movement had fallen into "crisis thinking," that is, reacting to injustice after it had already appeared. Complex justice would require mass protests, but it also meant getting out in front of social problems, and building alternative civic and economic structures so that people would not have to rely on problematic state or corporate institutions. He called for organizing neighborhoods and creating diverse networks of allies that could support one another.

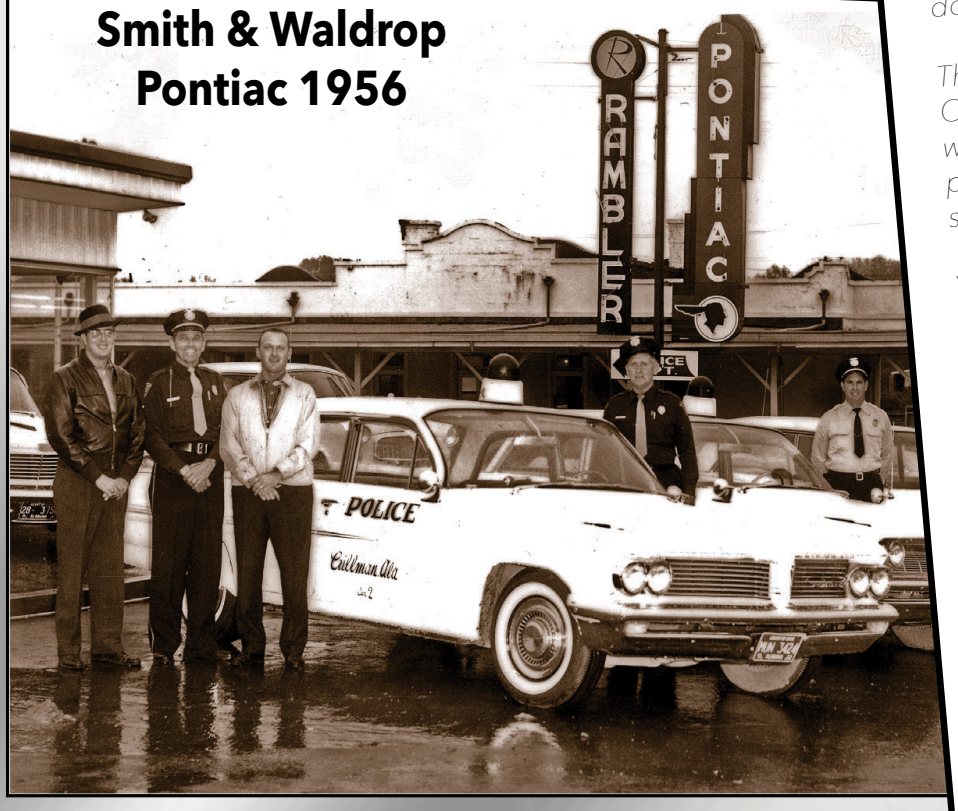
A glimpse of this kind of activism came about when Occupy organizers provided assistance in the wake of Hurricane Sandy in 2012. Achieving climate justice, then, will mean not only protests against this pipeline or that shipping port, but also working to connect local community gardens, alternative currencies, free libraries and medical clinics, into thick webs reaching across urban and rural areas. This kind of organizing will enable widespread skill sharing and mutual aid, but also deliver a message that was dawning at the height of the Occupy movement: another world is possible, and there are many across the world who desire to work together to build it.

King believed we had it within us to avoid mutually assured destruction; he also thought we were developing the insights and activist resources to radically align our world to the moral arc of the universe. The climate justice movement might become the place where we prove him right.

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