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CATHEDRAL OF PRAISE GIVES BACKPACKS AWAY



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

» The steadily growing Cathedral of Praise Church of God in Vinemont gave away 312 backpacks to local school children that attended their entertaining and informative event.

Three Day Game Show Themed Family Fest Helps Local Families Get Back to School

Sharon Schuler Kreps
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VINEMONT - While most churches in the area have wonderful Bible schools in the summertime, Cathedral of Praise Church of God in Vinemont hosts a three-day Family Fest event instead. Mainly geared toward the children of the congregation, entire families tend to gravitate p6

LOCAL BUSINESS

STEELE ORCHARD: MORE THAN APPLE-TIZING FRUIT

Sharon Schuler Kreps
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CULLMAN - For those who enjoy apples and peaches, Steele Orchard is the place to be! Steele Orchard, located here in Cullman, has everything you need to satisfy your hunger for these delicious fruits. Whether you have a hankering for good ole southern fried pies, homemade jams and jellies, or even fresh apple butter, the folks at Steele's can help you with a smile.

Recently recognized by Fred Hunter's Absolutely Alabama, the family owned and operated orchard has become quite the sensation in these parts.

Humble and true to their roots though, the Steele family has not forgotten all the hard work and dedication it took to take a flat chunk of land and turn it into the amazing field of apples and peaches it is today. p6



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

» In addition to fresh apples and peaches, Steele Orchard also serves up southern fried pies, homemade jams and jellies, and apple butter.

Rumors Deli Rearranges Plans

» Though restaurant won't open bar, new menu items and surprises are just around the corner

Kate Mullaney
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CULLMAN - Talk of Rumors Deli opening a bar has turned out to be, well, a rumor. Sad but true, owners Ralph and Annette Harris have decided to postpone the project.

"As the quotes came in for remodeling, equipment, and other things, the amount we were going to have to borrow escalated to an amount we just didn't feel safe borrowing," stated Annette Harris. "We wanted to do it right and by doing that, it costs a lot of money. . . A lot of money. So, we just put it on the back burner."

This news is unfortunate as many people were looking forward to the addition of a Rumors Deli bar.

But, the Harris's are reevaluating everything they have going on and are improving the already delicious Rumors Deli (but rumor has it that it can't get any better!).

"We are doing a little rearranging and painting," said Harris. "We've moved around tables, made better use of the back room that didn't get used as much, and we're trying to spiff up the patio."

Rumors has also given up the side of the restaurant which used to be home to the coffee house.

"Since we were just using that area for seating, we decided we would give that up and make good use of the other side of the restaurant and save on rent," Harris commented.

But the changes don't stop there.

"We are adding a few things to the menu that I've been wanting to try," stated Harris. "A Southwestern type salad is on the way. I also want to do more with social media contests and such. We have also started getting involved with Hops & Shops that happens every second Thursday night p3

ADERHOLT INTRODUCES BILL TO TURN BACK WAVES OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

Brian Rell
Contributor

» The 'Protection of Children Act of 2014' would streamline removal process to return them home

WASHINGTON D.C. - Congressman Robert Aderholt along with two other members of the house introduced legislation Friday that streamlines the removal process for illegal aliens caught at the border, and allows unaccompanied minors to be returned to their home country in weeks instead of the usual years it takes to navigate the current process.

This legislation closes a loophole used by human smugglers to exploit the anti-human trafficking law amended in 2008 that was designed to p2

PRINTED LOCALLY @ PRINTING Alabama Web Press

LOCAL DAIRY QUEEN RECEIVES TWO HONORS

Chelsea Sparks
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CULLMAN - Cullman is a beautiful place to be, and everyone that does business here takes part in that upkeep. Some businesses, however, go above and beyond in maintaining a quality business both inside and outside their doors. It is that mindset that landed the local Dairy Queen two awards this month.

Samantha and Mike Way, owners and operators of the Cullman Dairy Queen, were delighted to receive two awards from the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce. They received a Community Improvement award and the Small Business of the Month Award.

While the two were thrilled to be recognized by the community for their work, they wanted to give credit where credit was due on the landscaping of the business.

"To be honest with you," Mike Way said. "It is Samantha's mother, Caroline, and friend Tommy Arnold that are responsible for all of the flowers and shrubs. They take care of those and do that every year for us."

"She takes a lot of pride and works so hard every year," Samantha said.

"We've gotten it several times because of them so it is really their award."

The Dairy Queen also received the small business of the month award for July. Both owners said that this award was due in large part to both their employees and customers.

"Our customers are not just customers to us," Samantha said.

"They are like family. We have been in the business since 1982, and so we know a lot of them by name and their story. So we give a lot to our community, and in return, our community gives back to us."

Dairy Queen in Cullman donates yearly to several charities ranging from schools to churches.

It is their belief that investing in their community is what sets them apart from other businesses like them.



CHELSEA SPARKS/CULLMANSENSE

» Owners Samantha and Mike Way's Dairy Queen in Cullman received the Community Improvement Award and the Small Business of the Month Award from the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce.

In addition to having loyal customers, a business must have loyal and hard working employees.

Dairy Queen has several that have been with them for almost 10 years.

"We give a lot of the credit to our employees," said Samantha. "We train them and do the best we can, and they work really hard for us."

Most people do not see a fast food restaurant like Dairy Queen and think small business, but the people who own it and run it are two of our very own.

They, and their employees, work hard to bring delicious ice cream, hamburgers, and superior customer service to their neighbors and friends.

Justice For All: LegalShield is Making Justice Affordable for Everyone in Cullman

Will Hogue
will@cullmannsense.com

CULLMAN - LegalShield is a company that provides equal access to the top firms in whichever state someone lives for often less than $20 a month.

Jeremy Brothers, the leading associate for LegalShield in Cullman, moved to Alabama from New York in September of 2013.

He has been with LegalShield since 2003 and was hoping to introduce his company to Cullman.

He found out that LegalShield had been in Cullman since 1999 though, but there was no one to facilitate those accounts that had been set up, so he went about doing just that.

The city of Cullman and Cullman County are just two of his many clients.

When a company or a small business or even a family signs up for LegalShield, they are assuring themselves of excellent legal representation in the event that the need to use it arises.

"Think of it like car insurance," Brothers said, "you pay for it each month, and whether or not you use it, it's there if you need it."

It's a much more affordable alternative than what most people choose, which is the classic, go straight to the law firm choice.

LegalShield is cheap because all the access and services of the top firms in Alabama are available to anyone who signs up for under $20, and it's efficient because there are no limitations to how you can use it.

Have a legal question that needs answering?

Call your lawyer that you pay for.

LegalShield covers any situation.

LegalShield is a great and affordable alternative because it does something that law firms cannot; it offers identity theft protection and is currently the only service in North America that offers full restoration for victims of identity theft.

Not only are the county and city themselves LegalShield clients, but businesses throughout Cullman are signed up for the service: College Tire in Hanceville along with Nare Home Medical Equipment on Cherokee Ave, to name a few.

When asked why more people are not signed up for the service, Brothers said, "Because most people don't know about it. We don't do any big advertising."

Brothers says the beauty of LegalShield is that "You know longer have to ask yourself, 'How much justice can I afford?'"

Immigrants (from Front)

deal with illegal child labor and sex trafficking.

The legislation allows for all unaccompanied children, regardless of what country they are from, to be treated the same under the law and to be reunited with their families in their home country. Aderholt, who previously chaired the Homeland Security Appropriations subcommittee, teamed up with the current subcommittee Chairman John Carter (R-TX31) and Health & Human Services Appropriations subcommittee Chairman Jack Kingston (R-GA01) to introduce the legislation this morning to address our nation's crisis at the border.

"The end of the border crisis begins with honestly enforcing our immigration laws at the border," said Congressman Robert Aderholt who chairs the Agriculture subcommittee on Appropriations.

"This common-sense legislation is needed to streamline the removal process and, at the same time, protect minor children who qualify for asylum. We need a process where these cases can be dealt with quickly. With this legislation in place, instead of the process taking years, the process will move much more quickly. Those who try to circumvent our laws and who are here for the wrong reasons need to know it will soon take just weeks for them to be sent back to their home country."

The legislation amends the 2008 William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA) and provides for the expedited removal of Unaccompanied Alien Children (UAC) who are not victims of human trafficking or do not have a credible fear of returning to their home country.

This Legislation:

- Removes the distinction between Canadian/Mexican UACs and UACs from non-border countries, like Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador.
- Requires immigration enforcement officials to investigate the individuals receiving custody of the children inside the United States. These guardians are often here illegally and many sent thousands of dollars to criminal smuggling organizations.
- Allows officials to hold UACs while their claims are heard, rather than release them throughout the country at taxpayer expense.
- Reaffirms that taxpayers will not pay for lawyers to represent illegal immigrants.

Congressman Aderholt serves as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies for the powerful House Appropriations Committee; he is also a member of the Committee's Defense Subcommittee, the Committee's Commerce, Justice, and Science Subcommittee, and the Helsinki Commission.

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NATHAN ANDERSON NAMED DIRECTOR OF CULLMAN CITY PARKS & RECREATION

Noah Chandler
noah@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - Cullman City Parks & Recreation has a new director following months of searching since the retirement of former director John Hunt.

"The park board and staff of the department are excited to welcome Nathan as our new leader," said Rusty Turner, chairman of the Parks and Recreation Board.

"We believe Nathan brings the demonstrated leadership qualities that will serve the department and the community as we continue to strive to improve the quality of life in Cullman."

Nathan Anderson was officially named Director of the City of Cullman Parks & Recreation Friday evening, however, the news didn't make the rounds until early Saturday morning.

"I am honored to serve as the new Cullman City Parks & Recreation Director. The future is bright, as this extraordinary organization has already attained a vast amount of success under John Hunt, the Park Board's leadership, and a very talented team," Anderson said.

"I am eager to begin and look forward to working with city leaders to continue to enhance Cullman City Parks & Recreation to meet the needs of our community."

Anderson has worked with the Cullman City School system since March 2012 as the District Technology Director. He will begin work as CP&R Director in the coming month, leaving behind his position at CCS.

"Although we hate to lose Nathan Anderson as the Technology Coordinator for Cullman City Schools, we are very excited about this new opportunity for him," Dr. Doreen Griffeth, CCS Superintendent, said.

Dr. Griffeth said during Anderson's time with the CCS he was "instrumental in bringing Cullman City Schools forward in utilizing technology to meet the needs of our students and teachers" and she is confident that "he will now bring his ingenuity and forward thinking mentality to better all of Cullman County."

Anderson said he looking forward to getting to know the "exceptional team at CP&R."

"Upon arrival, I will work closely with the Parks Board on an immediate plan of action, build relationships with the staff, make technological improvements to the daily business operations, and work on website improvements," he said.

"As the Director, I will wake up every day, focused on promoting Cullman City Parks & Recreation, a valued treasure of Cullman, as the premier standard for all parks and recreation departments!"

A graduate of Vinemont High School, where some may remember seeing Anderson on the basketball court or football field, he has lived in Cullman for the past 18 years.

In 2006, he married Anna, who is entering her eighth year teaching first grade at Cullman City Primary School.

The couple have a three-year-old son, Graham, who they look forward to raising in Cullman.

NATHAN ANDERSON

Educational background consists of an:
Associate's Degree in Business Administration and a Bachelors in Business Management with minors in Marketing and Information Systems Management



CONTRIBUTED

Relevant work history includes:
District Technology Director, Cullman City Schools; PR Advisor; Event Planner; Property Mitigation Manager; Financial Planner; Marketing and Sales; CDMA Non-Profit President for Two Years

Helped establish two non-profit organizations:
Cullman Downtown Merchants Association and Cullman Downtown Disaster Relief

Helped establish two new community events:
Celebrate Cullman and Celebrate Christmas and has also been the Lead Facilitator for Christmas in Cullman Open House for the past three years

Rumors (from Front)

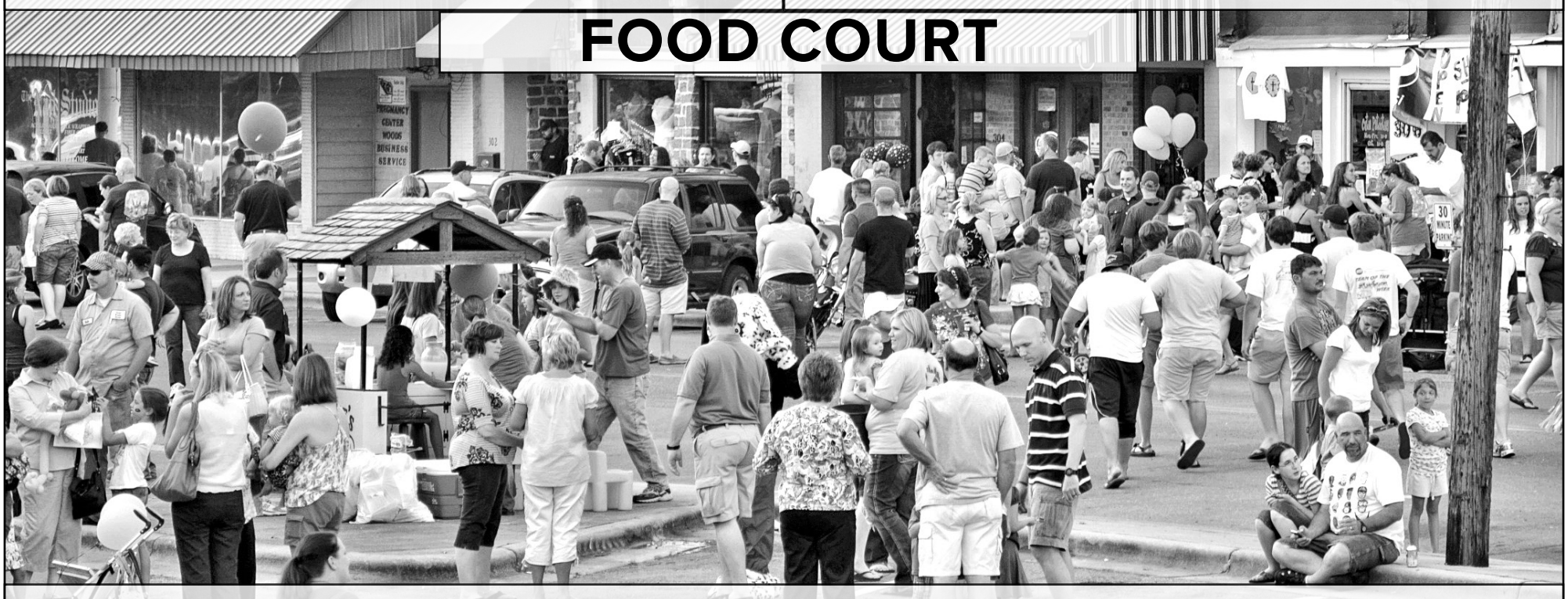
from 4-9 p.m. It's growing, and we stay open that night. There could be some other things in the future that I'll keep under my hat for the time being. But if it materializes, it will be awesome!"

If you're a fan of Rumors Deli (and let's face it, who isn't?), then you have a lot to look forward to.

On top of all these exciting changes, Cullman's favorite restaurant is looking forward to celebrating a big anniversary next year.

"We just celebrated our 14th anniversary," said Harris. "I'd like to plan something cool for our 15th. I have a year to put that into place, so just stay tuned and keep your eyes open for what's to come. It may not just be a rumor."

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LAUGH IT OUT: LAUGHTER YOGA CLASSES BEGIN AT CULLMAN CIVIC CENTER

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - We have all heard the phrase "laughter is the best medicine", but a new sensation has been sweeping around the globe that takes that phrase to a new level. Laughter Yoga was developed by Dr. Madan Kataria in India and has swept the globe and is now taught in 72 countries.

The idea is simple, but can have significant effects on your health and well being. The core concept of the program is to teach people breathing and laughter techniques that will help you to better oxygenate your brain, and in turn, make you feel healthier and more energetic. Sandy Seibert, instructor for the class, talked about the benefits of her class.

"Laughter Yoga has been has been around for about 19 years now," she said. "And I think the thing that is so great about it is that laughter really is very beneficial to our bodies, and it has good healing qualities."

Over the years, many studies have been performed to study the effect that laughter has on the body. The findings have shown that laughter can lower blood pressure, help with sleep, pain relief and many more benefits.

"We combine yoga breathing and laughter techniques, and people really do come out of it feeling revived and energetic. It's been one of the best things I've ever personally experienced," Seibert said.

The premise behind the laughter techniques is that we do not need comedy to laugh and reap the benefits from laughter. In fact, studies have shown that you receive the same benefits from "fake" laughter that you would if you were genuinely laughing at something humorous shown to you.

"It's based on the idea that we don't have to have comedy or humor, that we naturally know how to laugh and it's an innate instinct. What happens is, we're born knowing how to laugh and somehow we lose it," said Seibert.

"I mean children do it all the time, they do not need to be shown something funny to just laugh."

While the concept may seem strange to some, the idea and science behind the practice shows that this class is beneficial to both body and mind.

In fact, Seibert has even started classes with the elderly in local nursing homes and has seen impressive results.

"Laughter Yoga is dependable," Seibert said. "Just going through everyday life, you don't know where the next laugh is coming from and you might go a whole week without having any deep laughter. With laughter yoga, it's a dependable place to go and have it happen."

The class is held at the Cullman Civic Center on Saturdays and is funded on a donation basis, and any amount of donation is welcome.

The classes will be starting up again on August 2 at 10 a.m. For more information, please call the Cullman Civic Center at 256-734-9157.

Tips for Back to School Success

Chelsea Sparks
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CULLMAN - July is coming to a close and with August on the horizon, back to school shopping and prepping is nearly upon us. It is a bittersweet time for parents as their little ones are preparing to enter school for the first time or are going back after a summer of fun. It can also be a stressful time, and it is with that in mind that this article is offering a few tips on how to make this back to school season a little easier.

For this reporter, the hardest part of preparing for my son to get back into a school routine is the sleep schedule. Children of all ages need a solid sleep schedule to keep their minds and bodies in prime condition to learn.

This is not only true for children, but parents as well. So this year, start the school routine two to four weeks ahead of time.

Start waking yourselves up at school time and going to bed earlier now, and that first morning of school is sure to be a breeze.

Another big part of getting the kids ready for school is clothes shopping. While younger kids are not concerned with fashion, older children tend to want the latest styles. Consider taking advantage of our towns numerous and amazing consignment shops. Shops like Bubble Gum & Blue Jeans and Better than Before offer designer clothes at affordable pricing. It is a great way to get the clothes your kids want without breaking the bank.

When it comes to school supplies, shopping the sales is essential. Notebooks and pencils are cheap on their own, but when added up with all of the other supplies, things can get pricey. This is why watching out for coupons and specials from now until school time is the best plan. For even bigger savings, save your coupons, and do all of your shopping on tax-free weekend. This year's tax free weekend will be August 1-3. Yes, it will be crowded but the extra savings will be well worth the effort.

Lastly, make sure to minimize your own stresses for the first week back to school. Consider making a week's worth of freezer meals to lighten your after school load. Clean and organize problem areas in your home so that new backpacks, books, etc. are not adding to the clutter. Remember: An organized home is a happy home.

It is my hope that these tips will help you and yours have a happy and exciting back to school week.

There are plenty more things to do in preparation for school, but let this be a jumping point to get your mindset back on the education track.

POSITION AVAILABLE

Program Facilitator needed for local domestic violence intervention program.

Full time, BS degree required. Send resume to: vsoced@vsoccullman.org

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Roast: 7:00



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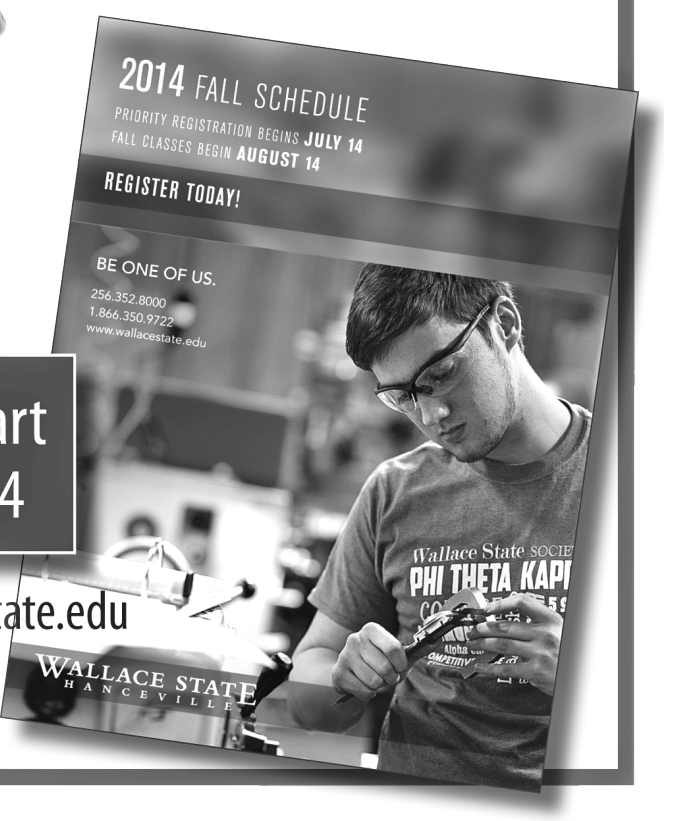
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CULLMAN COUNTY HISTORY: YOUR TOWN'S NAME MAY NOT HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THE SAME

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

If you are anything like me, you probably grew up here in Cullman and have no real clue the rich history our town has to offer. Thankfully, as an adult I have developed an insatiable desire to research all areas of history, whether it be my family tree or the community I grew up in.

As my research into Cullman County began, I found a few things that I found very interesting. Did you know that many of our towns and communities here in Cullman County originally had totally different names than they do now? It's true! For example, Vinemont was once known as Pinnacle.

In 1871, Mr. Joseph Fromhold hopped on a train in Newport, Kentucky and rode the L&N Railroad until the tracks literally ended five miles north of the unsettled city of Cullman. The name Pinnacle was given to the spot where Fromhold stopped because of its 1,100-foot elevation above sea level.

The definition of the word pinnacle is "a high, pointed piece of rock". Because of its high elevation, it's no wonder the name came to the new settlers so easily.

Pinnacle was officially renamed Vinemont on April 20, 1898 in honor of the prosperous vineyard industry that had become well known in the area.

Eventually a large winery was established in Vinemont and was a success for many years.

Simcoe was originally named by Mr. Starling Austin who was Postmaster from 1890 to 1893. Mr. Austin wanted the area to be named after himself, calling the place "Austinville". Unfortunately the postal regulations at the time did not allow the duplication of already existing names within the state. Mr. Austin suggested naming the area "Simcoe" in honor of Lake Simcoe, which is located in his native country of Ontario, Canada.

Bug Tussle was originally named Wilburn by Mr. Jesse Sandlin around the turn of the century. Mr. Sandlin was Wilburn's Postmaster when the post office was established on April 4, 1903.

That same post office was discontinued to Bremen in 1906.

The big name change happened six years later when, according to legend, local resident Charlie Campbell made an amazing discovery – one that would change things forever in the small mining and sawmill town of Wilburn.

With a love for White Lightning, good old Charlie Campbell was probably a little soused when he headed up the mountain one day.

Out of nowhere, something caught Charlie's attention and he became completely absorbed in the sight before him.

For the longest time, Charlie sat and watched a couple tumble bugs as they struggled to roll a small ball of dirt across the road.

Fascinated and easily amused, Charlie let out a big roar of laughter and announced the town should be called Bug Tussle. The more the story was repeated, the name Bug Tussle stuck.

I've mentioned Vinemont, Simcoe and Bug Tussle in this article, but there are other communities in Cullman who have had name changes over time as well.

Others have kept their original names since their humble beginnings. But there's one truly unique thing that connects them all together as one and it's the fact that they are all part of this amazing place called Cullman.

MIRRORING HISTORY: GERMAN BANK

Jessica Norrell
jessica@cullmansense.com

The historic photograph shows a street view of the German Bank (right) at the corner of First Avenue and Fourth Street Southeast prior to 1912.

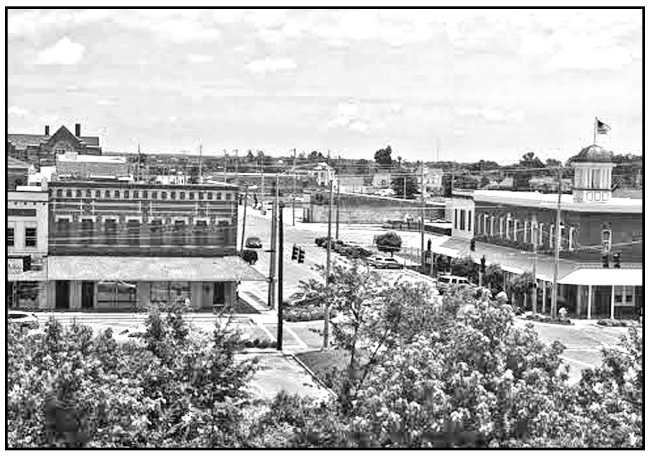
The cupola on the German Bank was constructed so people could stand at the top of the building and watch trains.

The large building to the left was at one point People's Drug Store.

A wooden platform with bales of cotton can be seen in the foreground waiting for the train.

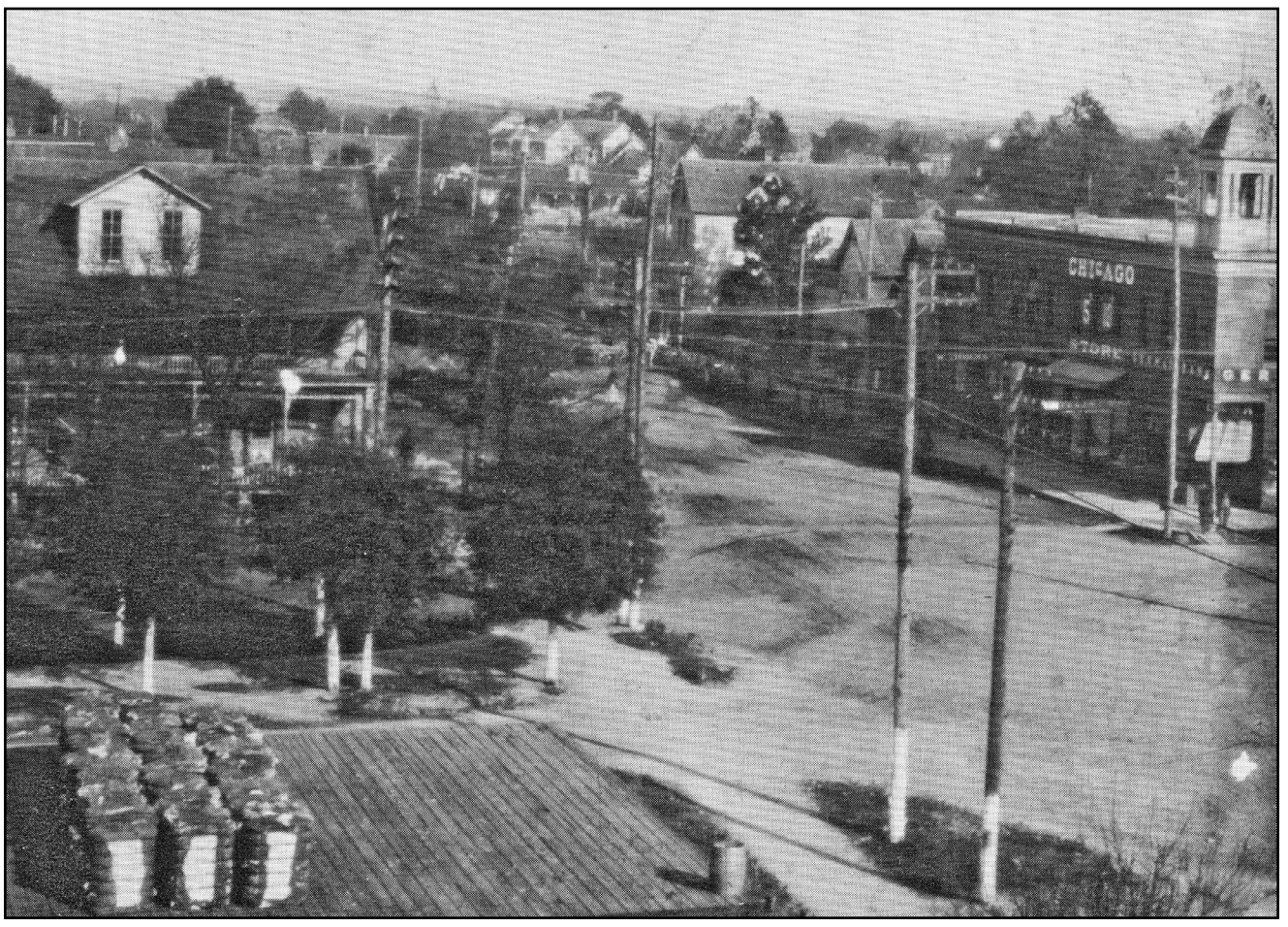
The German Bank still stands today as Mary Carter.

The building that was People's Drug Store is now gone but has been replaced by the building that houses Moe's Original BBQ and Berkeley Bob's Coffeehouse, along with several other businesses.



JESSICA NORRELL/CULLMANSENSE

» The German Bank is now home to Mary Carter.



CONTRIBUTED

» The cupola atop the German Bank on the right provided a prime location to watch trains.

DIY: Bokeh Light Shapes

Summer Crook
Contributor

Looking online, it's easy to find festive and fun images with lights in the background in various shapes, such as hearts, stars, music notes, etc. Have you ever wondered how it's done? Well, look no further. It's actually a very simple process that only takes a bit of thick, black construction paper, some tape, scissors, and shaped hole punchers. To save on costs, use a precision knife to cut the shapes instead of using various hole punchers.

It is important to note that a camera, which allows for interchangeable lenses, such as a DSLR, is required.

The cutout filters will need to be attached to the front of one of these lenses. A fast lens with a large aperture is also required to get the desired effect.

First, cut a 1 to 2-inch wide strip of the construction paper to a length long enough to wrap the girth of the lens, and tape the paper ends together, creating a tube.

This is the hood of the filter that will keep the filter in place while shooting.

Next, cut a circle out of the construction paper with the same diameter as the tube that was just created. This will be the bokeh filter that will cover the lens' glass and create those beautiful shapes in our images.

Now we need to decide what shapes we want our lights to be in our images.

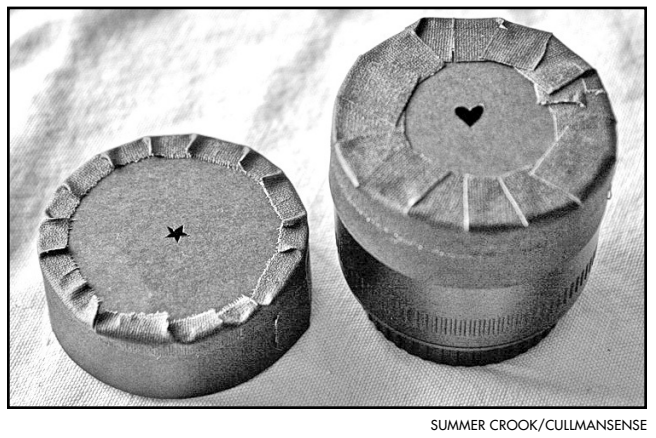
There are many different possibilities as far as shapes that can be made. The key is to make the cutouts very small, about 15 to 20 millimeters in diameter.

Also, make sure the cutout is in the very center of the paper circle. It is recommended to sketch the desired shape of the cutout on the paper first and then use the precision knife to cut along the design to create the opening. Be sure to keep the edges of the cutout smooth, or the final images will show the fraying of the cutout, if any.

With the cutout complete, tape the cutout filter to the tube we first created.

Now we can slide the filter on and off of the lens. Practice using the filter by taking pictures of smaller lit items, such as a string of lights, candles, etc.

This filter won't work on large light sources, such as windows or large light fixtures.



SUMMER CROOK/CULLMANSENSE

» You can make your own simple bokeh filters with black construction paper, tape, scissors, and hole punchers.

Have fun creating a variety of cutouts and experimenting with different light sources, and you will be amazed at the unique images you will capture.

Backpacks (from Front)

to the church and enjoy the fun as well. This year's Family Fest was held Thursday through Saturday night.

"The event was spread out over three nights of kid centered services, which were led by our children's Pastors, Dennis and Amy Shockley," explained Dwayne Harbison, lead pastor. "Then on Saturday night, at the end of the program, we gave away free backpacks to all the school age kids who attended. Each backpack we gave away was filled with school supplies, and the backpacks were separated by age groups so that each child received the appropriate things needed for the school year."

"This is our fourth year to do the backpack give away," Harbison continued. "It was born out of a desire to help local families with their back to school expenses. The program has really grown quickly," he chuckled. "The first year we gave away 150 backpacks, this year we gave away 312," he said with a big smile on his face.

Family Fest is a high-energy program with lights, music, drama, etc. This year's theme was Game Show Mania and each night was filled with special versions of the old game shows from TV - and lots of prizes. Thursday's game was "Price is Right", Friday's game was "Let's Make A Deal", and Saturday's game was "Minute to Win It". The games were played with added religious lessons and the children had a blast.

With humble beginnings, Cathedral of Praise started out with 20 members four years ago. Today the church has a very active and growing congregation of over 200 families. Small children and babies fill the establishment and are proof that God is certainly at work as the church grows.

This statement from the church's says it all. "At Cathedral of Praise, our doors are wide open to people from all backgrounds, regardless of where they are on their spiritual journey. What people usually notice first about us is the life-giving nature of our ministry. We want to be the kind of church that's described in the Bible, where there's relevant teaching, heart-felt worship, honest friendships, constant prayer, and compassionate care for those in need. In short, we'd like to have the kind of contagious Christianity that can influence and encourage the entire community, one life at a time."

If you or anyone you know would like more information about Cathedral of Praise Church of God, feel free to visit their website at www.cathedralofpraisecog.tv or give them a call at 256-737-7291. All are welcome to visit the church during any services they offer. The church is located at 14142 AL Hwy 157 in Vinemont.





SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

» Renditions of classic television game shows such as "Price is Right", "Let's Make A Deal", and "Minute to Win It" not only provided fun for children and adults, but also taught religious lessons.

Orchard (from Front)

"We planted the first original 300 trees in 1985," explained owner Linda Steele.

"We started out with just two varieties, but we now have over 20," she giggled. "We started growing apples because we simply love apples. We didn't know what we were doing back then, but when we do something, we do it big, which is why we started out with the 300 trees."

Once the apples started coming in, the next thing to do was figure out what to do with all of them.

The family had more than they could eat, so they made their delicious apples available to the public.

"In the beginning, we sold apples out of the back of our truck in the front yard," Steele continued. "Then we built a building to sell them from. We also went to Birmingham and sold them at market."

Over time, a lovely gift shop, as well as a bakery was added to the property. Now anything and everything apple related is available for purchase.

But apples aren't the only thing Steele Orchard is famous for. They are also well known for their delicious peaches. They currently have six different varieties of peaches available, and each kind is juicy and delicious.





SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

» After beginning with 300 apple trees whose fruits were sold from the back of a truck in 1985, Steele Orchard now offers an assortment of apple and peach related items and provides multiple services to the community.

Like an apple or peach, Steele Orchard is a well-rounded place. Not only do they offer fresh produce, homemade goodies, and apple shaped souvenirs, but they also provide many different services to the community. Depending on the time of year, Steele's has something unique and interesting for everyone.

"Well, in the springtime, we sell trees and we have people that come out and teach you how to take care of them," Steele said with a smile. "We also do school tours here. Senior citizen groups come and buy apples from us and if they call ahead and let us know how many people are coming, we usually make them a batch of apple pie ice cream to try. In the fall, during the whole month of October, we do something called the Boogie Man's Barn. It is a spook house that has a vortex tunnel and then a maze that you go through. You also get to sit in the Boogeyman's closet and things happen to you while you are sitting in there," she giggled and winked.

With so much to offer, there's no wonder Steele Orchard is considered to be the apple of Cullman's eye. If you or someone you know loves apples and peaches, have them visit the fine folks at Steele's today.

They are located at 1695 County Road 1141 in Cullman. You can give them a call at 256-734-5249 or visit their website at www.steeleorchard.com.

Quick and Easy Ways to Improve Your Snapshots: Quality of Light

Summer Crook
Contributor

It's understandable that a lot of people aren't interested in becoming professional photographers but want to take interesting and visually appealing pictures of family, friends and everyday moments that are worth capturing. While professional gear certainly does help, there are simple ways to take an average snapshot and turn it into a more visually dynamic image. We will be discussing three ways to help take those images to the next level with just a little bit of practice and forethought. For this article, we will focus on paying attention to light.

With point and shoot cameras or even DSLR cameras, there is typically a pop-up flash that most people rely on to properly expose their images, without giving much thought to the unflattering quality of light it produces. This is what typically gives an image that "snapshot" look. So how do we combat this problem? Simply learn to read light.

It's actually a combination of reading light and shadow. The absence of light is where a subject gets interesting. This shadow is what adds dimension. If I were to take a picture of a white piece of paper lying flat on a table, there isn't much interest there because there isn't any depth. However, if I were to crinkle and fold the paper, there would be dimension. That depth and dimension is only readable to the eye with light and shadow created by the creases and folds where light cannot reach.

However, having light and shadow isn't enough. We need to look at the quality of the light. There are a lot of factors that determine quality of light, but all we need to understand is hard light verses soft light.

Hard light will create hard shadow lines, and soft light will create soft shadows or soft transitions from light to shadow. The latter is typically more appealing to the eye. So we can train ourselves to notice quality of light by the way it falls on people or subjects, and this will help when getting ready to take a picture. If possible, move the subject to a place that is nicely lit with even light that creates soft shadows and avoid uneven or dappled light. Dappled light happens when the subject is hit with light coming through objects like leafy tree branches. It creates spots of light and shadow over the subject and isn't flattering.

Many professionals will use modified light, such as strobes, flashes, continuous lights, etc. to create the light they want. They often use modifiers with natural light as well such as scrims and reflectors. So, how does the everyday snapshot taker create beautiful light without these professional items? In actuality, modifiers are all around us. The most common modifiers of light are clouds. They are basically just big diffusers that can create beautifully soft light.

If there are no clouds, moving into the shade will help diffuse the light as well. Shaded pictures can often be a bit dull, but if it's all you have to work with other than the blinding sun, it's definitely a better alternative for a more flattering image. If you happen to have one of those metallic window visors for your car, that can be a great reflector to bounce sunlight on your shaded subject as well.

If you are indoors and want to take a picture, move your subject near a window that has a nice flood of light coming in. This is another diffused light source that acts as a large softbox and can provide gorgeous, soft light on your subject. Try placing the subject with the window to their side and moving the subject slightly to the back of the window. Having the window between you and the subject will allow the light to actually hit more of the face, whereas placing the subject right in the middle of the light from the window would actually cut the light hitting their face in half.

The bigger the light source, the softer the light. Also, the closer the light source, the softer it will be as well.

Again, experimenting with and watching how light affects the items it hits will help train the eye to see light quality and improve the quality of your pictures overall.

By moving the subjects to more flattering light or finding ways to modify light with things around us, we can avoid those pop-up flashes and that unflattering snapshot look in images.



THANK YOU CULLMAN!



I am humbled by the support I have received during my campaign.

I want to take an opportunity and thank the citizens of Cullman County for placing their trust and confidence in me.

Thank You,
Matt Gentry

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.

J.P. LaGanke MS Support Group Meeting
All interested are invited to attend the monthly (3rd Monday each month) group meeting of the Joanne P. LaGanke MS Support Group. The evening starts at 5 p.m. with light finger snacks for attendees. At 6 p.m. a program on heat intolerance will be offered by Carol Groce and all those affected through MS are invited and most welcome to attend these monthly support meetings.

Upcoming Bosom Buddies Support Group Meeting
The Bosom Buddies Support Group offers support to individuals affected by Breast Cancer. The group will hold its next meeting at 6 p.m. in Cullman Regional Medical Centers Depot Room in the Community Education Center located in Professional Office Building 2, located at 1890 AL Highway 157, Cullman, AL 35058. For more information, contact Nurse Navigation at (256) 737-2588. For a complete list of upcoming support groups and events at Cullman Regional Medical Center visit the online Calendar of Events at www.crmchospital.com.

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.

'Summer Program' at St. Paul's Lutheran School
St. Paul's Lutheran School is offering a 'Summer Program' for ages PK 3 - 6th grade. The program started May 27th and runs until August 1. Daily hours are from 7:45 a.m. until 3 p.m. There will be a 'childwatch' session from 3 p.m. until 5 p.m. The fee of $120.00 a week includes weekly field trips and daily snacks. Additional information available by contacting 256-734-6580.

Therapeutic Bowling for Those with Disabilities
All individuals with disabilities and their immediate family are invited to take part in the Cullman Parks & Recreation's Therapeutic Bowling program tonight from 6 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. at the Cullman Bowling Center. Cost is $4.00 per bowler and lanes must be reserved by 4 pm on Tuesday. Please call Rhonda Davis, 256-962-2208 or Hollie Guiterrez at 256-734-9157.

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.

Good Hope Farmer's Market
Good Hope Farmers' Market is now open for local farmers to sell their produce from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. on Thursdays. This market is located in Good Hope's Hathcock Park. Everyone welcome to shop.

'Root Ministry' at Abundant Grace Church
There is a weekly meeting each Thursday night starting at 6 p.m. 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.

Dive-In: "The Lego Movie"
Cullman Park & Recreation Department once again is sponsoring their 'DIVE-IN" movies at the Cullman Wellness and Aquatic Center. Bring your bathing suit and towel and get ready to see 'THE LEGO MOVIE' tonight. Cost is FREE for members and $5.00 for non-members.

Dulcimer Classes
The Cullman City Parks & Recreation Senior Spirit Program is offering Dulcimer classes beginning July 11th. Classes will be held at the Donald E. Green Sr. Center on Fridays at 1 p.m. and taught by Craig Mann. Cost for the class is $10 for an hour. For more information or to register for the class contact Angie Jochum or Catherine Hasenbein at 256-734-4803.

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!

Good Hope Farmer's Market
Good Hope Farmers' Market is now open for local farmers to sell their produce from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. on Saturdays. This market is located in Good Hope's Hathcock Park. Everyone welcome to shop.

Annual Parent-Child Golf Scramble at Cullman Golf Course
All golfing families are invited to take part in the Annual Parent-Child Golf Scramble which will be at Cullman Golf Course this weekend. A $140.00 registration fee per team and includes green fees, cart fees, prizes and daily mulligan per golfer. For additional info please call the golf shop at 256-739-2386. The family that plays golf together has a great time on the links!

2014 Chesley Oaks Open Golf Championship
All golfers are invited to participate in the 2014 Chesley Oaks Open Golf Championship. Entry fee - $135.00 - includes 2 rounds of tournament golf, practice round for cart fee only, lunch each day and a tee gift. This 36-hole game will be flighted after Day 1. Top 20 and ties will make up the championship flight for the final round. Top 5 finishers and the 'B' flight winner will receive prizes for their efforts! To register, to request tee times or partners for the first day and for more info please call 800-775-8938 or 256-796-9808. Come on out and take part in a great weekend of golf - who knows, you might end up with the 'winning title'!

Laughter Yoga at the Cullman Civic Center
Everyone is invited to take part in 'Laughter Yoga' classes each Saturday morning starting at 10 a.m. Donations accepted but no set fee is charged. Come start your weekend out with some great 'laughs'! Please call 256-734-9157 for additional information.

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.

Domestic Violence Survivor Support Group
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Cornerstone Revival Ladies Prayer Meeting
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Aqua Zumba Classes at CWAC
Everyone is invited to take part in the Aqua Zumba classes that are offered each Monday at Cullman Wellness & Aquatic Center beginning at 7 p.m. in the center's indoor pool. Please call 256-775-7946 for additional information!

Looking Ahead

Murphree Reunion
The descendants of Solomon and May Elam Murphree, Blount County pioneers, will hold their annual reunion on Saturday, August 16th at the Porter Center, at Palisades Park, near Oneonta, beginning at 10:00 a.m. A covered dish lunch will be shared at noon. For more information, call Rex Murphree at 205-237-0969 or Stan Murphree at 205-901-4505.

This Week in Local Entertainment

Sponsored by Busy Bee Café

Monday, July 21

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

Tuesday, July 22

- Eat on the Street at the Festhalle from 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
- Spirit Night at Jim 'N Nick's from 12-8 p.m.
- Square Dancing Lessons at East Point Community Center from 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- Pickin' Under the Pavilion at the Senior Center at 6:30 p.m.
- Trivia Night at Rodney G's at 7 p.m.

Wednesday, July 23

- Story Time at the Hanceville Library at 10 a.m.
- Karaoke night at Grumpy's Italian Grill at 7 p.m.

Thursday, July 24

- Eat on the Street at the Festhalle from 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
- Free Community Concert at Heritage Park from 6:30-8 p.m.
- Ladies' Night at Rodney G's at 8 p.m. Half off drinks for ladies
- Trivia Night at Rodney G's at 7 p.m.
- Karaoke night at Cadillac Ron's
- Bike Night at Grumpy's Italian Grill
- "The Lego Movie" at Dive in Movies at The Aquatic Center at 8:30 p.m.

Friday, July 25

- "The Lego Movie" at Dive in Movies at The Aquatic Center at 7:30 p.m.
- Ladies' Night at Rodney G's at 8 p.m. Half off drinks for ladies

Saturday, July 26

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

Sunday, July 27

- Daystar Church Kidfest at 6:30 p.m.

Busy Bee Café
Try our German Food!

GROW YOUR BUSINESS



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For more information on our great advertising rates, please give me a call at 256-297-1408 or you can reach me through e-mail at shawn@cullmansense.com.

BEAT THE HEAT: INDOOR IDEAS TO SPARK THE FUN IN A LAND OF A/C

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - There are some days during summer where the heat is just too hot to handle. When the temperature in Alabama reaches 95 degrees, you can bet the heat index and humidity will make it feel like 110. So what are you to do when you want to go, but can't beat the heat?

The first on our list of fun indoor activities is a simple one that can run some energy out of the kids, and allow you to sit back.

The "Air it Out" room at FUNZONE in Cullman is a great place for family fun. An assortment of inflatable slides, bounce houses, and obstacle courses will give your kids lots of high energy entertainment in a safe place and give you a chance to relax. An hour of play is $6.45 per kid.

If you are looking for some great deals for yourself, or the kids, that is a little more relaxed, then look no further than the Carmike 10. While normally this is a more expensive option, the Carmike Cinema in Cullman is offering some discount deals that can provide great entertainment at reasonable pricing. Koneisha Timmons, a manager at the Carmike, tells why the deals going on are the best around.

"Our Stimulus Tuesday deal is a great deal where we offer $2 drinks, popcorn, and small candies, or $2 off our combos," Timmons said.

"The best time to come is from 4-5:30 p.m. where tickets are only $5.75 unless it's 3D, and then it is $8.25."

She went on to talk about their summer movie days for kids.

"On Thursdays, at 10 in the morning, we show older kid's movies," said Timmons.

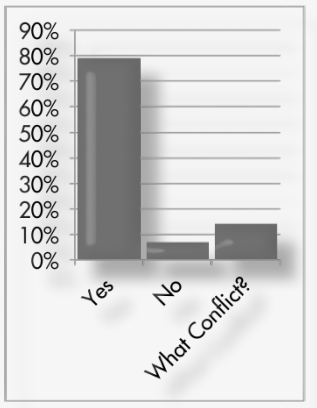
"This week coming up is the "Lego Movie". It is $4 to get in for all ages and includes a small popcorn and drink with the admission, and it is just a great way to come together and watch a great movie."

For those who are looking to do something that is free for you and the kids, then why not try the local library? Tons of fun, entertaining books and a new, stimulating space to read to them can turn a boring afternoon into an educational adventure. Let the kids pick out some of their favorite books and have story time with them, or let them lead story time and read the book to you. It's calm, fun, and, best of all, free for everyone.

There are lots of great activities to do inside and outside the home, without having to sweat through it. From arts and crafts to movies at home or at the theater, the heat doesn't have to stop you from having a fun bonding experience with your family.

Poll

Are you concerned with the conflicts currently taking place in the Middle East?



This Week's Poll

Do you prefer cooler July temperatures?

Vote Today at CullmanSense.com/Poll

JAY'S LAST RIDE

Texting and Driving Prevention Rally to be Held at Courthouse

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Texting and driving has become a huge problem throughout the country. Many states are now banning the practice and issuing tickets to violators. This, like any traffic law, can only do so much to stop the practice.

Unfortunately, some do not realize the danger until they have caused harm to themselves or someone else.

On Sunday, July 27, an event is being held to shed some light on the tragic consequences of texting and driving.

"Jay's Last Ride" will be held at the Cullman County Courthouse from 7-9 p.m. and is free to everyone. A candlelight vigil, a pledge against cell phone use behind the wheel, and a "cell-free" walk for safety will be held.

There will also be a pre-rally event from 2-5 p.m. at Jay and Suzette Kendall's family place, J&S Karaoke. Everyone is asked to bring a covered dish to "give thanks and count blessings". This event will be a great eye opener for our community and will help bring the very real message to everyone that texting and driving can have dire consequences.

For more information on the rally, please e-mail Suzette Kendall, rally director, at SuzetteKendall@aol.com

Area Film "Fishers of Men" Looks Online for Funding

Kate Mullaney
kate@cullmansense.com

FLORENCE - UNA student Derek McClanahan is raising funds for his upcoming student film: "Fishers of Men". This class project is a huge undertaking and vital to the future careers of McClanahan and his fellow students.

"Fishers of Men" is a story about a man from the modern South whose virtuous life is shaken following the death of his son.

As he struggles to stay true to his values, he suddenly finds an opportunity to get the peace of mind he needs.

"The message of the film is that it's easy to lose yourself if you allow yourself to be controlled by anger," stated McClanahan. "Forgiveness, as difficult as it may be to show, is freeing."

McClanahan, wearing many hats, is the writer/director/co-producer of this film, along with the help of several of his peers.

"It's primarily a class project, but we're also looking to enter it into film festivals," stated McClanahan.

"We just want to get our work out there."

McClanahan is using Kickstarter to fund this project.

The goal is $1,200 and must be raised by August 6, 2014.

So far he has raised $510.

McClanahan is passionate about this film and urges anyone interested in the project to visit his site soon and support this project.

"We are students," he said.

"We're trying to jumpstart our careers. We want to have something to show so we can get our careers going. Most people don't put this much effort into their senior projects, but we really want to make something good."

There's a little more than two weeks left to give, so be sure to check out McClanahan's Kickstarter page at www.kickstarter.com/projects/1240972514/fishers-of-men.

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Auto-Owners Insurance
Life Home Car Business



cullman city parks & recreation

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

www.cullmanrecreation.org
256-734-9157

- **EvaBank Midnight Run** registration is NOW OPEN at the Cullman Civic Center, all EvaBank locations, and online at active.com. T-shirts and goodie bags will be given to all runners as well as a chance to win great door prizes like a flat screen TV, an iPad, and more. Winners receive $250 cash, masters $200. Medals to top 3 in each age division. Proceeds benefit the programs of the parks and recreation department to better our community. Call 256-734-9157 for details.
- **FREE Community Concert Series** will start at Heritage Park on Thursday July 10 and be held each Thurs. through July 31. Concerts will be from 6:30-8pm each week and feature country, blue grass, and more. This week's concert will be Blackrock Station, a bluegrass band.
- **Eat on the Street** will take place each Thursday in July at the Festhalle Farmer's Market from 11-1pm. Come eat, shop, and relax with us and support your local farmers! This week's featured food truck will be Devil Dawg's.
- **Fall Baseball & Softball Registration** will be August 1-20 at the Cullman Civic Center for ages 7-8 and 9-12. $90 per individual or $400 per team. Call 256-734-9157 or 256-739-9931 for more info.
- **Coed Kickball League** registration will be August 1-20 at Heritage Park. Teams will be $350 to register. Season will include 12 games and a single elimination tournament. Call 739-9931 for details.
- **Fall Men's League & Coed Softball** registration will be August 1-20 at Heritage Park. Cost to register is $400 per team. 12 games with a single elimination tournament. Call 256-739-9931 for more details.
- **Laughter Yoga** is a great way to stay in shape, relax, and enjoy a good laugh! This class is held Saturdays at the Cullman Civic Center at 10am Saturday. Donations will be taken, but no charge will be made. Call 734-9157 for details.
- **Nia Dance & Ageless Grace Fitness Classes:** Includes yoga stretching, anti-aging tips, and more with instructor Ann Caretti. Nia class is held Tuesdays at 10:00am at the civic center, and Ageless Grace is held on Thursdays at 5:30pm.
- **Monday Fundays** are held each Monday at CWAC, $5 admission per person for open swim, games, and more. 6pm to close. Call 775-SWIM.

What's Online

Good Hope Presents WilcoHess Travel Stop

The city of Good Hope is proud to premier its new and nice truck stop. This addition is located just off the 304 exit and features a Wendy's, a WilcoHess Travel Center and a Dunkin' Donuts Express.



qrne.ws/228

West Point, Cold Springs, and Vinemont take to the field for 7-on-7

Throwing the football will be part of the game plan in the upcoming season for the West Point Warriors, Cold Springs Eagles and Vinemont Eagles. But all three local teams will likely keep the passing game to a minimum.

qrne.ws/229

A Taste of the Gulf Comes to Cullman

The people of Cullman and surrounding areas can now enjoy fresh seafood – right in their own homes. Scales Seafood Market, located at 221A 2nd Avenue SE in Cullman, has brought the wonderful flavors of the Gulf Coast to our front doors and our tables.

qrne.ws/230

ARTISTIC AMBITIONS: LOCAL ARTIST JUSTIN SHUBERT IMPRESSES WITH UNIQUE PIECES

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com



CONTRIBUTED

» Justin Shubert discovered his passion for art after having to take a drawing class in college and now offers a host of services to local businesses.

CULLMAN – Over the past few years, Cullman has seen significant progress in bringing more art and culture to our great county. Art galleries, festivals, and shows have opened many doors for local artists to spread their wings. Justin Shubert, 29, may be a young up and comer in our area, but his ambition is leading him to big things.

In downtown Cullman, Shubert has been working out of his studio, LionheARTS, for about a year now. In that time, Shubert has been working on the many different media and art projects on his own, but has a bigger vision for the space.

"My vision is for lionheARTs to be a hub for anything that has to do with art," Shubert said. "Of course, I do my drawing and painting, but I am interested in doing graphic design, photography, and video work for businesses around the city."

Shubert has been working with several local businesses and helping them to add a little extra something that helps draw the public's eye. He said that he also hopes to expand his videography portfolio in the future.

"It's really fun to incorporate my different talents into what I am doing," said Shubert. "I recently designed a logo for a new business in town and then hand painted it on their store window."

It is hard to put this artist into any specific category because his talents vary widely. A box, however, seems to be the last place this artist wants to be in.

"If it has anything to do with art, I do it," he said. "Drawing, painting, graphic design, photography, video, I do it all!"

While some artists discovered their talents at an early age, Shubert says that a lot of his talents came after he graduated from high school.

"I grew up playing music and was focused on that," Shubert said. "I didn't really get into art until after high school. I decided to go to college for graphic design and I had to take a drawing class. I realized that I was pretty good at it and I fell in love with it and I haven't stopped."

Since Shubert has opened his studio space, he has decided to commit himself fully to his work there and in the community.

He currently does a lot of work for Desperation Church, where he attends.

"Aside from my studio, my passion is serving Jesus," he said. "I spend all of my free time doing graphic design and video production at Desperation Church. God has called me to be an artist and specifically to do it here in Cullman, Alabama. I love this city!"

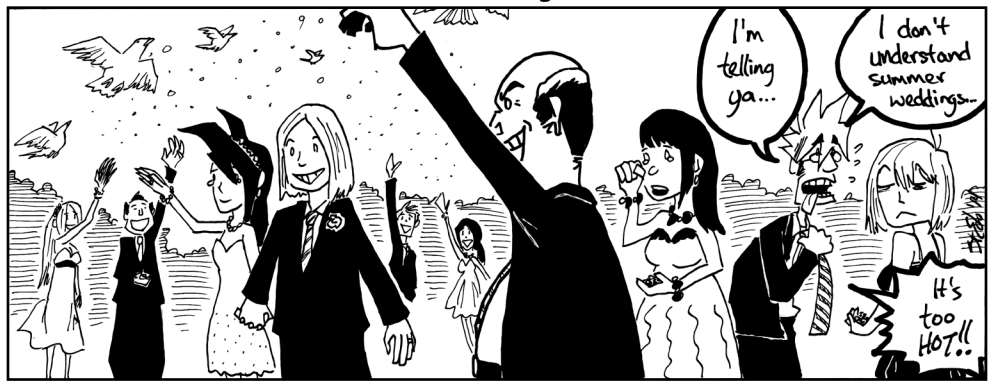
While Shubert has not been in the business of art for very long, his talent and work speak for themselves. His eye for color and finding the beauty and art in everything around him will really bring a fresh look and great flair to any business he works with.

"I just like how you can see art in everything. You might not know much about art history, but I think everyone is an expert in art. Our talents are art, our passions are art, and our lives are all works of art. People say that beauty is in the eye of the beholder. It's true! We make the things we love beautiful. It doesn't matter what anyone else thinks, only what you think."

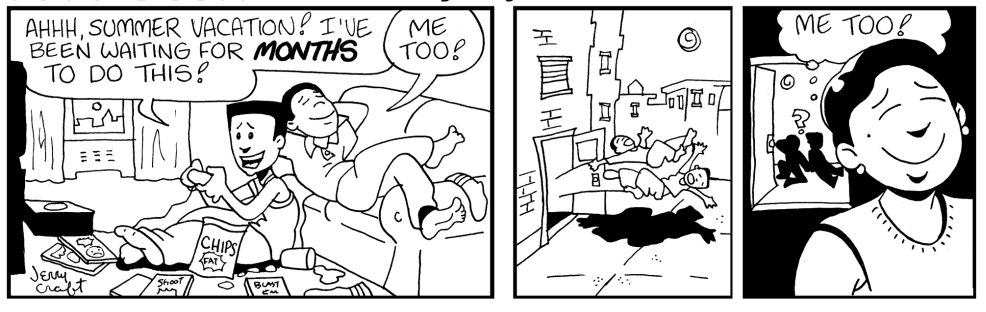
To contact Justin Shubert, you can contact him through e-mail at JustinShubertArt@gmail.com or give him a call at 256-620-5530.

Comics

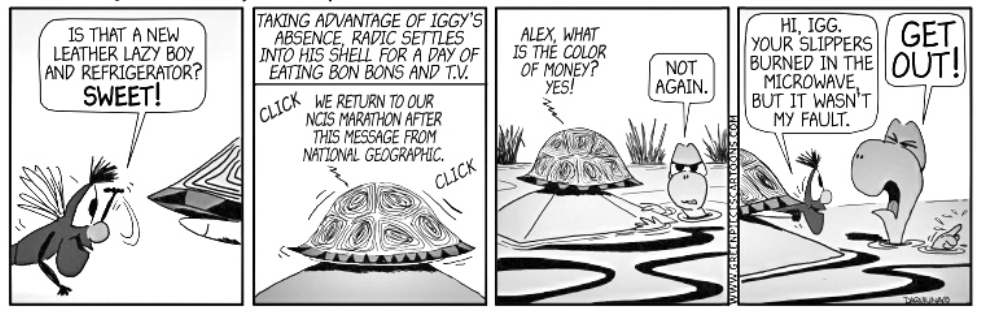
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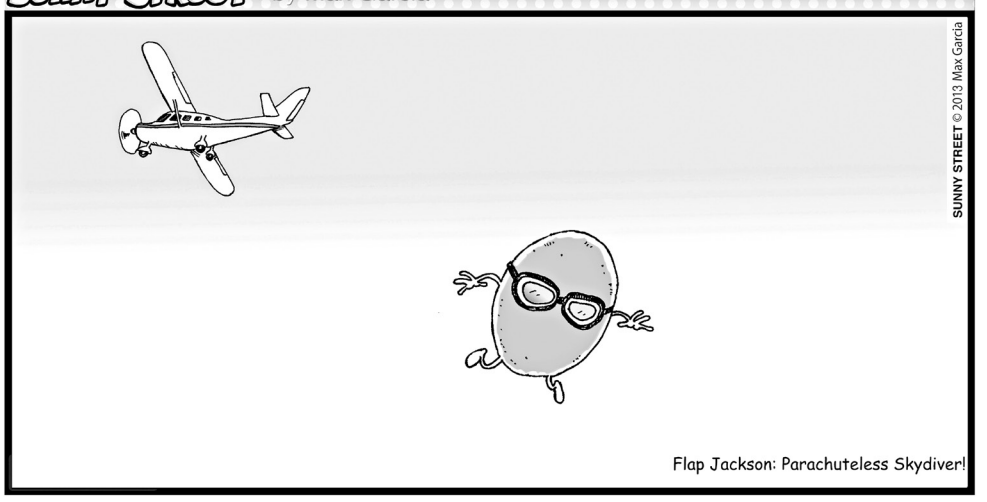
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SUNNY STREET by Max Garcia



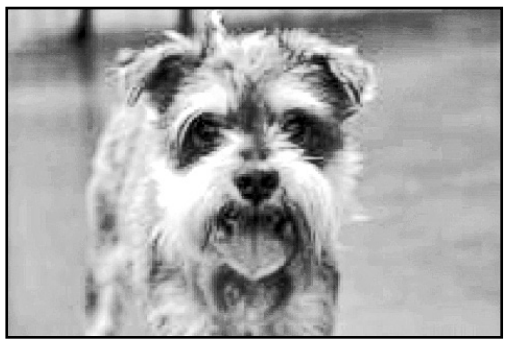
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Pets of the Week

Buster

Hello! My name is Buster, and I am about 5 years old. I am a Schnauzer, and I currently weigh 19 lbs.

I am spirited and enjoy company. I'm ready for my new forever companion and best friend to rescue me.



Rusty

Hello! My name is Rusty, and I am about 1 years old. I am believed to be a Great Pyrenees mix, and I currently weigh 83 lbs.

I was a stray but am now available for adoption. I am full of life and love to play. I'm ready for my new forever home and family to come adopt me.



ADOPT THESE PETS TODAY

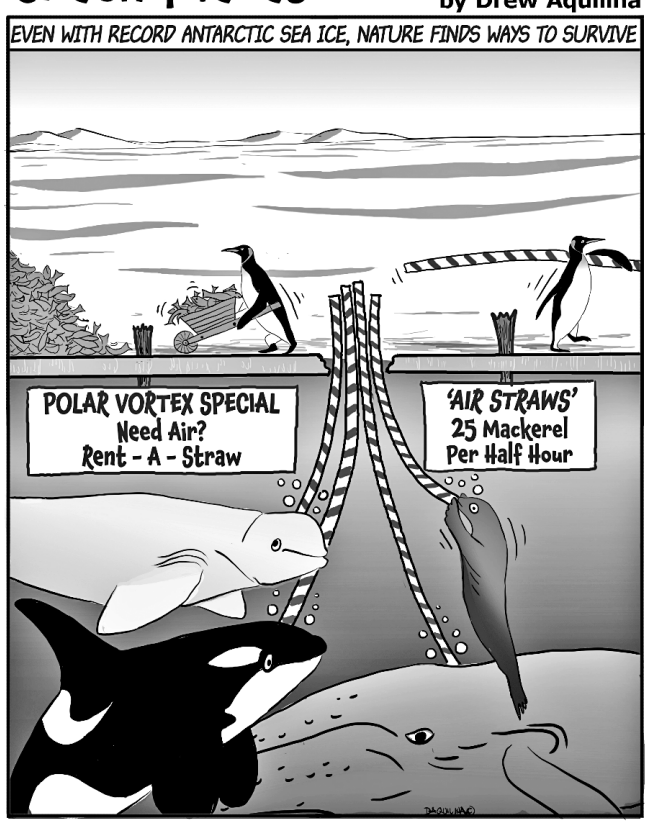
Both of these dogs have an adoption fee of $90 that will include their general exam at the Vet, vaccines, wormer, rabies shot, microchip, spay/neuter, and free 45 days of pet health insurance. Pet Depot will give you a bag of food (you pay taxes) as their way of supporting adoption.

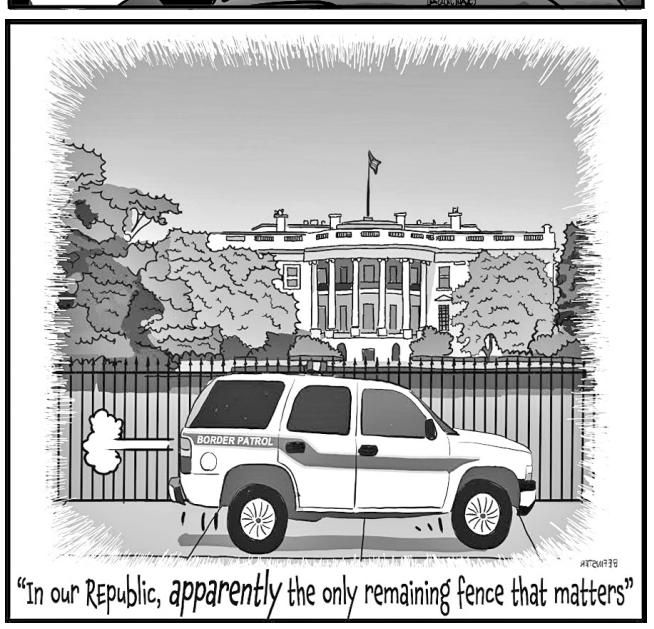
If you know the owner of either dog or if you are interested in adopting one of the dogs, please call 256-734-5448 or come by the Animal Shelter.

Editorial Cartoons

Green Pieces®

by Drew Aquilina







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OPINION

IN GAZA, US CITIZENS ARE PAYING ISRAEL'S TAB

Wim Laven, M.S.
PeaceVoice

A riveting letter is making its rounds from Dr. Mads Gilbert, a Norwegian doctor volunteering in Palestine. In it, Dr. Gilbert describes his first-hand account of Israel's boots on the ground in Gaza - the sounds of F16s, drones and Apache helicopters, "So much made and paid in and by US," blended with the screams, the smells, the sight of shivers and blood. He pleads, "Mr. Obama - do you have a heart? I invite you - spend one night - just one night - with us in Shifa ... I am convinced, 100 percent, it would change history."

Like President Obama, I'm complicit in this campaign of aggression in Gaza. We all are. The U.S. is using our money to pay for Israel's party of death.

U.S. taxes are supporting $3.1 billion in Foreign Military Financing to Israel in 2014. Thursday, July 17th, 2014, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved $621.6 million in U.S. funding for the U.S.-Israel Missile Defense Program. According to the Congressional Research Service's April 11th, 2014 report, "U.S. Foreign Aid to Israel," American taxpayers give Israel's military campaigns $9.9 million per day - $121 billion in assistance to date.

This money is paying for the destruction of innocence - my tax dollars at work in the massacre of precious children, including a five-month-old baby. I will not be complicit in these crimes against humanity as they're disguised as self-defense.

It's a broken record; we've heard the lines and the lies before: "We're only defending ourselves." This timeless justification for violence has always failed the people.

Like Hermann Goering, founder of the Gestapo, voiced at the Nuremberg Trials, "Naturally the common people don't want war ... Voice or no voice, the people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is tell them they are being attacked, and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger. It works the same in any country."

Despite the lessons we've learned since Nuremberg, it also appears to work in any era – so long as we allow it. Let's end this great delusion that serves to justify violence and pad the wallets of wartime elites.

What is happening in the conflict is not self-defense. The best defense for the people is an end to violence, which many believe could be achieved by returning to the 1967 borders, allowing refugees of the Nakba to return home and making honest attempts at collaboration toward resolution and reconciliation. Neither Israel's nor Hamas' strategies are directed toward peaceful resolution. Both target and terrorize innocent populations, and any use of violence to achieve political goals is morally wrong. I dare say that the greatest proof that peace is possible is that the war profiting elites are working so hard and spending so much money – our tax dollars – to oppose it.

I will not lose hope, however. More and more of us are speaking out about the abuse of our tax dollars and resisting paying war taxes, such as the National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee and War Resisters League. And I implore all of us to join these efforts. Because it's unlikely that President Obama will take up Dr. Gilbert's offer to spend a night in Palestine, otherwise things might be drastically different: "Nobody with a heart and power could ever walk away from a night in Shifa without being determined to end the slaughter of the Palestinian people ... The rivers of blood will keep running the coming night. I can hear they have tuned their instruments of death. Please. Do what you can. This, this cannot continue."

OPINION

WAR JOURNALISM LEADS THE BLEEDING IN GAZA

Erin Niemela
PeaceVoice

As Israel's boots hit the ground in Gaza, Operation War Journalism rages on. Both Arab and Israeli war journalists weaponize rhetoric: False dichotomies (do we bomb or do nothing?) and a pro-violence worldview, among other deadly bullets. War journalism sells violent conflict – "if it bleeds, it leads" – and we're buying it. The violence in Gaza is partially a result of decades of media-distributed war products made from state-provided materials. War journalists escalate and prolong violent conflict. Their reporting choices, whether conscious or not, are harmful to citizens on all sides of violent conflicts, the Gaza crisis included.

Fortunately, violence isn't the only product on the market. "To say that violence is the only thing that sells is to insult humanity," Prof. Johan Galtung said his 2000 essay, "The Task of Peace Journalism." Peace journalism, Galtung's conception of the 70s, is defined as "when editors and reporters make choices – about what to report, and how to report it – that create opportunities for society at large to consider and to value nonviolent responses to conflict." Peace journalism insulates journalists from war propaganda by avoiding false dichotomies, highlighting nonviolent options and making other positive peace reporting choices. For the immediate cynics: Peace does, in fact, sell. Conflict & Communication Online studies in 2005 and 2006, by Wilhem Kempf and Monika Sphors, respectively, showed audiences accepted peace journalism articles no less, and even more, than traditional war journalism articles on the same issues.

The photo: A grieving Palestinian woman, wailing toward the sky. The headline: "Gaza Under Siege: Naming the Dead." Al-Jazeera's regularly updated webpage lists the names and ages of the now-285 Palestinian victims in Gaza. In a 2013 study on Arab news framing of the 2008-2009 Gaza conflict, author Mohamad Hamas Elmasry and colleagues found that some Arab news networks regularly framed Palestinians as victims of Israeli aggression, showed images of Palestinian grief and included names and ages for Palestinian victims more than that of Israeli victims. In fairness to Al-Jazeera, two Israeli victims' names and ages – the only Israeli deaths, so far – sit below the list. But the names aren't meant to provide balance or personalize those deaths. They're meant to dichotomize between good and evil and provoke the question: Whose side are you on? With victimization comes demonization – the "evil" side is implied and violence against evil is culturally justified.

For Israeli news, it's the same story. In an extensive 2004 study on audience effects from news of Israeli-Palestinian conflicts, "Bad News from Israel," Greg Philo and Mike Berry observed that participants identified more with the side where violence was presented as justifiable. Words like "retaliation" for Israel's military operations provided this justification. Palestinians were presented as having "started it."

A July 18th article from The Times of Israel on the Gaza invasion is a case in point. The title: "20 Hamas fighters killed, 13 captured in first hours of ground offensive." With violence in the headline, the lead justifies: "IDF says soldiers in Gaza destroy 21 rocket launchers, find several tunnel openings; Eitan Barak, 21, from Herzliya, is first IDF fatality; 80 rockets fired at Israel." Dangerous weapons, nefarious tunnels and an Israeli death are just the facts on the ground and they happen to provide justification.

Yet, there are other facts, such as in a curious blurb near the bottom: "Gaza health officials said at least 20 Palestinians have been killed since the ground operation began, including three teenage siblings killed by shrapnel from a tank shell attack. It was not immediately clear if the 17 terrorists killed by the IDF were among the casualties reported by Gaza authorities." Peace journalism refrains from emphasizing our facts while marginalizing their facts, and names "evil-doers" on all sides.

Reporting nonviolent options means sourcing peacebuilders, like the Christian Peacemaker Teams that work with locals to build nonviolent, Palestinian-led, grassroots resistance. Or Gush Salom – Jewish-Israelis using direct action to stop the occupation. Any respectable reporter can find a peacebuilder to quote, and a balanced, impartial report on Gaza depends on including the voices of peace.

Traditional war journalists support perpetual violence – their bread and butter. Yet, reporters could choose to support perpetual peace and still maintain journalistic integrity. Peace journalism practices deflect war propaganda, provide actual balance, and fully inform democratic audiences. We need more peace journalists in Gaza, America, Israel and every country suffering through violent conflict.

This isn't advocacy, public relations or advertising – these are the goals of war profiteers. This is simply good journalism by good journalists with a commitment to democracy, accountability, and the wellbeing of global society.

Bill Smith

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