SERIES 4, ISSUE 22 MONDAY, JUNE 9, 2014
CULLMAN'S MONDAY NEWSPAPER
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Leading the Way: Youth Advocate Program Strives to Help At Risk Children and Teens

By: Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – It is simply a fact of life that children can sometimes lose their way. In the formidable teenage years, many find themselves in a sea of peer pressure, drugs, and other negative influences. When you are this young and impressionable, it is easy to take the wrong path to fit in with one's peers. It is with these kids and others in the child welfare system that the Cullman County Youth Advocate Program steps in to help.

Tim Thrasher, Alabama's state director and Cullman's program director, talked about the program's main objective.

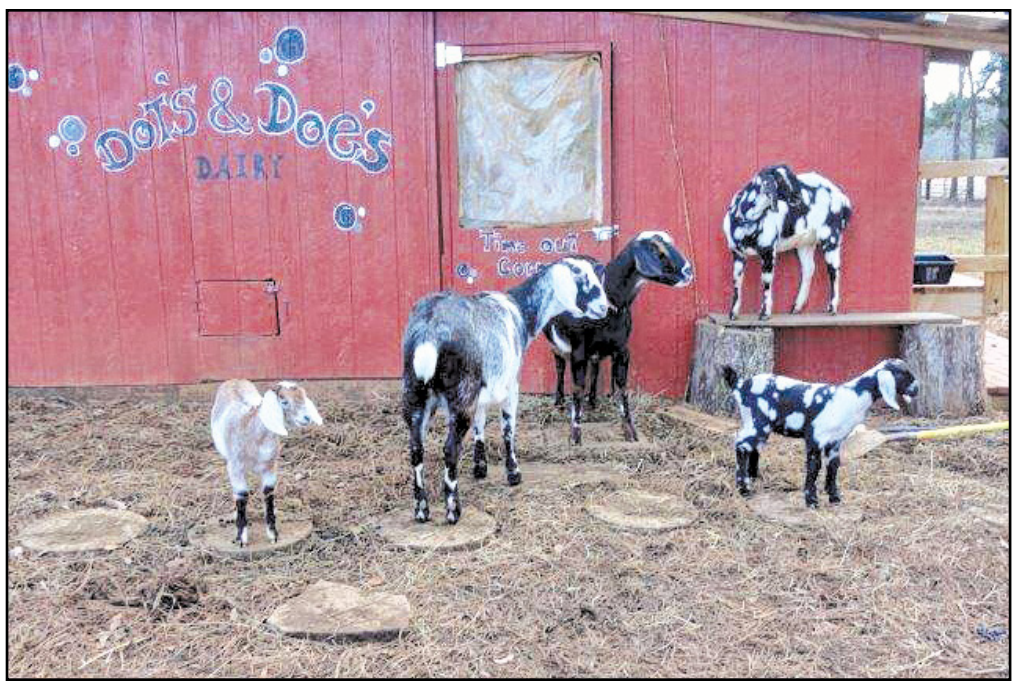
"Cullman County YAP (CCYAP) serves 'high-risk, at-risk and deep-end' kids. Our goal is to help these youth stay in their home and within their community," he said.

"This has been the focus of YAP's approach for almost 40 years nationwide and for three years within Cullman County. CCYAP has and continues to strengthen the Cullman County community and facilitates a better educated and more committed workforce by creating positive outcomes within the lives of these youth and families."

In 2013, the program served 26 youth and families referred by the Cullman County Juvenile Probation Department and 60 youth and families served p6

DOT'S & DOE'S DAIRY MAKES ART OUT OF THE ORDINARY

» Determined to provide healthy milk for her five children, Amanda Woodard's goat farm has morphed into a specialty soap and lotion supplier p6



KATE MULLANEY/CULLMANSENSE

» The Woodard's goats not only help create quality milk, soaps, and other goods, but also are the family's pets, with each animal knowing its name.

PRAYERS4SHAWN
Family Holds Fundraiser at C.W. Day Park for Hanceville Student Injured in Water Accident

By:Chelsea Sparks
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HANCEVILLE - A community fundraiser is being held at C.W. Day Park on June 14 to benefit a Hanceville High School student. The family and friends of Shawn Anderton welcome everyone to come out to the carnival, have a p2

ADPH urges men to make their health a priority

By: William Kennedy

MONTGOMERY – The Alabama Department of Public Health is joining in the celebration of June as National Men's Health Month and June 9-15 as National Men's Health Week by encouraging men to take steps to become healthier and stronger and make their health a priority.

The purpose of this observance is to heighten awareness of preventable health problems and encourage early detection and treatment of disease among men and boys. Men's health is often overlooked and their symptoms are often ignored.

On average, men live five fewer years than women and die at higher rates from 9 of the 10 top causes of death. Men make up 92 percent of workplace deaths, mainly because they are employed in dangerous occupations. Furthermore, 1 in 6 men will get prostate cancer and approximately 28,000 will die from the disease this year.

The following are a few important steps men can take to improve their health and stay healthy:

- Get enough sleep
- Quit using tobacco
- Increase physical activity
- Eat healthy food
- Tame stress
- Get regular checkups

Some diseases and conditions may not have symptoms, so checkups help diagnose issues early or before they can become a problem. Men should pay attention to signs and symptoms such as chest pain, shortness of breath, excessive thirst, and problems with urination. If you have these or other symptoms, be sure to see your doctor right away.

Keep track of your readings for blood pressure, blood glucose, cholesterol, body mass index (BMI), or any others you may have. If your numbers are high or low, your doctor or nurse can explain what they mean and suggest how you can get them to a healthier range. Be sure to ask him or her which tests you need and how often you need them.

Get vaccinated. Everyone needs immunizations to stay healthy, no matter how old you are. Even if you had vaccines as a child, immunity can fade with time.

Men's Health Week in Alabama is celebrated each year as the week leading up to and including Father's Day. The public is encouraged to wear blue on June 13 in support of men's health.

PRINTED LOCALLY @ PRINTING Alabama Web Press

Berlin man dead following two shootings Sunday evening

By: Noah Chandler
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BERLIN - Shortly after 7 p.m. deputies with the Cullman County Sheriff's Office responded to both the Berlin Plaza Quick Stop and a residence along U.S. Hwy 278 East after receiving multiple shooting calls in the area.

Cullman County Sheriff Mike Rainey said deputies responded to the call to the Berlin Plaza Quick Stop before receiving the second shooting call. "We responded to the Berlin Plaza Quick Stop where witnesses told deputies a male subject pulled up on a motorcycle before shooting at the store's window," Sheriff Mike Rainey said. "After the would-be victim was able to elude the shooter, the suspect then drove off and went to the residence of Raymond Earl Brooks."

Details of exactly what happened next are not fully known, with the exception that Brooks, 59, was shot and killed in his home, located at 4932 U.S. Hwy 278 East.

"At this time we are still investigating both crime scenes, the one at the store and at Mr. Brooks' residence," Rainey said. "We just ask that the public stay patient as our investigators work to piece together the events which took place Sunday night." Rainey said a suspect, 41-year-old Jay Maynor of Cullman, was taken into custody following the shootings by Alabama State Trooper Anthony Peebles.

"Trooper Peebles was responding to the scene when Maynor pulled out onto the roadway from the Brooks' residence, directly in front of the Trooper," Rainey said. "I want to extend a personal thank you to Trooper Anthony Peebles for his quick response and apprehension of the suspect."

At this time Maynor is being held at the Cullman County Detention Center for questioning regarding both the fatal and non-fatal shootings.

EDITORS NOTE: Brooks was convicted of Sexual Abuse – 1st degree on August 26, 2002. The incident involved an 8-year-old female. Since that time he has had to register as sex offender.

When asked if this had any role in the night's shooting, Rainey said "We are investigating all aspects of this case and cannot comment on motive at this point. Our thoughts and prayers are with the victim's family." Maynor is currently being held at the CCDC for questioning regarding the shootings which took place Sunday evening. Charges are expected to be filed as early as Monday. For updates, visit cullmansense.com.

Eyewitnesses claim lightning is to blame for fire at Health Imaging Services PET Center

By: Noah Chandler
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CULLMAN – According to eyewitnesses a fire started shortly after 3:05 p.m. at Health Imaging Services PET Center, located at 1760 Warnke Cir NE, following a mid-afternoon storm.

Bill Piper was at work at Alabama Web Press, which is located adjacent to Health Imaging Services PET Center, when the storm began.

He along with several other coworkers watched as the strong mid-afternoon storm pushed through the area.

"We heard all of the rain, so we were watching it come down," Piper said. "Shortly after we saw a bolt of lightning strike either the building or right behind it."

Piper said a few minutes later he and others at his workplace began to notice a smoke cloud rising from the PET Center.

Cullman City Police Chief Kenny Culpepper said the fire would be investigated by the Cullman Fire Department.

"This is an active scene for the fire department; we're just assisting with traffic congestion on both Eva Road and Hwy 157," Culpepper said. "No injuries have been reported at this time."

At the time of this report CFD Chief Edward Reinhardt was unavailable for comment.

More information will be released as it is made available by the Cullman Fire Department.



NOAH CHANDLER/CULLMANSENSE

» Smoke rises from the PET Center after a strong mid-afternoon storm.

Cullman Civitan Club Raises Funds to build sensory trail for therapeutic horse riding at HOPE

By: Kate Mullaney
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CULLMAN - The Cullman Civitan Club held a yard sale last Friday to benefit their latest community project. This club is active in Cullman by helping others. The Civitan Club is an organization in Cullman that serves the community through special projects and fundraisers. It was founded in 1954, and two of the original members are still living today.

"The Civitan Club will be 60 years old this year," said Civitan Club President Amy Higdon.

"We help the community and primarily focus on people with mental and physical disabilities. We do all kinds of projects in order to help people in the community."

Last Friday's yard sale was held to benefit the Civitan Club's latest project at HOPE.

"Our community project right now is building a sensory trail out at HOPE," Higdon remarked.

"It will work by participants riding to about five or six stations to engage each one of their senses."

HOPE is a therapeutic horse riding facility located on Convent Road. Their mission is to provide therapeutic horsemanship to individuals with special physical, mental, cognitive, and emotional disabilities.

HOPE offers lessons administered by PATH (Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship) certified instructors. Each participant receives a custom lesson plan designed for him/her. The sensory trail provided by the Civitan Club will be a welcome addition to HOPE's already fantastic facilities.

"We're working on getting the stations built right now," said Higdon, "and it should be done in a few months."

All proceeds from the Civitan Club's yard sale will help to build the sensory trail. "We've had a really good turnout this morning," Higdon said with a smile. "We've done well."

The Civitan Club is constantly working on projects to benefit our community. Organizations such as the Civitan Club and HOPE are essential to Cullman, and our treasured town would not be the same without them.

Fundraiser (from Front)

good time, and support this courageous family.

On March 29, Shawn Anderton was in an accident at Panama City Beach while playing in the ocean that left him paralyzed. Shawn's sister, Brooke Sivley, spoke about the accident and the long road ahead for him and the family.

"He went to dive into a wave and the wave flipped him and he was immediately paralyzed," Sivley said. "He was taken to Bay Medical Center where they realized he crushed his 6th and 7th vertebrae and was rushed into an emergency surgery. After a week at Bay, he was flown back to Alabama and became stable at Children's Hospital of Birmingham."

The carnival fundraiser is open to the public. There will be music, food, and some exciting items to be raffled at the event.

"We have a ton of items that will be raffled off such as: a 60-inch flat screen TV, an origami owl necklace, four Spring Valley Beach season tickets, photography sessions, and much, much more," Sivley said. "There is no charge for the event but donations are certainly welcome."

The family has already received an outpouring of love and support, for which the family is immensely appreciative. The cost of hospital bills, rehabilitation, and having to be away from home and work for an extended period of time will take a toll on any family's finances.

"The community has been so wonderful coming together to support Shawn. We have never felt so loved and supported," Sivley stated.

"We would most certainly love to thank everyone who has helped, and especially thank Hanceville High School for everything they have done to help support our family through this rough time. We can't even begin to express how thankful we are for everything that has been done for us."

The event will take place at the C.W. Day Park from 2 to 5 p.m. and everyone in the community is encouraged to come show their love and support.

For more information, you can visit the Facebook page "Prayers4Shawn".



Fallen Firefighter Memorial Unveiled

By: Sharon Schuler Kreps
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CULLMAN – The city of Cullman unveiled a brand new Fallen Firefighter Memorial on Wednesday, June 4. The memorial stands proudly in front of Fire Station Two located at 1711 Main Ave. SW, next to Marvin's. The memorial is unique and displays a beautiful bell. The bell has a history all its own and it is truly a part of Cullman.

"This is a historical bell that was in the first fire station back in the 1800s, so we're trying to preserve it and also due diligence to the firefighters who serve our community," explained Fire Chief Edward Reinhardt Jr., pointing at the bell as he spoke.

The first fire station was built in 1895, and the bell was one of three original bells that were cast for the city of Cullman.

Back in the day, the bell was sounded to alert the firefighters of fires. The firefighters responded to the said fire with horse drawn buggies and all sorts of fire equipment.

Before the unveiling on Wednesday, the bell was dedicated to the Cullman Fire Department in 1974.

It is uncertain where the bell was actually kept up until then.

"Including the old bell is one of the ways we help the firefighters, as it stands as a memorial to them for their service." Chief Reinhardt explained. "We'd like to thank the Mayor, the council, and everybody for the privilege of doing this and honoring the firefighters with it."

Mayor Max Townson was there for the ceremony and started things off with a few words. "We want to thank all the men and woman who have served as firefighters, not only here in Cullman and Cullman County, but also those across the United States."

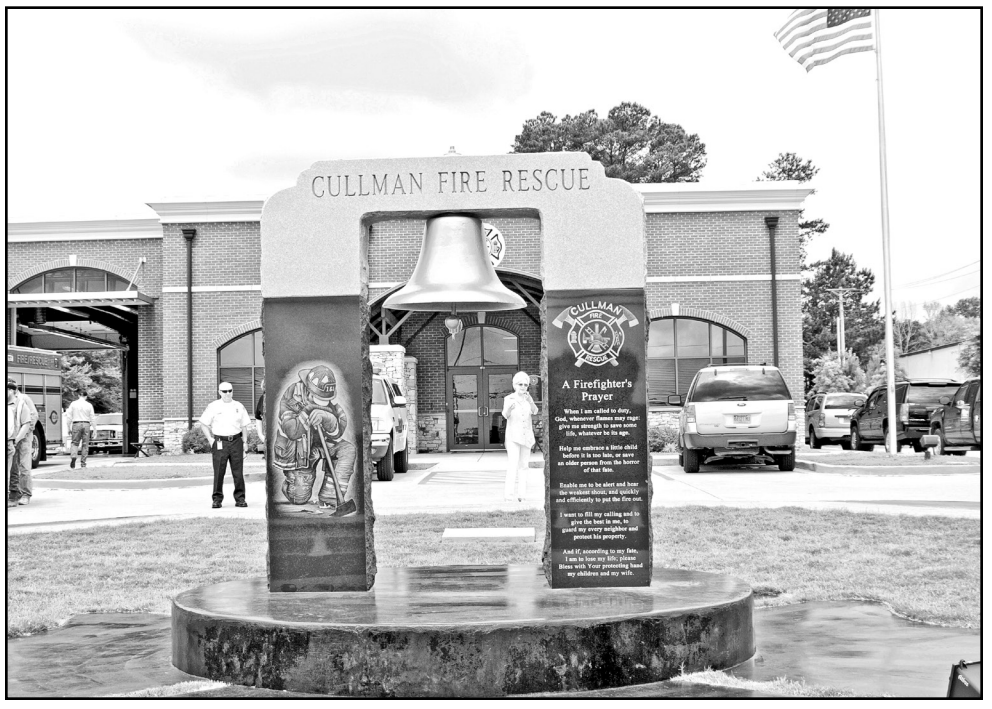
While looking at the crowd, he continued, "You know, the past few years we've lost a lot of individuals who have sacrificed to save folks all the way back to 9/11. We're very proud to have this monument to honor them."

Mayor Townson was complimentary in speaking of Cullman's city employees. "I want to thank the Chief for doing such an outstanding job. I am very proud of our fire department and all the employees that work for the city of Cullman," Mayor Townsend beamed. "The Street Department, Sanitation Department, and Water Departments all helped out with the building of this memorial and the Cullman County Community Development Commission gave us a grant, which helped with the cost. We really appreciated that."

The new memorial is surrounded with lovely benches to sit on and there are a couple of stones with the names of the deceased firefighters from Cullman close by. But what stands out about the memorial is the writing next to the old bell: a copy of "The Firefighter's Prayer" as transcribed on the right.

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SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

» The Fallen Firefighter Memorial stands in front of Fire Station Two on Main Avenue. On display is a bell from the first fire station in 1895.

THE FIRE FIGHTER'S PRAYER

When I am called to duty, God, whenever flames may rage; Give me strength to save some Life, whatever be their age. Help me embrace a little child Before it is too late, or save an older person from the horror of that fate. Enable me to be alert and hear The weakest shout, and quickly And efficiently to put the fire out. I want to fill my calling and to Give the best in me, to Guard my every neighbor and Protect his property. And if, according to my fate, I am to lose my life; please Bless with Your protecting hand My children and my wife.

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AUCTIONEER: BRYAN MESSERSMITH #1067

Ally & the Alley Katz: Accomplished 14 Year Old Musician Premieres at June Hops & Shops Cullman

By: Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - Cullman is home to an array of talented individuals and several local bands have been circulating to various venues and entertaining the masses. Ally Knight is a part of one such band that will play at this Thursday's June Hops & Shops Cullman, an event held in town every second Thursday of each month. She has had lots of great success early on in her career, but the most impressive thing is that she has accomplished this much at 14.

Ally Knight is going into 9th grade and has already created her first album. Her band is called Ally & the Alley Katz, a play off of her childhood nickname. While the band is still fairly new, they are already booking many local events such as Hops & Shops Cullman. She talked about her start and how the band came to be.

"After recording my first CD, I started learning to play the guitar," Knight said. "My guitar teacher, Wayne Reburn, told me we needed to start putting a band together. Wayne and my dad started calling musicians, and after a few practices, we decided we needed a name for the band. Wayne insisted on naming us Ally & the Alley Katz because I have had the nickname Ally cat since I was little."

The band consists of several members: Wayne Reburn, Rodney Johnston, Charles Baker, Jerry Beadlescomb, Doug Jean, Jacob Knight, and Ally. Jacob Knight is Ally's father and manager. Having that support and guidance from her parents is very important to Ally.

"It is always great to have your parents supporting what you do, and I couldn't do it without them. I really couldn't get anywhere without them since I can't drive," she said with a laugh.

This budding young artist has had the opportunity to go to Nashville and play with some big name professionals in the country music business.

"I love going to Nashville, it's always fun being in that musical atmosphere," Knight said. "While I was there, I recorded four traditional country songs with some amazing musicians such as Doug Jernigan, Greg Cole, and others who have worked with Blake Shelton, Reba McEntire, George Strait, and Daryle Singletary."

She went on to talk about the song that she had the pleasure of singing that was written by a friend.

"One of the songs I recorded was written by Larry Kirkland, a friend of my family. It is called 'If Her Old Stage Could Talk,'" she said. "It's a great song and he is responsible for helping me get the chance to work with these great musicians."

The sky is the limit for Knight and her band. With her talent and drive at such a young age, and the help of older and more experienced musicians, we may someday see her name in lights in Nashville.

If you would like to catch Ally & the Alley Katz, you can find them at the Cullman Chamber's June Hops & Shops Cullman this Thursday, June 12. Their set will run from 6 to 9 p.m. in the parking lot across from Berkeley Bob's. Come hear some great music and enjoy the event.

For booking information, please call Jacob Knight at 256-338-1410 or follow Ally & the Alley Katz on Facebook.



CONTRIBUTED

» Although young, Ally Knight has played with professional musicians in Nashville and has recorded her own CD.

Free Therapeutic Swim at CWAC Helps Disabled

By: Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - Cullman Wellness and Aquatic Center is now offering free therapeutic swimming for individuals with disabilities and their families on Monday nights from 6-8 p.m. The first event was held Monday, June 2, and it was met with great success.

The wall of the Aquatic Center's indoor pool was lined with participants exercising in different ways, following instructor Emily Jones' skilled lead.

Even though Jones was just filling in Monday night, you'd have thought she had been working with the same group of people for years.

"I normally teach water aerobics in the mornings and fill in when needed," she smiled happily as we talked. "Water aerobics is offered Monday through Friday, both in the morning and in the evenings."

"Water Aerobics," Jones went on to explain, "offers low impact exercise for your joints. It's an excellent class for those with arthritis and those who are going through knee surgery, elbow surgeries, and back surgeries. They can get into the water and not have all that pressure like they would if they were in the gym doing weights, walking the treadmill, or anything that puts a lot of pressure on their joints."

A fitness aficionado, she is definitely an encyclopedia on what to do to get in a great workout, while thinking foremost of safety.

Full of gusto, she continued, "It is fast paced, aerobic, and really gets your heart rate up! It's a very exciting class," she giggled.

"There are a lot of different things you can do in the water that people are amazed at. You're not just bound to one certain thing, there's a lot of variety."

"Classes can be pretty big. Most classes range from 25 to 30 people, but we are really busy in the mornings," Jones added, clearly excited.

"A lot of people come in at 8 a.m. because they want to come in and get their workout done."

No matter what time of day you end up going to a water aerobics class, you are sure to get an amazing workout and make a few new friends while you're at it.

The free therapeutic swim on Monday nights is not the same as the actual water aerobics classes.

If you are interested in taking a water aerobics class at Cullman Wellness and Aquatic Center, you can either pay $10 per class or you can easily purchase a membership.

"You can have a membership with both the gym and the aquatics, or you can just have a membership with either the gym or the aquatics, so you can mix it up a bit," Jones stated. "Plus, we just opened up the outdoor pool, so that's pretty fun."

As far as pricing is concerned, there are three different options for you to choose from to best fit your needs at the Cullman Wellness and Aquatic Center.

The first is for the single person, the second is for a couple, and the third is for the entire family.

For more information about joining Cullman Wellness and Aquatic Center, you can give them a call at 256-775-SWIM (7946) or you can stop by and speak to them in person.

They are located at 1636 Field of Miracles Drive in Cullman.

For more information about the free Therapeutic Swim Program offered on Monday nights, please call Hollie Guiterrez at 256-734-9157.



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

» CWAC's free Monday therapeutic swim sessions provide low impact exercise for individuals with disabilities and their families.

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New exhibition at WSCC Burrow Museum features rural farm scenes

By: Gail Crutchfield
WSCC Contributor

HANCEVILLE - Dozens of prints depicting rural life are now on display at the Burrow Museum in an exhibition entitled "Days Gone By."

The exhibition is on loan to the museum from Grover and Irma Reeves of Vinemont, who have been collecting prints that remind them of the past and, in some cases, their own life for about 10 years. Their daughter Jeanne, who works for Cotton Incorporated, would attend conferences where one of their favorite artists would be selling prints. She would buy some of those prints and introduced her parents to his work.

The Reeves then started purchasing watercolor prints for themselves and to donate for fundraisers for the Soil and Water Conservation District, for which Mr. Reeves served as supervisor of the Cullman County office and as president of the Alabama Association of Conservation District Supervisors. Their collection includes prints by Jack C. DeLoney, Clara Thomas, Joe Belt, Ronald Ragland, M. Hartsfield, and Connie McDonald.

For a while, the prints hung on the walls in various offices at the Cullman County Courthouse, where Mr. Reeves worked during his time with the Cullman County Soil and Water Conservation District. Reeves said when the SWCD planned to move to new offices, they contacted him about what to do with the prints. He decided to retrieve them and offered them to Wallace State for an exhibit. Now all of the prints are gathered at the Evelyn Burrow Museum on the Wallace State campus. "I decided to call this collection 'Days Gone By' because that is exactly what these prints show," said Donny Wilson, director of the Burrow Museum. "There are images of farmers bringing their cotton crops to the gin, rural landscapes, and scenes we don't often see anymore in this fast-paced world."



WSCC

» Grover and Irma Reeves stand next to Mr. Reeves' favorite print in the exhibit "Days Gone By," featuring dozens of watercolor prints the couple has collected over the last decade.

One of Mr. Reeves favorite prints is entitled "Solitude" by DeLoney. The print is a winter rural landscape that features leafless trees, their bare limbs reaching toward the sky, and two old barns. Mrs. Reeves favorite is one called "Sunday Morning," also by DeLoney, and is a scene showing a church as the parishioners leave the morning service. Several of DeLoney's grandchildren are depicted in the scene, said Mrs. Reeves.

Ironically, not even one of their prints hangs on the walls of their home, as the Reeves prefer to share the art with others. That selflessness is not uncommon of the couple, especially Mr. Reeves who is know for his acts of kindness in the community. As a member of the Lions Club, Reeves assisted in many fundraisers for the organization, including helping implement the organization's annual fish fry. For almost 20 years, Reeves has helped provided Thanksgiving Day meals for those might otherwise go without. He's served as a missionary and assisted with other fundraisers in Cullman County and the state when he saw a need.

The Reeves collection will be on display at the Evelyn Burrow Museum through Sept. 30, 2014. For more call Wilson at 256-352-8457 or visit burrowmuseum.org. The museum is open Tuesday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday.

CAMP CULLMAN

TWO SESSIONS...
June 2nd-27th & July 7th-Aug. 1st
7:45am - 5:15pm
Base Camp will be at Cullman Wellness & Aquatic Center

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For questions, contact wharbison@cullman.org, or call 256-734-9157.

Download the Parent Manual and Forms at www.cullmanrecreation.org

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to Benefit Cancer Victims
June 14th, 2014
(Rain Date is June 28, 2014)

REGISTRATION starts at 8am at the Cullman County Fairgrounds on Sportsman Lake Rd.

DOOR PRIZES!
$20 per Rider
$5 per Passenger
50/50 DRAWING!
Ride begins at 10:00 a.m.

Biscuits furnished by Bojangles'
Water and Crackers furnished at Guntersville State Park
BBQ & all the trimmings furnished after the ride

Members of AL-VIII of the Blue Knights International Law Enforcement Motorcycle Club will lead the ride!

cpr Call 256-734-9157 for details! cpr

SPEED & AGILITY CAMP
Ages 7-11; 11:30-12:15
Tuesdays & Thursdays June 10-July 17
Ages 12 & up ?am-8:30am
Mondays June 9-July 14
Includes introductory and advanced weight-lifting, speed and agility drills, and other training. Great for football, volleyball, other fall sport preparation.

SUMMER TENNIS LESSONS
Beginning June 2, three 2-week sessions will be held for beginners, intermediate, and advanced players coached by Ryan Hunt.
Sessions will fill up soon, so register ASAP!

JUNIOR GOLF CLINICS
Held at the Cullman Golf Course
Tuesdays June 3 - July 10 at 8:30am,
Cost is $60 for all 5 sessions,
or $15 per session.
Includes PGA instruction; ages 6-18.
Call 256-739-2386 for details

ARCHERY CAMPS
Mark your calendars for summer archery camps
June 11-June 13 and
July 28-August 1
Held at the Cullman Archery Park

USATF SUMMER TRACK & FIELD
CP&R will be hosting a summer track program for ages 6-18. Great for high school and middle school athletes as well as younger children to introduce them to the sport and a mandatory interest meeting will be held May 20 at 5:15pm at the Wellness & Aquatic Center

SWIM LESSONS
Swim Lessons will be held at the Cullman Well ness & Aquatic Center in 2 week sessions. Session I starts June 2. Class times are 7am, 8am, or 9am.
Registration is open at the center 256-775-SWIM for details.

Follow us on Twitter @CullmanSense

Dairy (from Front)

By: Kate Mullaney
kate@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - Let's face it, summer makes you sweat and sweat makes you stink! Thankfully, Dot's & Doe's Dairy offers a deliciously fragrant and exquisitely beautiful line of goat milk soap.

This soap is made from scratch in Falkville, Ala. by owner Amanda Woodard. Woodard's creativity eventually led her to make soap four years ago when she started a goat farm with her family.

"I have 5 kiddos and wanted a small farm to help us with our milk supply because we drink 5-6 gallons a week," she stated. "Plus, I've always been concerned about our health and raw goat's milk was something I wanted to incorporate in our diet. That's kind of how my little farm started."

The Woodards are quite close to their goat friends and milk them twice a day.

"Our goats are pets to us and are extremely personable," she said. "They're all named and they know their names well."

Eventually, Woodard began to experiment by making goat cheese. She has made chevre, feta, mozzarella, and ricotta all from her goats' milk.

"I also made Cajeta, an amazing Spanish caramel made from goat's milk," she said.

Unfortunately, she is unable to sell her goat cheese to the public due to state regulations.

"Some state laws seem to be changing in regards to small farm dairy products across the country though," she stated with hope. "Perhaps Alabama will join in as well one day."

Since she couldn't sell her cheeses, Woodard decided to find something else she could make with her goat's milk, which she would be able to sell.

Her mind finally landed on soaps and lotions. Goat milk offers an abundance of health benefits in regards to the skin. It's been well established, so Woodard decided to give it a try.

"I made my first soap last August and quickly became hooked," she said. "I'm an artist and wanted to express that side of my personality in my soaps. So, I added colors, designs, flowers, soap sculpting, and anything else I thought would go well with the designs in my mind."

Woodard has found an opportunity to make something wonderful out of something that is normally ordinary. Her soaps are beautifully crafted, not to mention they smell delightful. It's difficult to determine which is better, the smell or the appearance!

One soap is called "Day Before the Wedding". It is an orangey pink combination on the bottom, while the top is a soft pink and black marble pattern. It is decorated with glitter, pearls, and even rose petals and has a strong but delicate fragrance of roses and champagne.

"I have had people tell me my soap is too pretty to use," said Woodard smiling, "but my response is just to enjoy the artwork inside the bar. After all, Cleopatra's beauty secret was her goat's milk baths, so why would you want to miss out on that?"

Woodard's soaps are wonderful, but she also recommends her goat milk oils and butters.

"It truly is skin nourishing, and it's a great natural product. I make lotions out of the same scents that are incorporated in several of my soaps. I will also be making lotions using essential oils to target such things as sore muscles. The lotion is fabulously thick and creamy."

Not only does Woodard raise goats, use their milk to make lotions and soaps, and sell the products, but she also teaches classes on how to make soap.

"My soap is lye based," she stated, "and care has to be taken when working with lye. That's one point I always cover well in my soap making classes – safety in working with lye."

This goat milk expert has found success in the soap making business, and she has even more in store for the future.



KATE MULLANEY/CULLMANSENSE

» Dot's & Doe's Dairy owner Amanda Woodard started a small goat farm to supplement her household milk supply. Now she makes and sells her own goat milk lotions and soaps such as Triple Butter, seen above.

"Lately I have been formulating several soap recipes to target skin conditions such as acne, eczema, and sensitive skin," she said.

"In these soaps, I infuse some of the oils with medicinal herbs and flowers such as arnica, which I use in my sore muscle bar and bentonite clay in my acne bar. I also use essential oils to target specific skin conditions in my line of skin issue bars."

She is also working with a local organic farmer in Hartselle beginning this summer combining his organic tallow with her goat's milk for even more variety of soaps.

"I have also received requests for custom soap designs for events such as weddings where I incorporate the wedding colors into the soap. These could be given away as party favors from the bride and groom. I'm hopeful that this area of my business will grow in the future," she stated.

Woodard's soaps and lotions are a must try. Soon, she will be selling her products at the Farmer's Market every Saturday, on Etsy.com, and in Finders Keepers in Cullman. But for now, if you're interested in the best way to keep your skin clean and moisturized, contact Amanda Woodard at 256-784-5787 or go to her Facebook page at Dot's and Doe's Dairy.

Advocate (from Front)

through the Department of Human Resources. The youth served during 2013 were between the ages of 13 to 18 for Juvenile Justice, and birth to 18 referred through the Child Welfare system. Most of the children coming in from the welfare system have had at least one out-of-home placement, and those who come from the justice system have been adjudicated on a prior charge.

Thrasher and his team at the Youth Advocate Program boast a 93 percent success rate in helping the youth in Cullman get back into school with better attendance, grades, and all around attitude in the school setting.

"YAP's assigned Advocates (paid mentors) work with youth in their homes, schools, and communities," Thrasher said. "Intensive intervention and support enables youth to re-enroll in school, find employment, and live productive lives in their neighborhoods without jeopardizing community safety."

The program has numerous activities and resources available to help both parents and children, even after their time with the program has ended. This ensures that lessons taught and progress made does not backslide.

"The Youth Advocate Program provides community-based intensive wraparound services," Thrasher stated. "Our planning process ensures caregivers are engaged as equal partners. Planning is strength based and community resources are identified and natural supports are selected by the family."

A natural support can be anyone from a family's preacher, a coach, a friend, or relative who will ensure that the guidance that has been put in effect is upheld. These "natural supports" are crucial to making sure that the child stays on the right track. Tim Thrasher has served in many, if not all, of these roles and continues to provide the state and Cullman with the tools it needs to succeed.

"I have a passion to work with youth and their families to create a better community in Cullman County and throughout Alabama," Thrasher said. "Personally, I have dedicated a large part of my life (30 plus years) working with youth and their families. I have served youth and their families through my work with churches in three states, my service as a campus minister at Childhaven, and through my supervision of intensive in-home programs."

He went on to say how rewarding this work has been for him personally.

"Over the past three years, I have served CCYAP and the state of Alabama through Youth Advocate Programs, Inc. I love what I do and am rewarded daily by the success stories of the youth and families our advocates serve," he said.

"I am also excited by the changes observed in families in our community and state served by YAP. I realize the benefit YAP brings to youth and families through the comments I hear from judges and family members as I travel the state."

This program is one of many helping to make Cullman a better place for everyone and changing the lives of many kids and families. If you would like to volunteer or work with the program, please call 256-734-2644.



Coca-Cola PRESENTS

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FRIDAY JUNE 20 & SATURDAY JUNE 21 2014

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LYNYRD SKYNYRD

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BILLY CURRINGTON

SARA EVANS

CHARLIE DANIELS BAND

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DJ HISH AND MORE!

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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 at the All Steak. 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.

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.

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

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.

'Root Ministry' at Abundant Grace Church
There is a weekly meeting each Thursday night starting at 6 pm at Abundant Grace Church. 'Root Ministry' has the aim of radically overcoming obstacles together for anyone with any types of hurts, hang-ups or habits in their lives. Please call 256-739-7091 for additional information. All welcome!! **

Thursday Afternoon Overeaters Anonymous Meeting
Those interested are invited to attend the weekly Thursday afternoon meetings of Overeaters Anonymous which begin at 4:45 p.m. at Grace Episcopal Church's Carriage House. For additional information please call 734-376-2124 or 256-352-1143.

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.

Nimble Thimble Quilt Guild of Cullman
Members of the Nimble Thimble Quilt Guild of Cullman will gather at the Colonel Cullman Museum starting at 9:30 a.m. All interested quilters are invited to attend this meeting.

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!

Dodge City Day Festival
Everyone is invited to attend the 'Dodge City Day Festival' which will feature a day of fun for all. There will be activities for every age and a car show at Jack's to boot, all beginning at 10 a.m. All Cullman County seniors are invited to enjoy a free lunch at 12 noon at the Town Hall. There will be a 'scavenger hunt' as well as a water feature at Town Park for the children. The street festival with over 40 vendors and food carts will take place up and down Highway 69 through the town and in front of Town Hall will be inflatables for kids. Music schedule The Trammel Family.

Bosom Buddies Motorcycle Ride
Bosom Buddies Foundation is sponsoring a Motorcycle Ride today to raise funds to put toward helping cancer patients in Cullman and the surrounding area. Registration starts at 8 a.m. at Cullman Fairgrounds (next to Sportsmans Lake Park). Fee is $20.00 for the rider and $5.00 for passengers and the ride starts at 10 a.m. (Rain date is June 28.) Members of AL-VIII of the Blue Knights International Law Enforcement Motorcycle Club will lead the ride.

Next Monday

Cullman Kiwanis Club
The Cullman Kiwanis Club invites all local men and women who are interested in taking part in community service along with great fellowship, fun, networking, and learning to attend their weekly luncheon meeting at 12 noon each Monday at the All Steak. Come see what Kiwanis is all about and enjoy a great luncheon meal as well.

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This Week in Local Entertainment

Sponsored by Busy Bee Café

Monday, June 9
- 79 cent wings at Rodney G's Hickory Grill from 6-9 p.m.

Tuesday, June 10
- Square Dancing Lessons at East Point Community Center from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
- Trivia Night at Rodney G's at 7 p.m.
- Trivia Night at Grumpy's Italian Grill from 7-9 p.m.

Wednesday, June 11
- Story Time at the Hanceville Library at 10 a.m.
- Musician Derek Sellers at the All Steak from 6-9 p.m.
- Karaoke night at Grumpy's Italian Grill from 7-10 p.m.

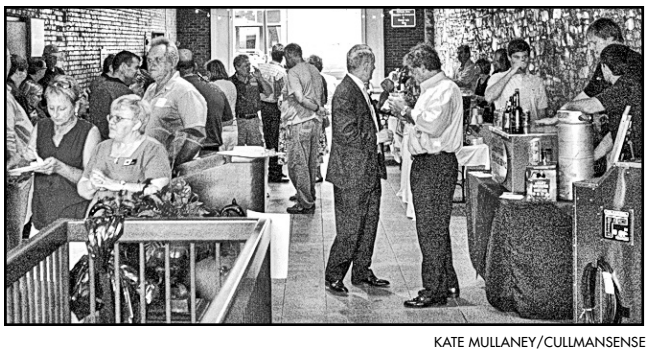
Thursday, June 12
- Trivia Night at Rodney G's at 7 p.m.
- Karaoke night at Cadillac Ron's
- Luau at From the Heart from 6-8 p.m.
- June Hops & Shops Cullman from 4-9 p.m.
- Bike Night at Grumpy's Italian Grill

Friday, June 13
- Ladies' Night at Rodney G's at 8 p.m. Half off drinks for ladies

Saturday, June 14
- Ladies' Night at Rodney G's at 8 p.m. Half off drinks for ladies
- Dodge City Day Festival from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Busy Bee Café
Try our German Food!

Annual Summer Samplers in the Breezeway Highlights Local Restaurants



KATE MULLANEY/CULLMANSENSE

» The Summer Samplers in the Breezeway event gave a variety of restaurants an opportunity to present their best dishes to a hungry crowd.

By: Kate Mullaney
kate@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Cullman was exposed to a taste of class with the Chamber of Commerce's Summer Samplers in the Breezeway this past Thursday. This event enticed the eager taste buds of participants to all the fresh flavors Cullman has to offer. HH Technologies sponsored this one of a kind event.

A variety of local restaurants were present at this annual showcase to present their best dishes. The All Steak, Busy Bee Café, the Cullman Brewers Guild, and Guthrie's were located outside in the breezeway. It was scattered with people enjoying the food and drinks and soaking up the atmosphere.

Inside were several other restaurants including Chick-fil-A, Dairy Queen, Grumpy's Italian Grill, Carlton's Italian, Johnny's Bar-B-Q, and more. The party flowed from inside the Chamber to outside in the breezeway creating an upscale and creative event.

President of the Cullman Brewers Guild Mike Mullaney was happy for their group to have been a part of the event.

"Home brewers love to share their creations with other people," he said, "and this event was a great opportunity to do so."

The band 'Old Spice' entertained at the event. They sang and played saxophone and trumpet to several jazzy tracks. In front of the band was a small dance floor, of which many people took advantage.

The Chamber of Commerce succeeded in providing edgy and exciting entertainment to Cullman. With our town on the rise and local restaurants eager to share their best, Summer Samplers was just what Cullman needed.

TEACHING WITH LOVE:
St. Paul's Lutheran School Celebrates 60 Years

By: Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – There are many great churches in the Cullman area, as well as several wonderful Christian schools. St. Paul's Lutheran School is currently celebrating 60 years of quality education. The school opened in 1954 and has been a staple in the private school scene in Cullman ever since.

St. Paul's Lutheran School prides itself on its rich history of 60 years of providing children with a strong academic foundation, while also instilling a loving and Christian environment.

Christina Miller, parent and active member of the school, talked about the main difference she feels sets St. Paul's apart.

"We have a very loving environment here," Miller said.

"Because we can teach the children about Christ, we're teaching them about love and compassion. There are other parts of character that we are able to address at a deeper level."

Another aspect of the school that may surprise many is that they do teach the theory of evolution to their students.

"We do teach evolution," Miller said. "Because children need to understand what the concepts are and what else is out there. We do not teach our kids to be ignorant of what all the concepts are."

To Miller and the Church's Reverend John Bussman, it is essential to make sure that every child leaves the school with the knowledge of different viewpoints, while still adhering to their core beliefs in Christ.



CHELSEA SPARKS/CULLMANSENSE

» With a dedication to individulized learning, St. Paul's Lutheran School has provided a quality Christian education in a loving environment to its students since 1954.

The Church itself was created a mere seven years after the founding of Cullman.

While the school is much younger, in its 60 years, it has seen controversy and has always dealt with it in a Christian mindset.

Reverend Bussman told of one such scenario during the Civil Rights Movement and the stand their principle took.

"We had a black student in the 1960s who was very well received by students. Unfortunately at some point, our brains changed to hate. So the church, in response, put the child through school and college in Selma," Bussman explained.

This story is one that Bussman feels says a lot about their church and what it represents.

"It's how you approach the world," Bussman said. "Here is why we are not going to hate, here is why this person is a child of God, just like you and me no matter what."

The tradition of compassion and love that started then continues today within the school.

"The Christian love and concern that we have for our brothers and sisters from the very beginning of our creation, it has been there and still is today," Reverend Bussman went on to say.

There are many things that could be said about this school, its teachers, and classrooms.

You could talk about their state of the art technology, their dedication to individualized learning, and much more.

However, the core of this school and its 60 year history is one of love; teaching students, parents, and the community at large what it is to love and learn, and that the two go hand in hand.

If you would like more information about St. Paul's Lutheran School, please visit their website at www.stpaulscullman.com. Everyone is welcome.

RESIDENTIAL RECIPES

Best. BBQ Sauce. Ever. Recipe

By: Allison Robertson • Recipe Contributor

The weather is getting warmer so that means I am using my grill almost every day. Not only do you keep your house from getting hot from the oven or stove but you also get to enjoy the beautiful weather after a winter of yuck. In my opinion, buffalo chicken is always a good choice but sometimes you don't want fire in your mouth when it is hotter than the surface of the sun during the day. This is a great barbeque sauce recipe that's super easy and you can use it on just about anything.

Sauce Ingredients:

- 1 bottle Kraft original barbeque sauce (I know that's cheating but believe me it will taste much different)
- 1/2 cup - spicy mustard
- 2 tablespoons - soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon - hot sauce (your favorite)
- 1 teaspoon - minced garlic
- 1/2 stick - butter

Instructions:

- Mix all ingredients in a microwave safe bowl and microwave until the butter is melted. Usually about 2 minutes.
- Stir and paint on your chicken wings, burgers, pork chops or any meat before and after grilling. Best. Sauce. Ever.

Cream Cheese Banana Bread

By: Allison Robertson • Recipe Contributor

If you are like me, sometimes you buy a bunch of bananas and they get pushed to the back of the fridge and forgotten about until they are brown and gross looking. Well, don't waste them, instead make this delicious banana bread.

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup - butter
- 8 ounces - package of cream cheese
- 2 eggs
- 2 cups - granulated sugar
- 3 cups - all purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon - baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon - salt
- 3-4 bananas, mashed
- 1/2 teaspoon - maple flavoring

Instructions:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- Beat butter and cream cheese until smooth.
- Gradually add sugar until light and fluffy.
- Add eggs one at a time mixing in between.
- Gradually add in flour, salt and baking powder 1 cup at a time, mixing thoroughly.
- Stir in mashed bananas and maple flavoring.
- Spray two 8x4 loaf pans and separate the batter into each evenly. Bake at 350 degrees for 50-60 minutes or until a knife or toothpick comes out clean.

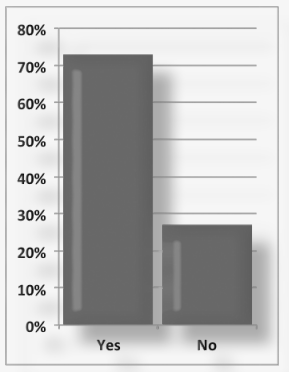
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E-mail submissions to

recipes@cullmansense.com

Poll

Do you try to conserve energy?



This Week's Poll

Do you donate to charities?

Vote Today at
CullmanSense.com/Poll

cullman city parks & recreation

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

www.cullmanrecreation.org
256-734-9157

- **Eat on the Street:** Food trucks will be on site at the Festhalle Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11am-1pm. Come eat, shop, and relax with us this week with Papa Duke's Tues. & Devil Dawg's Thurs. See our full lineup online.
- **FREE Drive-in Movie:** A FREE Drive-in Movie will be held in front of Nesmith Pool on Friday, June 14 playing Despicable Me 2. Movie will begin at dark and is free to the public. Call 256-734-9157 for more details.
- **Dive-in Movie at CWAC:** Frozen will be playing by the poolside on Thursday, June 26 at the Cullman Wellness & Aquatic Center. The pool will open at 6pm for open swim for $5 per person, and the movie will begin at dark. Admission to the open swim and movie is $5 per person. Call 256-775-SWIM for any details.
- **Monday Fundays** are held each Monday at CWAC, $7 admission per person for open swim, games, and more. 6pm to close. Call 775-SWIM.
- **Swim Lessons:** Summer swim lessons will be held in two week sessions this summer with the first session beginning June 2. Lessons are held at the Wellness & Aquatic Center at 7am, 8am, or 9am each day. Register now at the center, 775-SWIM.
- **Archery Camps:** Summer Archery Camp will be held June 11-13 at the Cullman Archery Park. Beginners and advanced archers alike will be able to develop their skill and shoot a better round. Sign up is now open at the Civic Center. 734-9157
- **Speed & Agility Camp:** Will be hosted by ASPT and work on speed, agility, & weight training. Cost is $135 for 6 weeks; ages 7 & up can participate with sessions Mondays & Wednesdays at 11:15 each week. Reg. now at the Civic Center.
- **Tennis Lessons:** CP&R will hold tennis lessons for beginners, intermediate, and advanced players in 2 week sessions with Session I beginning June 2. Ryan Hunt will serve as the instructor; register now at the Civic Center or call 734-9157.
- **Pickin under the Pavilion:** Summer concert series held at the Donald E. Green Sr. Center, Tuesdays starting June 3 at 6:30pm. Music will include bluegrass, country, oldies & more, call 734-4803. Behind the Times will be playing this Tuesday, June 10 at this FREE event.

What's Online

Johnny's Bar-B-Q Rolls in to Eat on the Street

Cullman's own Johnny's Bar-B-Q was the featured food truck at last Thursday's Eat On the Street. This delicious taste of home was a hit at the Farmer's Market. Josh Wiggins and his father Gary are in charge of Johnny's food truck. This new adventure began about a year ago, and they're not stopping.



qrne.ws/210

Funding Restored for Disabled Veterans Hospital Transportation Service

Lieutenant Governor Kay Ivey on Friday announced the restoration of funding for a vital hospital transportation service for disabled veterans. She made the announcement while speaking at the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Department of Alabama and DAV Auxiliary...

qrne.ws/211

Paddle Board Water Yoga: Getting Fit in H2O

A new way to stay in shape has splashed into Cullman. The Cullman Wellness and Aquatics Center is now offering paddle board yoga classes, great for those who love a challenge. Paddle Boards are traditionally used to stand on and paddle across larger bodies of water such as a lake.

qrne.ws/212

Rennard's Gallery is a Treasure Trove of Fine Art in Cullman

By: Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – No matter how much you think you know about this town, there is always something new to discover. No one would ever suspect to have a litany of fine art right here in the city of Cullman. Rennard's Gallery on 1st Ave. is a small shop with some big treasures to share.

When you pass Rennard's, upon first glance you might think you are only looking at a framing shop, but take a step inside and you will find a lot more than frames. Dennis Berse and wife Shannon moved to Cullman from the beachy area of Panama City, Fla.

"What got us started in the business is when we were living in Panama City," Berse said.

"It became outlandish framing, and I have been collecting for a long, long time. So I started looking to buy my own equipment, and the guy that had been framing my stuff was moving his business. So I made an offer and he accepted."

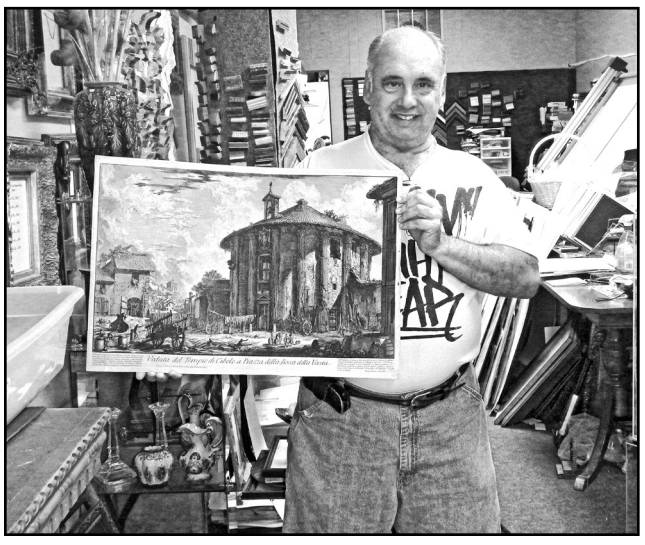
Berse quickly learned that he had a knack for the framing business.

"I never started to have an art gallery," Berse said. "But I would put stuff that I had framed on the wall in Panama City and people would like it."

Hundreds of prints, etchings, lithographs, and woodcuts fill the small shop, as well as a number of other forms of art.

"We have museum quality art here," Berse said.

You can find artists from all over the world at Rennard's: Salvador Dali, Leonardo da Vinci, Andy Warhol, and many more all right here in Cullman just waiting to be seen by those who already appreciate art or are looking to expand their knowledge. Berse is a passionate man whose love of art is more than evident. He loves for people to come in to his shop and just look around and have a conversation about his collection.



CHELSEA SPARKS/CULLMANSENSE

» Museum quality art from artists such as Leonardo da Vinci and Andy Warhol are on display at Rennard's Gallery.

"The collection dates back to the 1300s," Berse stated. "And this gallery is pretty unique in that it was written up as one of the top 100 tourist spots in Alabama for art. In Cullman County, they only mention three: the Shrine, the Grotto, and our gallery."

Berse's love of art has a long history that goes back to his parents.

"Well, it's interesting," he said. "My dad started a gallery in underground Atlanta, and he wanted to have a gallery where the average person could buy appreciable art or collectible art. I've been around art all my life, since both my parents were artists and went to school for art."

In the years since he and his wife have been collecting, their love and passion for it has only grown.

Now they both feel like they are more than collectors, they feel as though they are protectors.

"Shannon and I feel like we are custodians of art," Berse said. "It is our passion, and we have had people come in and if doesn't feel right, we don't sell to them. The stuff I have is hard to replace."

According to Berse, more than selling art, what gives him the biggest thrill is educating the community around him and encouraging others to take an interest in art as well.

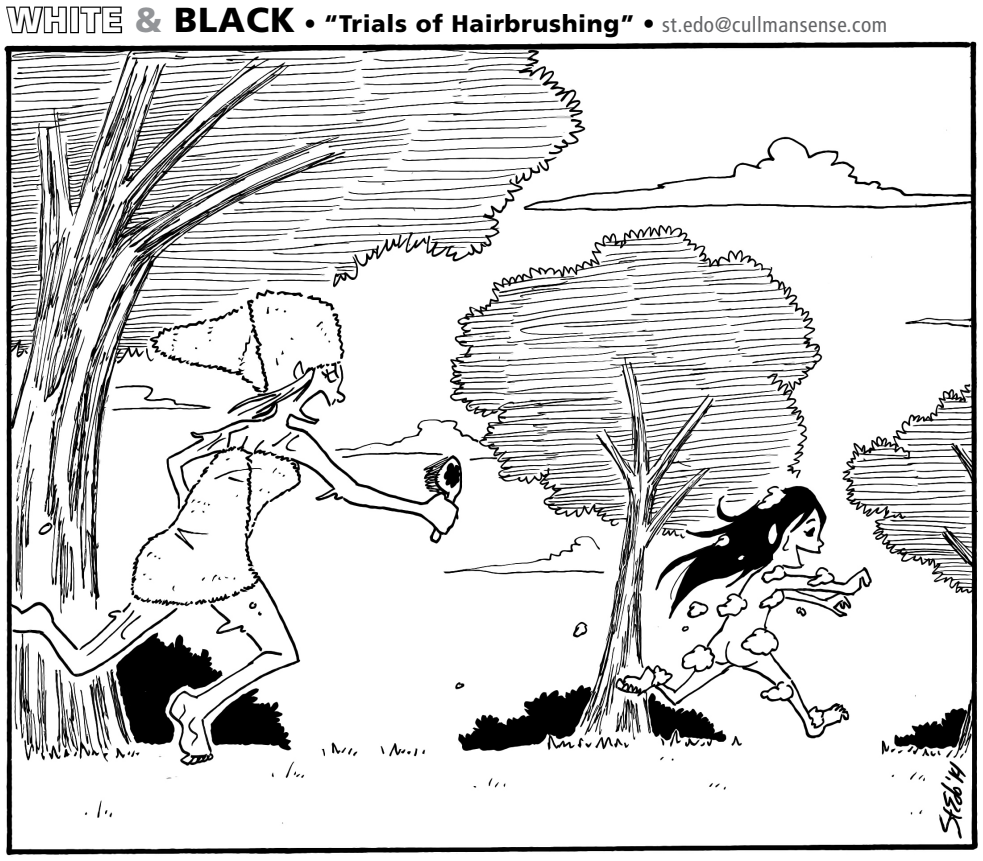
This remarkable little jewel in downtown Cullman is a privilege to have in the community. Everyone is welcome to come and take a look around at not only art, but history itself.

A lot of these works date back to a time long forgotten by most, and it is a wonder that there is a piece of those times right here in our fair town.

If you would like more information on Rennard's or would like to stop in to look, please stop by the shop on 1st Ave. next to Berkley Bob's or look them up on Facebook.

Comics

WHITE & BLACK • **"Trials of Hairbrushing"** • st.edo@cullmansense.com



SUNNY STREET by Max Garcia





Pets of the Week

Dalton

Hello! My name is Dalton, and I am about 1 years old. I am a German Shepherd and currently weigh 55 lbs. I am full of life and I love to play. I am currently a stray hoping my family comes to claim me but if not, I will go up for adoption on June 7. Please come visit me today. I am ready for my forever family!



Luna

Hello! My name is Luna, and I am about 1 years old. I am a black Labrador an currently weigh 66 lbs.

I am spirited and enjoy company. I am ready for my new companion and forever family.

Please come visit me today!

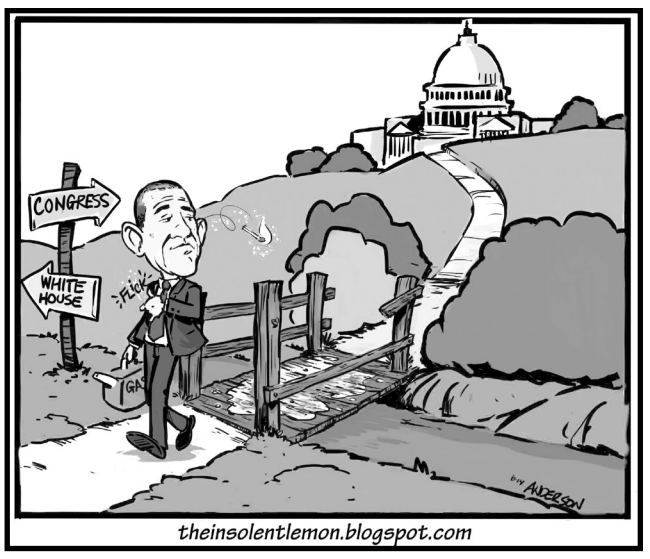


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If you know the owner of either dog or if you are interested in adopting one of the dogs, please call 256-734-5448 or come by the Animal Shelter.

Editorial Cartoons





HOW ARE WE DOING?

Tell us what we're doing right and how we can do better.

E-mail feedback@cullmansense.com
or Call 256-297-1847

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OPINION

THE NEW AGE OF HERO FILMS

By: Sage Overton
Contributor

Disclaimer: This article contains spoilers for several films including: "X-Men: First Class", "Man of Steel", "The Dark Knight Rises", and "The Amazing Spider Man 2."

May 23, 2014 cannot come soon enough for me. Since staying past the credits following "The Wolverine" and seeing a glimpse of what's coming next, I have been anxiously awaiting the arrival of "X-Men: Days of Future Past". It's been a long wait, and I haven't been alone in my anticipation. After seeing how "X-Men: First Class" reset the stage for a world of mutants beyond "X-Men: Last Stand", millions of fans can't wait for the next chapter in the saga.

Like many of them, I grew up on Christopher Reeve's Superman and Michael Keaton's Batman. They were invincible, unstoppable and ultimately unreachable, totally out of touch with the audience. The villains were unique, memorable, stunning and unrealistic. So much of the reason why the films and characters have been rebooted lies in this choice of portrayals. Today, we want something that hits closer to home, a Batman that could be our neighbor or a Superman made human by his upbringing.

That's what the new age of superhero films is delivering, at least the successful ones. Take the most recent "Batman" trilogy for example. First, it's dark and grounded. Gotham looks more like a city dealing with extreme pockets of poverty, hunger, gangs, unemployment and crime, and less like the Cirque du Soleil backdrop of previous films.

Second, the characters are mostly everyday people. Christian Bale's Batman actually bruises when hit, and he gets hit a lot, even while being a master of hand to hand combat. We see a scene where he's stitching up wounds from a vicious dog bite with several other scars from previous incidents.

Thanks to Heath Ledger's Joker, he loses the woman he loves in a violent explosion after being tricked into showing up at the wrong location. The new Batman is thus proven both mortal and fallible. Simply put, he could be anyone of us if we had the time to train and the money. As the icing on the cake, his gadgets are less science fiction and simply technological innovations that aren't mainstream yet. It's all believable.

They also place heroes in situations with real consequences. Take the most recent Spider-Man. Despite having amazing abilities well beyond the physical limitations of normal humans, he fell victim to no-win scenarios.

In the first reboot of "Spider-Man", Peter Parker must choose between saving all of New York from a bioweapon, or ensuring the safety of his girlfriend's father from the film's main villain. Obviously, Spider-Man saves the city and the father is mortally wounded. Before passing, he makes Peter swear to break up with his daughter (Gwen), keeping her safe from those who wish harm to Parker's alter ego (Spider-Man).

Peter breaks the promise, and she becomes caught up in a battle between him and another villain. During the fight, Gwen ends up falling from a clock tower and Spider-Man catches her a second too late, literally. As she hits the ground, his web catches her and begins pulling her back up. The scene is shocking and painful. We believe heroes should always win. Technically Spider-Man does. He wins the fight. But Peter loses his love. The audience is brilliantly shown how wearing a mask doesn't protect the person underneath, doesn't devoid them of emotions or vulnerabilities. It's an experience we can all relate to, the lesson of no good deed going unpunished.

The new heroes don't just lose those around them, they can also lose parts of themselves. In "X-Men: First Class", Xavier intervenes to save a non-mutant from his best friend and ally Magneto. His actions are an attempt to preserve both life and his friend's soul. A bullet in the exchange is flung carelessly by Magneto and lodges in Xavier, rendering him permanently paralyzed. While he saves someone, he loses his friend who becomes bitter and resentful and his own ability to ever walk again.

In "Man of Steel", Superman must break the ultimate rule to save others. In a battle with General Zod, the main antagonist of the film who also has Superman's abilities, Superman is forced to snap Zod's neck to save a family. The scene is by far one of the most shocking in any superhero film ever. Heroes, by assumed rules, can allow villains to meet less than fortunate fates. The key word is allow. They do not take justice into their own hands and they certainly do not kill, especially one like Superman. Henry Cavill (Superman) displays the anguish of making such a choice perfectly from the moments leading up to Zod's death to the aftermath.

So this is the modern age of heroes we long to see. Not the invincible protectors with a perfect moral compass, but a unique individual as flawed as the rest of us. We want them to hurt, to suffer, to lose, and then to prevail. That's where our hope and belief in them comes from now. Not in their powers, their strength, or their speed, but in their humanity, their pain, their courage. Our perfect hero is someone put in an impossible situation choosing to make a positive difference in a diseased world they know only they can bring. We need to know we are capable of being that hero because all that keeps us from it is finding the right villain to prove it and having Bruce Wayne's billions.

OPINION

Fixing Congress

By: Lee H. Hamilton

These are hard times for Congress. Its approval ratings have seen a bump from their historic lows of a few months ago, but it's a small one. Our representative democracy's keystone political institution is widely derided as ineffective, unproductive, irrelevant, and sadly out of touch.

It is no coincidence that this comes while Congress has developed a taste for so-called "unorthodox lawmaking," wandering far outside its traditional procedures. That's why I would argue that as grim as things seem now, there is a fix for what ails Congress.

Broadly speaking, it involves congressional process. Let me quote John Dingell, the canny U.S. House member from Michigan who recently announced his retirement. "I'll let you write the substance," he once told a House Judiciary subcommittee, "...you let me write the procedure, and I'll screw you every time." In legislative bodies, whoever controls the process controls the result. If it wants to restore itself, Congress must make its processes exemplary and fair.

Members should begin by opening the floor to more amendments. At the moment amendments are tightly limited, if not banned outright, in an effort by the leadership to control the outcome. This restricts debate, impedes the free flow of ideas, and strengthens leaders while disempowering ordinary members.

The simple truth is that members of Congress are there primarily to legislate — not to raise money or score political points on television. Yet Congress seems to devote less and less time to crafting and passing legislation; it is losing the habit and the skills, and its work product suffers. It needs to work harder at the job Americans expect.

To make this possible, the Senate should do more of its business by simple majority vote of the senators present and voting. I know that many senators like the ability to filibuster, and do not want to abandon the rule that requires 60 votes to close debate.

But here's the thing: the super-majority rule, as it has been applied recently, has become a formula for impotence and disorder. Every democratic institution in this country operates by majority rule except the Senate, where a small minority can completely gum up the works.

It's important for the majority to assure fair procedures that take minority views fully into account, but at the end of the day Congress needs to work, not be hamstrung by loyalty to a Senate rule that has outlived its purpose.

Which is not to say that tradition has no place on Capitol Hill. Many of the procedures it developed over long years of practice were designed to improve its functioning — especially in designing and enacting the federal budget. That process is completely broken now. Congress needs to focus its attention on returning to the traditional budget process of considering separate appropriations bills, as opposed to lumping the entire budget into a single bill.

The point of all this is that Congress is listing, but it can right itself. It may not be able to tackle all of these proposed fixes at once, but each is within its power. Members should quit throwing up their hands and protesting that they can't do anything about their own institution's problems. It's their job to put Congress back in working order and they have the power to do it.

Bill Smith

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