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"IT'S OUR CALLING, IT'S OUR LIFE PATH."

- PAUL COLLINS
CO-OWNER, THE VAPE SHOP

P6



KATE MULLANEY/CULLMANSENSE

» The Vape Shop creates the liquid that goes inside the e-cigarette cartridges themselves, including blends that do not contain nicotine.

HEALING THROUGH MUSIC

DIAGNOSED WITH EPILEPSY, LOCAL ARTIST'S NEW ALBUM DEDICATED TO FATHER, "ALABAMA ELVIS"

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - Songs have the power to move us in a way few other artistic mediums can. They can take you back to happy memories, heal pain and grief, or just bring a new perspective to the world. For Gary Sanders, music has been all of these things and more. His journey with music has been an inspirational one, and the music tells the story of his life.

Music has always been Sanders' main focus artistically.

He has been playing with bands and sharing his music for years now and is about to release his most important work to date. The theme of the music comes from his father who passed away.

"This music I am doing is really different, because I lost my dad in 2010," Sanders said. "He was an Elvis impersonator and was known as 'Alabama Elvis' around here. So I like listening to that music to keep him close."

Sanders goes on to say that his father's career and music inspired the tone of the album.

"So this music I had been listening to all my life, and I finally just heard that thing in the music that grabs everyone else that loves it," said Sanders. "So the music is based on that feel of the true

p3



CONTRIBUTED

» "Sidesteps" explores what the artists of yesterday might sound like today.

Brick by Brick: West Point High School Band Director Chris Machen Seeks to Rebuild Program

Will Hogue
will@cullmansense.com

WEST POINT - Second year West Point Band Director Chris Machen has a daunting task ahead of him: rebuild the band program from the ground up.

Due to the follies of band directors before him, Machen, 27, has a long list of repairs to make, from getting new uniforms, to acquiring a newer, bigger trailer to transport the equipment and instruments.

I walked into the band building at West Point High School and found Mr. Machen sitting on the ground with a few students, all of them putting together drums. We stepped into his office and began discussing the band program, which basically led off with a discussion about the uniform situation.

"The current uniforms are only about four years old," Ma-

p3



CONTRIBUTED

» Band Director Chris Machen plans to have 175 to 200 band members within the next three to four years.

ADPH ISSUES ALERT TO HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS ON EBOLA

Mary G. McIntyre
Contributor

MONTGOMERY – The Alabama Department of Public Health issued a message to primary care providers in Alabama Aug. 7 to alert them to report any suspected Ebola cases and to collect specimens from any suspected patients for testing. At this time, no Alabama residents have been tested for this severe and often fatal disease.

Ebola is characterized by sudden onset of fever and weakness that may be accompanied by other symptoms including headache, joint and muscle aches, vomiting and diarrhea, stomach pain, and lack of appetite.

Since May 2014 there has

p3

VINEMONT'S VAW WATER SYSTEMS WINS AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

Will Hogue
will@cullmansense.com

VINEMONT - VAW Water Systems of Vinemont, Alabama recently won the Award of Excellence in the category of water distribution in the state of Alabama.

Shawn Whittle, the superintendent for VAW, is grateful for the award.

"More than anything, it's just a recognition of excellence for what we do," Whittle said.

In order to be eligible for the award, VAW had to apply for it to even be considered.

"A representative had to come out, examine our systems, and even go in the field, and we had to successfully answer a series of questions con-

p6

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CPD OFFICER NAMED ALABAMA'S FIRST D.A.R.E. OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - Cullman Police Department veteran, Officer Cindy Rohrscheib, has spent the majority of her 14-year career mentoring over 6,000 children through the D.A.R.E. program. In June of this year, she was named Alabama's first D.A.R.E. Officer of the Year.

D.A.R.E. stands for Drug Abuse Resistance Education. It is a comprehensive prevention program designed to equip elementary school children with the life skills to recognize and resist social pressures to experiment with tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs. The core curriculum is taught by a specially trained, uniformed law enforcement officer, such as Rohrscheib, who provides for a unique relationship between officer and student.

This interaction promotes a positive role model identification as well as healthy bonding with a trusted adult.

"If you can teach a child that they have value and self worth, then they will feel like they are worth protecting and try harder to protect themselves from things that will hurt them like drugs, alcohol, physical abuse, and so forth," Rohrscheib explained. "I try to teach them they have a special purpose in life."

Rohrscheib and her twin sister had rough childhoods. It took until she was about 15 years old to feel like she could finally protect herself – that she had the right to.

She uses her childhood experiences as inspiration to help others who may be in similar situations. Her goal is to train others, especially women and children, to be strong individuals both mentally and physically, and to give them a sense of self worth.

"I just can't stand the thought of a child being or feeling rejected," Rohrscheib stated. "And especially a child that feels they can't take up for themselves. That's just horrible."

"It's wonderful for the police department to have a representative like Cindy, who can go out and do these programs," Police Chief Kenny Culpepper said. "And it's wonderful for the public to receive the training that Cindy does with these programs."

Cullman is a wonderful place to live and raise a family, but sadly we're not perfect. Just like the rest of the world, we have children who are abused in one way or the other.

Thankfully we have Cindy Rohrscheib and many other unsung heroes just like her working to make our town a much safer, happier place, especially for the younger generation who will someday pass the lessons they learned from Rohrscheib along to the next.



CONTRIBUTED

» Officer Cindy Rohrscheib has been serving the Cullman Police Department for 14 years.

If you or someone you know would like more information on the D.A.R.E. program, or would like to know about other programs Rohrscheib teaches, please feel free to contact the Cullman Police Department at 256-734-1434 or e-mail Rohrscheib at cindyr@cullmanpd.com.

CULLMAN COUNTY IS HOME TO AN AGRICULTURAL AFICIONADO: LEE HAYNES IS A CHAMPION OF CHANGE

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - On Tuesday, July 29, 2014, the White House and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) honored 15 local "Champions of Change," leaders from across the country who are doing extraordinary things to build the bench for the next generation of farming and ranching.

These champions are leaders in their industries and communities, inspiring others who want to find careers and a life on the land, and providing food, fiber, fuel, and flora around the world.

The Champions of Change program was created as an opportunity for the White House to honor individuals, businesses, and organizations that are doing extraordinary things to help empower and inspire members of their communities.

Cullman resident Mr. Lee Haynes was one of those 15 individuals that was given the special honor as a Champion of Change at the White House.

Haynes is part owner of his family's egg farm, Nature's Best Egg Company. He's held this position ever since he graduated from the University of Alabama, where he earned a degree in business. He will graduate from the Alabama Leaders for Agriculture's two-year leadership program in August.



CONTRIBUTED

» Co-owner of Nature's Best Egg Company, Lee Haynes was selected as one of 15 Champions of Change.

"Our farm is a family business that my parents, Robert and Carol Haynes, and I own together," Haynes said. "We house 240,000 hens on the farm. We wash, grade, and package eggs. We sell our eggs to numerous customers in both the retail grocery and food service industry. All of our eggs are marketed as all natural as we feed an all grain diet to our hens."

Business is booming and people are crazy about the delicious eggs that come from the Haynes family. Word has spread throughout Alabama, which resulted in Haynes' national honor. "I was chosen for the program by being recommended by employees of the Alabama Farmers Federation and nominated by Congressman Robert Aderholt's office," Haynes explained.

"White House and USDA staff then narrowed down all nominees from across the country and selected the final 15 Champions of Change."

A lot of hard work goes into running a business, especially in agriculture. There are many long days and short nights that folks like Haynes work through to ensure quality in their product.

As a community, we are blessed to have caring and hardworking individuals such as Mr. Haynes.

It is an honor to share a hometown with someone who has been recognized by the White House.

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DESPERATION CHURCH CLOTHES THOSE IN NEED

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - Desperation Church continues to give to the community. On Saturday, they held a Free Clothing Giveaway as part of their small group events. Many people from all over Cullman came out and took advantage of this remarkable act of kindness.

With school just around the corner, many families struggle to buy school supplies, pay school fees, and purchase new school clothing for their children's first day of classes.

Thankfully, people like the ones at Desperation Church recognize this and have done something about it.

"This is our third summer to do the clothing giveaway," said Linda Stone, church member.

"We do this once a year before school begins, and anyone who is in need can come and get the clothing. Each year we've had great turnouts."

Working in small groups is the avenue in which the folks at Desperation Church do their ministry.

They try to find ways to serve the community at least once a month in different ways.

"We look for and listen for needs in the community all the time," Long continued. "We want to minister in practical ways and so we came up with the idea of giving our excess clothing away. We hope to help those who may need back to school clothes but that may not have the resources available to purchase what they need."

Clearly God is working in this church and the community is grateful for all the time and energy Desperation Church puts in to making the world around them a better place.

If you would like to keep up with what's going on at Desperation Church, you can follow them on Facebook.

Or you may visit them in person at 202 Elizabeth Street NE in Cullman or visit their webpage at www.desperationchurch.tv.



CONTRIBUTED

» For the third summer, Desperation Church has given away back to school clothes to anyone in need.

School (from Front)

chen said. "But the previous director chose a design that, at the time, was already dated and on the way out." Thus causing a need for new, very sharp might I add, uniforms for the band.

The West Point Marching Band, which so far has 20 new members, needs to grow, according to Machen.

"We should be at 175 to 200 members in three to four years," Machen predicts.

"And that's if everything goes according to my plan. Which includes losing people every year to different sports and transfers," he continued.

Although the marching band is relatively small this year, the Beginning Band is a healthy size at 61 members. Machen explained that the Beginning Band really never performs, save for a handful of special events each year.

"The real point of the Beginning Band is to introduce kids to the instruments and reading music," Machen continued.

"It's really an opportunity to get them proficient at music, so that they are able to join the Mighty Warrior Marching Band."

Besides fighting against the added troubles brought on by preceding directors and the annual exodus due to sports and transfers, he has financial burdens as well.

"Most people don't realize how expensive it is to have a marching band," Machen revealed. "It costs about $1,500 per game to get from point A to point B."

The band program at West Point receives no money from the school, from the county, from the state, or from any mandatory quota.

All the funds that Machen, who has worked with various schools and marching bands around Alabama, has at his disposal are those given to the program by boosters or donors, or money raised by the musicians through fundraisers and sponsors.

However, even though the work is stressful for Machen and the job is difficult, the dream for the program is lofty. And, according to Machen, he has never worked with a group of harder workers than the ones at West Point High School.

Music (from Front)

and real rock-n-roll. It doesn't all sound exactly like that, but even theoretically in the music it is there."

The new album set to release in September is entitled "Sidesteps". Sanders gives a unique take of the golden age of rock in this album. A reimagining of what the artists of yesterday might sound like today.

"Say if Jerry Lee Lewis or Elvis had the technology or equipment that we do now," said Sanders. "This is a possibility of what that music might sound like. That was the foundation and I just went from there."

The passing of his father was not the only hardship Gary has overcome to put out this album. In late 2006, Sanders had just finished his last album with his previous band "Standing Damaged", when some curious symptoms started.

"I was working at a mattress plant, and I started having pains and tremors in my right hand," Sanders said.

"It eventually got so bad over time that I had to leave, because it had gotten to a point where I couldn't even sign my name."

After numerous doctors and tests, it was finally determined that Sanders was living with epilepsy.

Epilepsy is a neurological disorder that causes repeated seizures or convulsions over time that can lead to problems with behavior and attention. There are differing severities and not all seizures or convulsions look the same.

For some, the seizure is full body and highly noticeable. While for some, like Sanders, the tremors are more localized.

"I've been through about 5 neurologists so far," said Sanders. "I finally found one that was able to help me. The medication I am on now has helped me to regulate it."

While the medicine helps, it is by no means a cure, and playing has been a struggle for Sanders since his diagnosis. He is currently in school for music education, and says that playing in Wallace's Jazz Band has been a welcome challenge.

"I've been in jazz band practice all week and that is the longest I have played in a very long time," Sanders said. "From 8:30 to 3:30, that's a lot of guitar playing."

While Sanders' endurance has been hindered by his epilepsy, his talent and skill are still strong.

He also gives a lot of credit to the people that helped him to put the track together and his talented band mates.

Baker Productions allowed Sanders and crew to record the drum tracks needed at their facility, and the CD was mastered by Charles Baker.

With a lot of help and support from family and friends, Sanders has put out an album that tells his story.

The songs are relatable to everyone, the vocals and instruments are on point, and Sanders leaves his heart and soul out there for everyone to hear.

If you would like more information about Gary Sanders and his new album, please visit www.garysanders.net or like him on Facebook.

Ebola (from Front)

been an outbreak of Ebola that has resulted in deaths in people in several West African countries.

When an Ebola infection occurs in humans, there are several ways in which the virus can be transmitted to others that include:

• Direct contact with the blood or secretions of an infected person

• Exposure to objects (such as needles) that have been contaminated with infected secretions

What can travelers do to prevent Ebola?

No vaccine or specific treatment is available for Ebola. Many people who get the disease die, so it is important to take steps to prevent Ebola. Avoid nonessential travel to Liberia, Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria.

If you must travel, however, please make sure to do the following:

• Practice careful hygiene. Avoid contact with blood and body fluids.

• Do not handle items that may have come in contact with an infected person's blood or body fluids.

• Avoid funeral or burial rituals that require handling the body of someone who has died from Ebola.

• Avoid contact with animals or with raw meat.

• Avoid hospitals where Ebola patients are being treated. The U.S. Embassy or consulate is often able to provide advice on facilities that are suitable for your needs.

• Seek medical care immediately if you develop fever, headache, achiness, sore throat, diarrhea, vomiting, stomach pain, rash, or red eyes.

• Limit your contact with other people when you travel to the doctor. Do not travel anywhere else.

• Pay attention to your health after you return.

• Monitor your health for 21 days if you were in an area with an Ebola outbreak, especially if you were in contact with blood or body fluids, items that have come in contact with blood or body fluids, animals or raw meat, or hospitals where Ebola patients are being treated.

• Tell the doctor about your recent travel and your symptoms before you go to the office or emergency room. Advance notice will help the doctor care for you and protect other people who may be in the office.

Special recommendations for health care workers

Health care workers who may be exposed to people with the disease should follow these steps:

• Wear protective clothing, including masks, gloves, gowns, and eye protection.

• Practice proper infection control and sterilization measures.

• Isolate Ebola patients from unprotected people.

• Avoid direct contact with the bodies of people who have died from Ebola.

• Notify health officials if you have been exposed to someone with Ebola.

All persons with onset of fever within 21 days of high-risk exposure should be tested.

For more information about Ebola, go to www.cdc.gov.

EXPLORING CULLMAN'S PARKS: YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO FAR FOR LIMITLESS RECREATION AND LEISURE

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - In Cullman, we are fortunate to possess a wealth of excellent parks that offer above average amenities. Sportsman Lake, Heritage Park, Stony Lonesome OHV, and more have everything you need for a day or weekend of family fun. After taking a closer look at these parks, the only question will be which one will you visit first.

First on the list is Smith Lake Park, a large and beautiful park set on one of the nicest lakes in Alabama. Smith Lake Park has every amenity you could ask for out of a park. From their cabins and enormous pool to a beach; you cannot ask for much more. At this park, however, you get even more without asking.

The park also has eight pavilions that are perfect for family cookouts, birthdays, or even a work retreat.

If you need a place to lay your head after the day's activities, try one of their nine simple cabins for only $71.50 a night, tax and all.

"We have tent spots, RV spots, put-put golf, and a great stage for our events for the Fourth of July and holidays," said park employee Katie Edwards.

"You can grill out at the beach and swim. We always have someone lying out there tanning."

If you are looking for adventure and a great place to ride your ATV, then look no further than Stony Lonesome OHV Park. This park boasts over 1,400 acres of trails for riders and hikers alike.

For only $10 per bike or ATV, and $3 per hiker, you will get quality trails for a great price.

The park also offers simple, single room cabins that are perfect for those wanting to make their experience a weekend long event. According to park customer service representative, Katherine Ashley, there are more than amenities that sets this park apart.

"I honestly think we have the best park in the south because we are family oriented," Ashley said.

"Other parks allow alcohol and stuff and just don't care what happens. If you're here and you have an accident, we're going to be there to help you, no matter what. Other places don't know where you are or if you've had an accident. We want to keep it as family friendly as possible."

Of course if you are looking for fun right in the city of Cullman, then look no further than Heritage Park or Sportsman Lake Park.

At Heritage Park you can take a scenic stroll, give your dog some time to play in the dog park, play a game of disc golf, or take the little ones to the playground. There is never a shortage of fun things to do.

The same can be said for Sportsman Lake Park who has recently added a splash pad to give families a fun place to cool off. Pavilions at this park are a great place to have your next family event, or to rent an RV spot and stay a while. The kids will love train rides around the park, getting wet at the splash pad, or relaxing on the lake in a paddle boat. This beautiful park will keep you coming back for more, and their Christmas Light show during the holidays keeps the fun going year round.

There are even more parks to explore in the Cullman area, each with their own unique amenities that individually sets them apart from one another.

If you want more information on any of Cullman's parks, visit www.cullmanrecreation.org or www.cullmancountyparks.com.

22nd Annual Midnight Run 5K Race Set for Friday

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - For the 22nd year, Cullman City Parks & Recreation and Eva Bank will be holding the annual Midnight 5K Run on this Friday. Every year, hundreds of people fill the streets around the Cullman Civic Center and lace up their running shoes for a unique 5K experience.

"It's a staple for our Parks and Rec department," Waid Harbison, marketing director for Cullman Parks & Recreation, said.

"We started out with just a couple hundred people over 20 years ago, and now we have 800 to 1,000 people show up. It's a unique run, so we have people from all over come out to run."

The race will start and end at the Cullman Civic Center, and there will be plenty of light for runners to see.

Cullman Police will be blocking off the streets for the race and helping to keep everyone safe. Registration is available up until the race itself.

On the 14th and 15th, however, registration will only be available at the Civic Center and will be $30. Registration before that point will be $25.

Pre-registered runners can check-in from 5-7 p.m. on race day, or check-in from 10-11:45 p.m. with late registrants. Overall male and female runners will win $250, and masters male and female winners will receive a $200 prize.

If you think you have what it takes to win, sign up now, and support our local Parks & Recreation Department. For more information, please call 256-734-9157.

Cullman Optometrist Nabs Top Honors

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - There are many fine optometrists working in Cullman, but one just beat over 3,000 for the top honor. Dr. Kevin Neal, an optometrist who works out of the local Walmart, was recently honored as Optometrist of the Year in Orlando, Fla. by the Walmart Corporation. An honor he did not expect, but surely deserved.

After completing two bachelor's degrees in both biology and chemistry in 1996, he returned to school to study optometry in 2001 at the University of Alabama in Birmingham. Since he started his practice in Cullman's Walmart 12 years ago, he has devoted his time and expertise in improving patient care, and offering the latest technology to his patients.

"I'm a big techno nerd," Neal said. "And I try to bring the most up to date technology into the practice. I think we can get a little lazy as practitioners sometimes and we want to rely on a piece of technology to make a diagnosis and not use the computer between our ears, but these days we need to embrace some of these newer technologies because it gives us so much more data."

In addition to offering more up to date testing, Neal also took the initiative to team up with other doctors in the area, like a local cataract surgeon.

"I also try to develop relationships with primary care doctors," said Neal. "That way we can give referrals for different conditions, and also monitoring patients for diabetic eye care."

Dr. Neal was shocked and completely caught off guard when he received Optometrist of the Year at the national Walmart Health and Wellness meeting in Orlando.

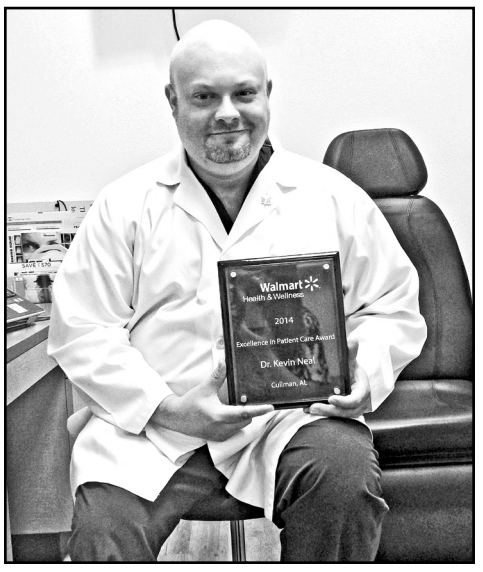
"They told me that they wanted me to go to this meeting to be a part of a national advisory board," he said. "But I knew something was weird when I got there and they picked me up in this big black SUV, and a VP for the company is in the car."

While the invitation to be a part of the advisory board was true, Neal was surprised upon arriving at the resort with the news of his award.

"It was pretty cool," Neal said with a grin. "I had been selected as regional winner before, but never out of the whole country!"

Contrary to popular belief, doctors working out of eye vision centers in Walmarts are not working for the company, they are leasing the space. It is more of a partnership than a boss and employee relationship. It was that relationship that sparked a need for an advisory board that would bridge the gap.

"With us being independent from the company kind of makes a unique situation because we aren't Walmart employees," said Neal. "So it keeps the company from interceding when someone isn't getting the job done. So the board will help with things like that and will give advice to others."



CHELSEA SPARKS/CULLMANSENSE

» Dr. Kevin Neal has been operating his practice in Walmart for 12 years and prides himself on using new technology to improve patient care.

Dr. Neal came into a store that was struggling 12 years ago and has transformed it into a thriving business and practice. His mission to keep a harmonious relationship with his staff and customers has and continues to pay off. It is his hope that his work with the advisory board will offer new insight to others in his field, and patient care can improve across the country.

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ANTIQUES GALORE
WHERE TO FIND THAT SPECIAL STATEMENT PIECE

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - The next time you are in downtown Cullman, check out the unique finds at three of the finest antique shops in town. Locally owned and operated, Finders Keepers, Southern Accents, and Littleville Blue have just about anything a person could possibly want.

"We've been here for over three years now," said Wayne Cook, owner of Finders Keepers. "We have a lot of different kind of things here, such as paintings, vintage items, furniture, home furnishings, and antiques. We also have clothing, which is something we didn't originally anticipate having when we first opened the store," he smiled.

Many stores get their merchandise from just one place, but Finders Keepers stocks their store from sources abroad.

From the moment you step inside the door, you can't help but notice the wide variety of treasures they have to offer. Set up like a mini flea market, the store has 150 vendors, most with different specialties and talents, with quality items ready to sell.

"We have several options for people who want to sell things," Cook explained. "We offer rental space to people who want to sell their own items. We also do consignments on certain things where we get a percentage. Finally, we do our own thing, which is antiques. So as you can see, we like to have a wide variety of things for people to choose from."

Finders Keepers is open every day of the week except for Mondays. They are located at 201 1st Avenue SW in Cullman. Visit their website anytime at www.finderskeeperscullman.com. For more information, feel free to give them a call at 256-727-5341.

Not too far down the road is Southern Accents, the largest architectural antique store in the Southeast.

Their mission is to rescue, restore, and protect architectural elements of historical significance. By documenting all the items they sell, Southern Accents passes along the important history behind their merchandise.

"We recently started a campaign of documenting our salvage missions," said Lisa Jones, marketing manager. "We call it preservation through documentation. When we salvage a historical house or building, we document the structure and the salvage mission through photographs, blueprints, and gathering as much known history as possible. We then compile the information and post it online for free. This is our way of ensuring that these structures are preserved for future generations."

Southern Accents has a talented team of artists and craftsmen who can both guide and educate their customers on how to repurpose salvaged materials.

They have a showroom, two warehouses, and two outdoor lots filled with everything from salvaged wood to doors, mantels, columns, stained glass windows, chandeliers, ironwork, claw foot tubs, and many more items. The store attracts customers from all across the United States.

Southern Accents is open Tuesday - Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and closed Sunday and Monday.

For more information, visit their website at www.sa1969.com or visit them in person. They are located at 308 2nd Avenue SE in Cullman. You may also give them a call at 256-737-0554.

Littleville Blue, located at 202 1st Avenue SE in Cullman, offers irresistible pieces of vintage and repurposed items that will keep you coming back for more.

Fun and friendly, the ladies at Littleville Blue view their customers as newfound friends and are genuinely excited to help them find exactly what they are looking for.

The shop offers antiques, vintage items, home décor, and gifts with a European vibe. With a perfect combination of creativity and resourcefulness, Rena Haga and Teresa Duffy complement each other perfectly to assure that every time a person walks into the shop, they will walk out with something unique and special.

Make sure to stop by and take a look around. They are open for business Wednesdays through Fridays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Feel free to give them a call at 256-347-7439 and visit them on Facebook and Pinterest.

As you can see, Cullman has many antique stores and believe it or not, all of them work together to promote each other.

A lot of times, groups of people travel from other counties to "go antiquing". Well, as you know, it takes more than just one place to consider the trip worthwhile.

With this knowledge, the antique storeowners have gotten together and made a simple map with each of their shops listed.

Scattered next to the cash registers of businesses throughout town, the aqua colored "Antique Shops of Cullman" fliers can be found. Be sure you take one and bring it with you the next time you go shopping.

Keep your flyer with you and visit each store listed to get the true "antiquing" experience in the Cullman area.



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

» Shops like Finders Keepers offer a variety of vintage items, furniture, home furnishings, and antiques.

MIRRORING HISTORY: WERDT'S STORE AND DELICATESSEN

Jessica Norrell
jessica@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - Attorney Sarah Baker's office now stands where Werdt's Store and Delicatessen was once located on Fifth Street and First Avenue.

Werdt's was owned by Herman and Clara Werdt and their store was one of the only businesses in Cullman that stayed open on Sundays.

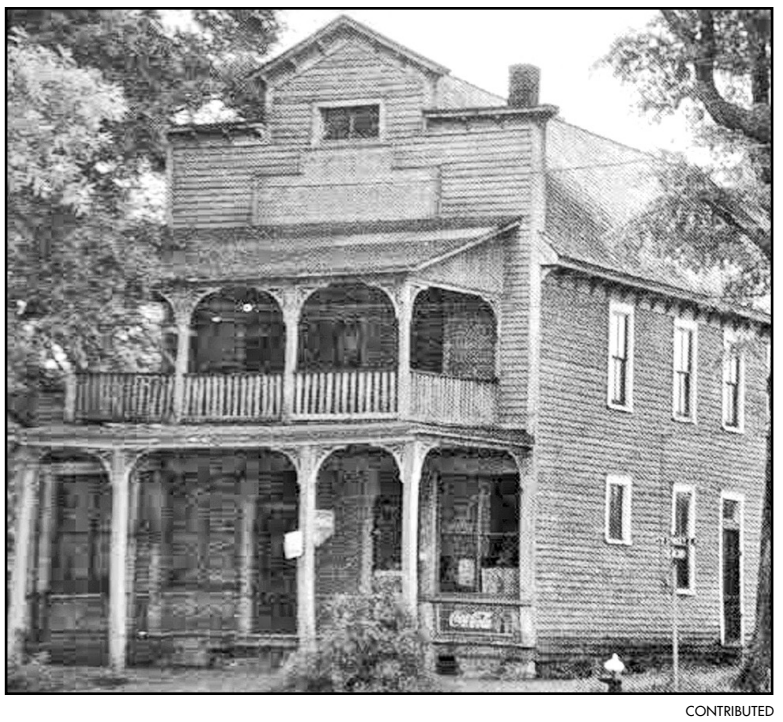
The delicatessen and store were in the front, and a small saloon was located in the back.

Werdt's store was torn down in the mid 1960s.



JESSICA NORRELL/CULLMANSENSE

» Located on Fifth Street and First Avenue, Attorney Sarah Baker's office now stands where Werdt's Store and Delicatessen was located before it was torn down in the mid 1960s.



CONTRIBUTED

» With a deli and store in the front and a small saloon in the back, Werdt's Store and Delicatessen was one of the only businesses to stay open on Sundays.

PERSONALIZE THIS SCHOOL YEAR WITH MONOGRAMS

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - The beginning of a new school year is such an exciting and sometimes stressful time. A new routine can be hard to get into, but it can become a comforting constant once it is set. Back to school shopping has been in full swing and most have taken full advantage of the sales happening. There is another way to send your kids into the school year even more organized and fashionable.

In the hustle and bustle of school it can be easy for kids to misplace items or for teachers to mistake one child's items with another. To combat the confusion and make life easier, consider monogramming your child's lunch box, backpack or nap mat, clothes, and more.

Some shops can even customize goulashes for rainy days.

One business that is known for their work in the area is Mongrams Plus.

Monograms Plus owner, Margaret Hamm, says that while orders from this point won't be ready for the first day of school, their three day turn around makes it possible to have items personalized quickly.

"We've been in business for 15 years, and we have a combined 45 years of monogramming experience," said Hamm.

"We offer some brands like Stephen Joseph that are exclusive to us, and they are a top selling brand for backpacks, lunch boxes, and also nap mats. We carry the biggest selection in town of monogrammable back-to-school items."

At Monograms Plus, a large wall in the store is filled top to bottom with adorable backpacks, lunch boxes, and more. You are sure to find everything you need in one convenient location.

"We have been extremely busy and we are extremely thankful for that," Hamm said. "Even though this is one of our busiest times of the year, we have still been able to keep that quick turnaround for our customers."

Another great shop that customizes merchandise is C&C Graphics.

This shop performs quality work for their customers at competitive pricing.

From rain boots to backpacks, they can take care of your needs. In addition to embroidery, they also offer screen-printing, which can be a cost effective way to customize clothes and other items.

"We are conveniently located in the middle of Cullman next to the Downtown Grill," Amy Key, employee of C&C said.

"We have some really great artists here who do amazing work. We can do anything; umbrella with pictures, clothes, bags, the sky is the limit. Anything that can get a logo on it we can do."

These shops are ready and willing to help you with your back to school needs. If you are late getting your merchandise customized, have no fear, these businesses can help; reasonable prices and quality work is their priority.

For more information on Monograms Plus or C&C Graphics, visit them on Facebook today.



CHELSEA SPARKS/CULLMANSENSE

» Backpacks and nap maps are among the many back to school items that can be monogrammed.

Vaping (from Front)

Kate Mullaney
kate@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – No ash, no tar, no second hand smoke, and no smell are just a few of the obvious benefits of vaping. Some claim that electronic cigarettes are a healthier alternative to smoking, while some claim since the long term effects of vaping are unknown, it's safer to stick to traditional cigarettes. If you or someone you know is a smoker, it's important to know the truth about vaping.

E-cigarettes are devices that contain a nicotine-based liquid that is vaporized and inhaled.

They all work similarly: inside the device is a battery, a heating element, and a cartridge containing the liquid. Some units are disposable and others have rechargeable cartridges and batteries.

These devices are also customizable. You can control the amount of nicotine which goes into your cartridge and how much vapor you get per puff. This will vary from person to person depending on preferences and how many cigarettes they smoke daily.

This means you can change the amount of nicotine you want in your cartridge each time you change it, giving you the option to wean yourself from it.

This customizable option has allowed many people to kick their deadly habit of cigarette smoking.

According to a recent study, 44 percent of people chose to switch to vaping exclusively within the first 6 months after trying it for the first time.

There are several advantages vaping has over traditional cigarettes. It is obvious that vaping is a much healthier alternative to traditional cigarettes. E-cigarettes contain no tobacco, no tar, no carbon monoxide, and no smoke. An e-cigarette contains about five chemicals, while a traditional cigarette contains about 5,000. While cigarettes destroy your dental health, most dental professionals report that the tooth and gum health of users who have switched to e-cigarettes are indistinguishable from those who have quit smoking all together.

Additionally, vaping is a much less expensive habit than smoking. A pack-a-day smoker can save about $1,200 per year by switching to vaping.

There are several other advantages to vaping. Users are more considerate to non-smokers since there is no ash, no smell, and no smoke. Because of this, users can vape indoors and in no-smoking areas. Also, e-cigarettes produce no pollution, while about 4.5 trillion cigarette butts are tossed each year.

People who have switched to vaping claim to experience higher stamina, productivity, and efficiency. The benefits of switching from smoking to vaping are bountiful, but there are a few drawbacks.

Since e-cigarettes have only been around about 10 years, there have been no long-term studies, so no one actually knows the long-term effects. Even though they don't contain nearly as many chemicals as cigarettes, they do contain a few. On their website, the FDA says that "E-cigarettes may contain ingredients that are known to be toxic to humans, and may contain other ingredients that may not be safe." The biggest drawback to vaping is that some of the effects are unknown.

Though there are some drawbacks to vaping, most agree that despite the fact that the long-term effects are unknown, it is likely a much healthier alternative to cigarettes.

The Vape Shop is an e-cigarette distributer here in Cullman. Owners Stacey and Paul Collins opened after discovering vaping for themselves.

"I smoked for 21 years," stated Stacey. "But when my grandson was born I knew something had to change. The minute I tried e-cigarettes I knew I had found the answer. So, we did some research and started selling our products from the flea market."

The Collins' found so much success at the flea market that they outgrew it. They are now located in a shopping center on Highway 31 North. This shop is unique because they create their own liquid that goes inside the cartridges.



KATE MULLANEY/CULLMANSENSE

» Owners Stacey and Paul Collins opened their new e-cigarette store, the Vape Shop, after outgrowing their booth at the flea market.

"Our juice is better than anything else we've tasted," said Stacey. "And that's because we're not cutting it with alcohol."

These business owners are passionate about vaping. They believe it can save even the heaviest smokers from a lifelong addiction.

"It's a beautiful thing to see someone come in for help," Stacey said.

"Someone came in here who had been smoking for 30 years. I got her set up with an e-cigarette here, and she came back 2 weeks later and hadn't smoked a cigarette since."

"It's our calling," added Paul. "It's our life path."

The Collins stated that though it's safe to vape forever, they encourage their customers to kick the nicotine habit eventually.

"You can continue to vape," said Stacey. "But we have juice without nicotine in it."

"It can become a hobby," added Paul.

Stacey and Paul feel blessed with the success of The Vape Shop and see big things in their future.

"Whatever God has in store for us is what I want to do," Stacey stated.

"We feel blessed. We just want to love it and live it and help people who need help."

If you would like to learn more about The Vape Shop, visit their Facebook page or reach them at 256-620-0588.

If you smoke, consider switching to this likely healthier alternative. These trendy devices might just save your life.

Award (from Front)

cerning water supply and details about its process."

The company, a cooperative servicing north Vinemont, west Battleground, Corinth, and various other small slices of abutting counties and townships, has no plans to expand their service area in the wake of this award.

Rather than increasing the area the company serves, Whittle and VAW wish to continue to improve the existing systems, pipes, and other areas of the distributor that could use work.

The company has been in existence since 1968 and looks to continue to service its customers with the excellence for which it has recently been awarded.

GET YOUR GROOVE ON: THE FACTORY DANCE PRODUCTIONS HAS A CLASS FOR EVERYONE

Kate Mullaney
kate@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - Our town just got a little bit groovier with the opening of The Factory Dance Productions located at Stone Bridge Farms. This new dance company opened on August 2 and will start classes on September 2.

This loving dance studio believes everyone should have the opportunity to dance, so they guarantee they have a class for everyone! They offer instruction in the areas of ballet, tap, jazz, contemporary dance, and hip hop, as well as boys and adult hip hop and adult tap. They offer a program called Dance Your Dreams, which is catered toward special needs students. They are dedicated to creatively teaching dance techniques in a family oriented environment.

In addition to these classes, beginning in October, The Factory will offer students a weekly video class from top choreographers and professional dancers.

Owners Nohealani Naehu, Keri Payne, and Sara Foust are excited to bring the love of dance into this already art filled town.

"Keri and I opened The Factory because we are in love with the art of dance," stated Neahu. "We want to share the beauty, inspiration, and challenge of the art with our community and the rest of the world!"

Luckily for Payne and Naehu, Sara and Ron Foust offered to use Stonebridge Farms as their studio location.

"The location and the facility is so beautiful," stated Payne. "It's perfect. There's a playground and a pond outside, and on Thursdays, we'll have dinners at Stone Bridge, so parents can drop off their kids at dance and go eat."

Along with Sara Foust, Stone Bridge Farms, and many friends and family, Naehu and Payne have worked to create an environment that fuels technique and creativity.

"Together we hope to inspire the community with movement, grow as dancers, and grow as artists," said Neahu. "It is our goal to provide the best teaching techniques in the curriculum for our students, as well as master classes by professional dancers in studio every other month. Throughout the year we will have two showcases, compete in national competitions, and participate in many community events!"



KATE MULLANEY/CULLMANSENSE

» Next month The Factory Dance Productions will begin teaching a variety of dance classes that can accomodate anyone and will also play host to workshops featuring renowned dancers.

To celebrate their grand opening, The Factory held a free dance camp last week, and in addition to classes starting soon, this new dance company has some exciting events coming up.

On Saturday, September 27, Tennessee Titans cheerleader Hannah Smith will be at The Factory offering a dance workshop.

On Saturday, November 1, So You Think You Can Dance's Janelle Issis will be doing a workshop at The Factory.

Mark your calendars for these once in a lifetime opportunities!

Company auditions for The Factory Dance Productions are also coming soon. Auditions will be held Saturday, August 23.

Details are available on their website.

If you are interested in The Factory Dance Productions, please visit their website at www.thefactorydance.com or contact them at 256-366-0138. You won't want to miss out on this one of a kind dance studio.

Biscuits & Business Discusses SBA Loans

Kate Mullaney
kate@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - The Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce held its quarterly event Biscuits & Business last Tuesday morning.

Chick-fil-A provided breakfast for this event, which was held at the new Peoples Bank location.

Kevin Kilpatrick of GCap Financing was the guest speaker at this event.

He gave a brief presentation about the ins and outs of SBA (Small Business Administration) loans.

Kilpatrick noted that there are three things to consider about SBA loans: small business owners think like sales people – not finance people, balance sheets reflect the overall health of the business, and thinking about the big picture is better for everyone involved.

Next, Kilpatrick spoke about how GCap Financing helps business owners grow their companies.

This involves recognizing that there is a difference between cash and equity, viewing every business decision as short term, knowing the true cost of borrowing, and knowing how to invest savings.

After Kilpatrick's presentation about SBA loans, President of the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce, Leah Bolin, announced a new plan from the Chamber.

"The Chamber is launching a small business development plan," she stated.

"We will do pre-business counseling for those who are thinking of starting a small business. This will help them know if they are making the right choices and if they are ready. We will also spend time with them during the first two years making sure they know how to market and helping them stay up to regulations."

Biscuits & Business is a quarterly morning event that offers exciting discussions and opportunities.

Visit cullmanchamber.org to find out about the next meeting so you won't miss another productive morning of breakfast, business, and networking.



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.

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 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.

'Celebrate Recovery' at Hanceville First Baptist Church
There will be a 'Celebrate Recovery' meeting tonight starting at 7 p.m. at Hanceville First Baptist Church. Childcare will be available. Additional info Church office at 256-352-9150. Open to all!

Ageless Grace Fitness Class
Come join in the Ageless Grace Fitness Class held each Thursday evening starting at 5:30 p.m. at the Cullman Civic Center. Leader Ann Caretti will show attendees the latest fitness tips available. The event is sponsored by Cullman Park and Recreation Department. Call 256-734-9157 for more information.

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.

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 shoe.

Murphree Family Reunion
The descendants of Solomon and May Elam Murphree, Blount County pioneers, will hold their annual reunion 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.s and enjoy an evening of great music, fun, and fellowship!

Autism Networking Group Meeting
There will be a special Autism Networking Group meeting (CAAN) starting at 5 p.m. for all interested families. This event will be held at the Margaret Jean Jones Center (CCCDD) with childcare services available for those who PRE-REGISTER. Please call Rhonda Davis, 256-962-2208 or Jessica Dyson, 256-339-1151 for childcare opportunity. The program for the night will be a Special Needs Theatre DVD presented by Virginia Murdoch. All welcome.

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.

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
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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

Big Band Dance
The Senior Spirit Program is offering a big band dance featuring the Shriner Band "Sentimental Journey" on Saturday, August 23, 2014 at the Donald E. Green Sr. Center from 7 – 9 p.m. Admission price is a $5 donation. We welcome donations even if you're not interested in the dance. Donations may be made or tickets purchased in advance at the Donald E. Green Senior Center. All proceeds go to the Shriner Children Hospital. For more information contact Angie Jochum or Catherine Hasenbein at 256-734-4803.

This Week in Local Entertainment

Sponsored by Busy Bee Café

Monday

- 79 cent wings at Rodney G's Hickory Grill from 6-9 p.m.
- Happy Hour at Moe's from 3-7 p.m.
- Monday Fundays at the Aquatic Center from 6-11 p.m.

Tuesday

- 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.
- Happy Hour at Moe's from 3-7 p.m.

Wednesday

- Story Time at the Hanceville Library at 10 a.m.
- Karaoke Night at Grumpy's at 7 p.m.
- Musician Craig Edwards at Brother's at 7 p.m.
- Happy Hour at Moe's from 3-7 p.m.
- Karaoke Night at Cadillac Ron's at 7 p.m.
- Ladies' Night at Cadillac Ron's from 5-8 p.m.

Thursday

- Open Mic Night at Brother's from 8 p.m. - close
- August Hops and Shops downtown from 4-9 p.m.
- Happy Hour at Moe's from 3-7 p.m.
- From the Heart Ice Cream Social from 6-8 p.m.
- Karaoke Night at Cadillac Ron's at 7 p.m.

Friday

- Live Music at Brother's
- Live Music at Moe's
- Happy Hour at Moe's from 3-6 pm
- Live Music at Cadillac Ron's from 8-12 pm

Saturday

- Live Music at Brother's
- Live Music at Moe's
- Happy Hour at Moe's from 3-6 p.m.
- Live Music at Cadillac Ron's from 8-12 p.m.

Busy Bee Café
Try our German Food!

GROW YOUR BUSINESS

"By combining my years of successful advertising campaigns and award winning use of digital and social media, I am able to provide my clients with superior service. With the endless supply of support from CullmanSense, I am able to put my expertise to work by partnering with your business to maximize your advertising budget and increase your bottom line."



» Shawn Murphree - Automotive/ Digital/ Social Media Specialist

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.

SMALL TOWN CELEBRATES PARK WITH SUMMER FUN: RAY PARK IN DODGE CITY CELEBRATES COMMUNITY



KATE MULLANEY/CULLMANSENSE

» The scenic Ray Park features a pavilion built by the Dodge City Lion's Club, waterfalls with an overlook deck, and an outdoor classroom as seen above.

Kate Mullaney
kate@cullmansense.com

DODGE CITY - It was a day of family fun on Friday at Ray Park in Dodge City. Dozens of children and parents came to the small, but beautiful park in the little town to enjoy the day. The city supplied good food, an inflatable bounce house, and even a water slide to make the day even better for the little ones.

The Perry Ray Park is set in a beautiful scenic location in Dodge City, far away from the traffic and noise. According to Mayor Tawana Canada, the park is named for Dodge City's first mayor of 16 years Perry Ray.

"This was nothing but a valley," Canada said looking around the park. "We worked really hard and we built the pavilion and the bathrooms, and we have what we call an outdoor classroom. It's built like you would see in a church or amphitheater with a podium and seating."

The park is surrounded by beautiful rock face, streams, and even has waterfalls with an overlook deck.

"We are just proud to give the children something to do," Canada said. "Before the kids would have to go to Good Hope or Cullman. This park is what I am most proud of."

The pavilion, which was donated by the local Lion's Club, has been a very popular choice for community events and birthdays, staying booked a month or more in advance.

"The Dodge City Lion's Club built the pavilion for us," Canada said. "And they don't charge anything to reserve it. It stays reserved about every weekend."

The joy was apparent on children's faces as they laughed and played on the park's equipment and inflatables. Parents and grandparents were all in agreement that the officials of the city have done something great for the community.

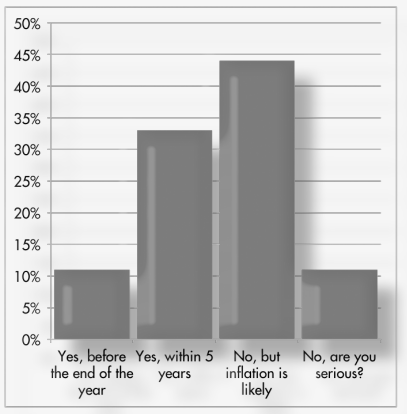
"I come down here and walk all the time and just enjoy it," said resident Martha Todd who attended the day's festivities with her grandchildren. "Tawana is a great mayor. She always has something like this going on."

The hard work of the mayor and city officials is definitely felt and appreciated by the community. While there are no plans in the immediate future for more playground equipment, it is certainly a hope that someday down the line to add even more great features to the park. If you are looking for a great place to have your next party, meeting, or family day, this park could be just what you are looking for.

For more information about using the facilities at Ray Park, please contact Dodge City Town Hall at 256-287-0364.

Poll

Do you believe a widespread economic collapse is imminent?



This Week's Poll

Are you worried about an Ebola outbreak in Alabama?

Vote Today at CullmanSense.com/Poll

Pet Owning Hacks: Tips & Tricks for Ensuring Happy Animals

Kate Mullaney
kate@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – There's nothing more fulfilling than owning a furry friend. But sometimes the responsibilities of pet owning can be a bit overwhelming. Don't stay stressed; here are a few pet owning hacks that will make you and your pet much happier.

1. Hide litter boxes with ease: get a small side table, hang stylish curtains around the sides, and place the litter box underneath. Your ugly litter box is hidden and you've just gotten a cute new end table!

Your littler box-trained friend can now do his or her business in private – just like the rest of us. Enjoy this trick in the living room, bedroom, or anywhere else you usually place a side table.

2. Give your pets an icy treat: on those hot days, it's very important to think of your furry friends.

If you're hot, they definitely are too! Give them a cheap treat that will cool them down. Fill your ice tray with chicken broth, apple slices, and anything else your pet likes (just make sure it's healthy). Your furry friend will thank you for the tasty cool treat during this hot weather.

3. Protect your dog's neck: if your dog is very large or elderly, bending over to reach his or her water and food bowls will put a strain on your pet's neck. But, let's be honest – those high end elevated water and food bowls at pet stores are over priced.

Make your own out of a side table like the Ikea Lack table, they're only around $8 online!

Cut out holes for your pet bowls and watch your pet thrive.

4. Make your own cat scratching post: it's important to your cat's health to provide a scratching post, but again, store bought pet toys can be very over priced!

Make your own with a single shelving cube sisal rope.

Wind the rope around the sides of the cube and tie in place until secure.

Make sure you wind the rope tightly in order to secure the rope well, and there you have it. Your cat has a brand new scratching post!

You should enjoy your pets to the fullest, and that doesn't have to mean spending a ton of money.

Use these hacks, but don't stop with just these. Be a creative pet owner and find unique ways to take care of your pets. Your fur babies will thank you!

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. Race will be held on August 15, 2014 at 11:59pm. 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.
- **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 with Johnny's BBQ as the featured food truck this week!
- **CP&R Jr. Tennis League** will be starting play on September 1. Program will be 8 weeks long with three weeks of practice and 5 weeks of matches. Registration is $75 for the 8 week session. and is now open at the Cullman Civic Center and Wellness & Aquatic Center. League will be played at the Cullman High School tennis courts against other CP&R teams. Call 256-734-9157 for info.
- **FREE CP&R Tennis Festival** will take place August 17. 2014 for interested participants in the Jr. Tennis program or adult tennis programs. Matches, free play, free food, music & more will all be a part of the event from 4-6pm.
- **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 $200 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.
- **CP&R Youth Archery Classes**: Held at the Cullman Civic Center's indoor archery range; classes will start August 18. Cost is $40 per class. Beginner classes held Mondays, intermediate classes Tuesdays, and advanced classes Thursdays.

What's Online

Local Musician Daniel Harbison Keeps Music Alive in Cullman

Music in Cullman is alive and well thanks to people like Daniel Harbison. Harbison, 24, has been playing music since he was 12, but only since 16 has been playing with bands. "I've played the JC Arena, Cadillac Ron's, and The Local Standard before it closed, Harbison said.



qrne.ws/237

Bentley grant to assist sexual assault victims statewide

A $271,466 grant awarded by Gov. Robert Bentley is helping local agencies and organizations provide more comprehensive services to sexual assault victims in Alabama.

qrne.ws/238

ADPH official addresses recent testing at Cullman Memory Gardens and suggested roof repairs

Sherry Bradley, MPA, Director Bureau of Environmental Services Alabama Department of Public Health, commented on the issues at Cullman Memory Gardens Cemetery.

qrne.ws/239

SHOP AROUND THE CORNER OFFERS QUALITY ART CLASSES

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com



CHELSEA SPARKS/CULLMANSENSE

» Shop Around the Corner offers art and pottery classes for children and adults as well as an extended day program for students.

CULLMAN - The Shop Around the Corner has been a staple in the community for many years. Students of all ages from small children to adults enjoy a number of art programs and a variety of mediums to learn about. Parents from across the county send their children to Shop Around the Corner for quality art education.

Laura Walker, manager of the shop, says that there are several great classes to choose from to fit your families' needs.

"Every fall, winter, and summer we put out a new class schedule," Walker said. "I know we are going to be having two days a week after school, and Wednesdays will most likely be children's pottery. The same basic classes stay around the same days, but we do have to tweak it according to the teacher's availability."

The youngest students in the school begin around age five, and once students get to the teenage years they are given the option to move to the adult classes. While many think of the Shop Around the Corner as being a creative haven for children, it is also provides an artistic environment for adults.

"Right now we have an adult pottery class going on," Walker said. "We have had it a couple years. We also have a great Monday night adult art class and then a Thursday night adult art class."

A great feature of the shop is their affordable pricing, and Walker said that even in the worst economic periods customers were still coming in every week.

"When I moved here and we turned it into a daily thing is when the economy was going bad," said Walker. "But in Cullman people love their kids, and if things are tight then they are still going to find a way to take care of their kids. Whether it be art classes or not, our customers never slacked off because of the economy. We had built our business through the worst of the economy."

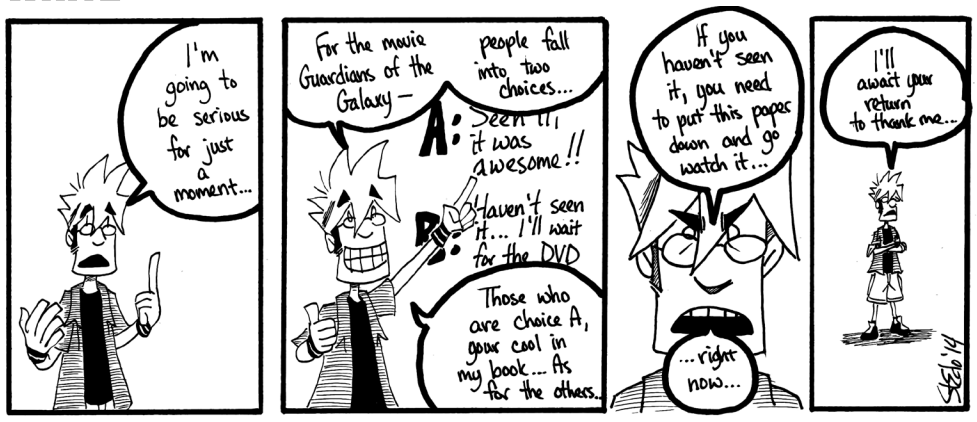
Shop Around the Corner also offers extended day classes after school, but spots for this program go quickly. Children are picked up from school and transported to the shop for an afternoon of fun and art. It is because of the quality of the shop's teachers and convenience that this program stays full for the most part.

For Laura Walker and the teachers of the shop, their goal and focus is to help cultivate talent and artistic ability in every age group of students. Every teacher loves what he or she does and enjoys helping their students reach their full potential. It is for this and so many other reasons that the shop continues to thrive in our community. "The most rewarding thing is that moment when it clicks and they say 'I can do art! Look at what I did!' It's a fabulous moment to a part of," Walker said.

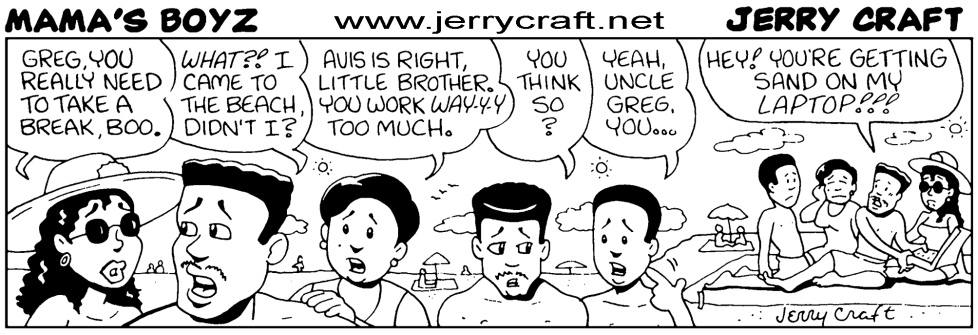
If you would like more information on the different classes offered, please visit Shop Around the Corner on Facebook or give them a call at 256-775-1775.

Comics

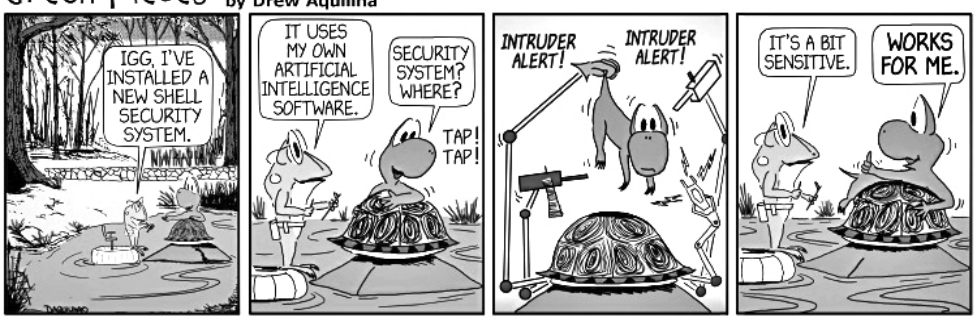
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MAMA'S BOYZ www.jerrycraft.net **JERRY CRAFT**



Green Pieces by Drew Aquilina



SUNNY STREET by Max Garcia



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Pets of the Week

Cygnet

Hello! My name is Cygnet, and I am about 3 months old. I am believed to be a Beagle mix, and I currently weigh 21.2 lbs. I am spirited and enjoy company. I'm a great sidekick, and I'm ready to find my forever companion and best friend.



Mowgli

Hello! My name is Mowgli, and I am about 2 months old. I am believed to be an American Bulldog mix, and I currently weigh 39 lbs. I am a stray but will be available for adoption on 08/13/14 at 2 p.m. I am full of life and I love to play. I'm a great friend, and I'm ready for my new forever home and loving family.

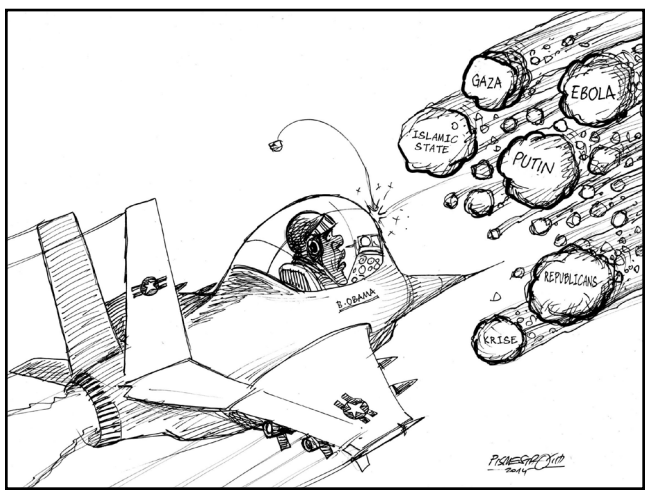


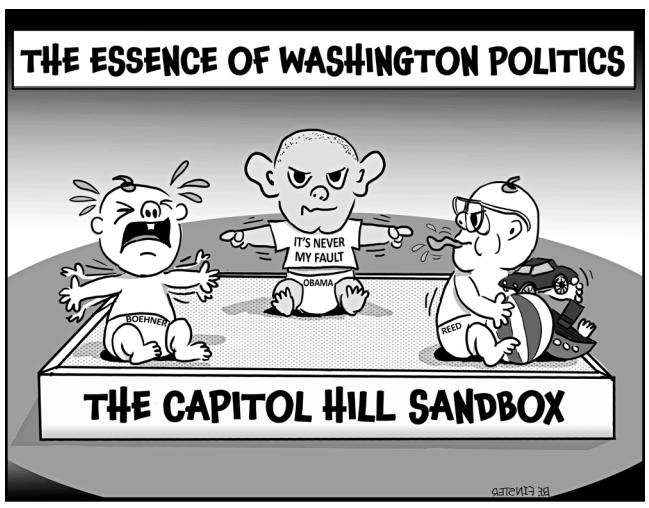
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Both of these dogs have an adoption fee of $90 that will include their general exam at the Vet, vaccines, wormer, rabies shot, microchip, spay/neuter, and free 45 days of pet health insurance. Pet Depot will give you a bag of food (you pay taxes) as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





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HOW ARE WE DOING?

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

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CULLMANSENSE
Community Matters

Publisher
Noah Chandler

Editor
Dustin Isom

Address
412 1st Ave. SE, Ste. 103, Cullman, AL 35055

Back Issues
issues@cullmansense.com

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Johnny Thornton

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COMMUNITY PLATFORM

FACT NOT FICTION

Edwin J. Slaten
Eva Resident

There is a saying, "Tell a lie long enough and it becomes accepted as the truth".

There is no better example than the co-called "Separation of Church and State".

The Constitution is clear about that.

Congress shall make no law concerning the establishment of religion, neither hindering the free exercise thereof.

What it means is that Congress will not pass a law designating a particular religion or division thereof as the official religion of the United States.

While Congress has not passed such a law, ignorant Judges are doing what it forbids Congress to do. That is "hindering the free exercise thereof".

Few people are aware that because of Christopher who was a Christian, when this nation was established the laws were based upon the word of God. Columbus believed that God was guiding him to a continent to help establish a nation whose laws were based upon the word of God.

That is one of the reasons that this nation became the most prosperous and powerful nation that has ever existed.

The other reason is that when Israel became a nation we started supporting Israel immediately. God had told Abraham, "They that bless you I will bless".

People such as the atheists and others are working diligently to destroy both of those things.

Those who oppose Christianity cannot prove anything that they state but I have been proving the truth of God's word for most of my nearly 82 years.

OPINION

WHY GOVERNMENT FAILS, AND WHAT WE SHOULD DO ABOUT IT

Lee H. Hamilton
Contributor

As election season approaches, I've been pondering a crucial issue about the role of government in our society. It's that our government often fails — and that we need to address this. What's odd is that while the frequent failures in government's performance are very much on ordinary people's minds, politicians don't talk much about fixing them.

True, you might hear a few words about the issue when members are back in their districts this month revving up their re-election campaigns, but for the most part they'll be focused on issues like jobs and the economy. This is understandable, because that's what their constituents expect to hear about.

But it's also a shame, because we need a healthy dialogue about why government often fails and how to fix it. There's ample cause for concern.

The VA appointments scandal; the botched launch of the Affordable Care Act; duplicative programs to help low-income families; the 28 years of missed inspections that led to the explosion of the fertilizer plant in West, Texas; scandals at the General Services Administration and the Secret Service; a broken federal appointments process; the regulatory screwups that contributed to the Great Recession; auto recalls that should have happened much sooner than they did; the failure to prevent the 9/11 terrorist attacks by sharing information within government; bridge collapses and infrastructure failures.... There's a long and dispiriting list of occasions when the federal government has fallen short.

Yet the issues surrounding government performance don't stir the passions. Progress comes slowly, the media's not especially interested in the tedious story of building competence, and politicians themselves look for home runs, not singles. They want to make grand proposals, not spend their time digging into the nuts and bolts of fixing bureaucracies.

Moreover, as political scientist Paul C. Light has amply demonstrated, government failures happen for a long list of reasons that cannot be fixed easily, painlessly or quickly. Sometimes problems are rooted in policies that were ill-conceived, too complicated, or not well communicated. Sometimes the policies were fine, but the resources necessary to implement them were inadequate or misused. Politics often gets in the way of good policy, with efforts to undermine programs by making their implementation difficult or by cutting staffs and budgets.

There are organizational and institutional problems, poor oversight, poor leadership — no matter how good a policy, if good people aren't available to carry it out, it will fail — and government's alarming difficulty attracting and keeping highly qualified administrators. Often, leaders are bored by the nitty-gritty of management.

Still, these are challenges, not barriers. If our political leaders wanted to focus on improving government management and policy implementation, there's no shortage of fixes they could make.

— They could ensure that federal agencies use pilot and trial programs much more frequently than they do now.

— They could mandate better and more rigorous evaluation procedures and the use of metrics that lay bare what works and what doesn't. There's more attention being paid these days to efficacy than there used to be, but it's still a trickle compared to what's needed.

— They could avoid rushing to announce programs, strive to get it right rather then get it quickly, and pay as much attention to follow-through as to the launch. Think about long term, not the next election, and make sure the mission is sharply defined.

— They could devote far more attention to how government will recruit, retain, and train the smart, highly qualified workers we need to carry out ever-more-complex programs. And they could vow to reduce the number of political appointees in favor of filling most positions on the basis of merit.

— They should certainly flatten the chain of command and reduce the layers of bureaucracy within federal departments and agencies, so that it's easier for top administrators to see what's taking place on the front lines.

— In the case of Congress, it needs to ensure that vigorous oversight of programs becomes a habit, not the rarity it is now.

All of us want government to fail less often, whatever our political stripe.

So here's my suggestion: As election season approaches, insist that your favored candidate work harder on making government more effective and efficient.

Lee Hamilton is Director of the Center on Congress at Indiana University. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.

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