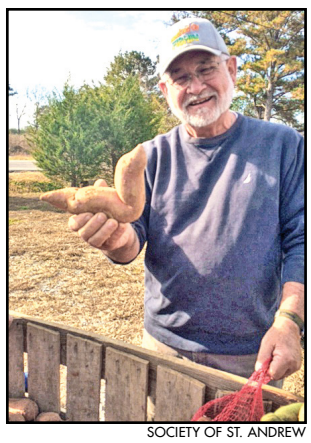
SERIES 4 • ISSUE 47 • DECEMBER 8, 2014

CULLMANSENSE
COMMUNITY MATTERS



ANNUAL CULLMAN CHRISTMAS PARADE BRINGS FAMILIES TOGETHER P7



SOCIETY OF ST. ANDREW

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SHRINE OF THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT OFFERS HORSE DRAWN WAGON RIDES TO PUBLIC FOR FIRST TIME P4



SHRINE OF THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT

The horses are raised and cared for on the Shrine's property.

LOCAL WOMAN DECORATES HOME INSIDE AND OUT FOR CHRISTMAS

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - December has arrived and Christmas is just around the corner, yet the warm weather outside has left many of us feeling around for a cold drink rather than a few ornaments to hang upon our Christmas trees. Thank goodness there are folks like Mrs. Joyce Sparks. Joyce loves decorating for Christmas, both p6



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Joyce Sparks has about an acre of her property covered in Christmas lights and displays.

GOV. BENTLEY AWARDS FUNDING TO REDUCE POVERTY IN ALABAMA

Larry Childers
Contributor

MONTGOMERY - Gov. Robert Bentley has awarded $2.9 million in grants to help low-income individuals and families achieve self-sufficiency and emerge from poverty.

The governor awarded 21 Community Service Block Grants to regional community service agencies covering all 67 Alabama counties.

The agencies will use the funds to assist eligible recipients with job training and education opportunities, better nutrition and housing, income management, and credit counseling.

Some agencies involve recipients in volunteer programs that serve other needy persons in the community.

"Neighborhoods and families that are most in need are targeted by this grant program," Bentley said. "The support services that are provided help low-income residents establish or regain a foundation on which to build a successful life," Bentley said.

A total grant amount of $130,473 was allotted to Community Action Partnership of North Alabama Inc., which services Cullman, Lawrence and Morgan counties.

FOOD DRIVE BENEFITS CULLMAN CARING FOR KIDS

Katie Dansby
katie@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - Action Resources has been collecting cans and non-perishable foods since November 24 and will continue until December 18 for their 3rd Annual Holiday Food Drive. The items from the first two years of the food drive were donated to the Jimmie Hale Mission in Birmingham, and this year they decided to stay local with donations by giving them to Cullman Caring for Kids.

Jessica Amaro, a recruiter at Action Resources, is heading up the food drive for the first time this year. "I was really excited to head this up and p3



JESSICA AMARO

The donated goods will go to local children.

CULLMAN EMS BUILDING REOPENS IN OLD LOCATION

Katie Dansby
katie@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - The new Cullman Emergency Medical Services building is up and running! An open house and ribbon cutting ceremony was held last Thursday to celebrate the completion of the facility and tour its great features. The previous facility was destroyed by the tornado on April 27, 2011 and after serious consideration, was rebuilt in its same location. They had the groundbreaking of the EMS building on March 27, 2014.

Board member Clint Frey expressed the importance of the facility regarding its ideal p7



KATIE DANSBY/CULLMANSENSE

A ribbon cutting christened the new building.

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CULLMAN COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION HOLDS MEETING REGARDING STATE OF GARDEN CITY SCHOOL

Chelsea Sparks
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CULLMAN - Tension and emotions ran high at a meeting last Tuesday at the County Board of Education. Members of the Garden City School community and elsewhere in the county gathered to appeal to the board about the decision on whether to keep Garden City School open, or close its doors for good.

Earlier this year the news came that Garden City School was no longer deemed a safe structure after an engineer went to check on the premises. Five points in the school were found to be unstable, and as a result, the school has had to do a lot of rearranging to keep their doors open for the rest of the school year. It has now fallen to a question of what to do for the future of Garden City School. With estimated repair costs around $850,000 the question may be bigger than Garden City alone.

The beginning of the meeting started with emotional testimonials from several students representing the older grades at the school, and one young lady who attended the elementary school a few years ago. While the speakers were young, they spoke with passion for their school.

"I just wanted to say that not only was I a student here, but I live in the town of Garden City," said Tiffany Bell, 17, a former student of the school who now attends high school.

"I have lived in Garden City my whole life, and I know what this school means to us. I just wanted to say how much this school means to us, and how much it means to these kids."

She turned back to speak to the younger students of the school directly.

"In a couple years, these kids will be where I am, and soon they will all go their separate ways," Bell said through tears.

"I want you guys to know that you always have your friends from here, and they will be a part of you no matter where you go."

Another student, Kayley Kahler, who is in 4th grade, read her letter aloud to the board.

"We all love our school and do not want to see it go," she said. "At what other school does the principal and all of the teachers walk around and know everyone's name? Many good things have happened here to others and to me. To me, Garden City is more than a school, it is my second home. You have to fix it so that one day I can send my kids to this great school."

Garden City School has a sterling reputation for excellence that cannot be disputed. The test scores are excellent in almost every area, and are second only to Welti Elementary.

One of the main points from the parents who spoke at the meeting, such as Kris Keller, was that the main reason for the children's success is the teamwork of the teachers.

"There's not a teacher at Garden City who doesn't care and is just there for a paycheck," said Keller.

If you split them up, they won't have that support system to help each other that's made Garden City so great. This is a great school."

Many other concerned parents rose to give their testimony about the school. Including one woman who said that it is only through the dedication of these teachers that her son, who is legally blind, can do as well as he does in school.

The principal of Garden City, Susan Melton, read aloud the mission statement of the school system, and made a point-by-point case as to why she feels they are fulfilling just that.

"We feel like we are working to accomplish your goal. I hope you'll not only allow us to continue, but help us to continue to grow," said Melton.

While there are many reasons to keep the school open, Superintendent Craig Ross stated that there are several reasons that make this a tough decision for the board.

"There are a couple of reasons we are in this situation," said Ross.

"Alabama ranks number 1 in the number of education cuts that we have taken. Alabama is not a rich state, but they have literally attacked education over and over again. We are a 10-mil system, which means we do not invest a lot of local tax dollars in education. We are at a critical point where I am asking the entire county: What kind of education do you want for your children?"

A TIME TO REMEMBER: LIGHTS OF LOVE HOLDS CEREMONY TO HONOR THOSE LOST

Chelsea Sparks
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CULLMAN - For the past 24 years, faculty of CRMC, as well as individuals and families, gathered at the annual Lights of Love tree lighting ceremony. It is a time to honor those who have passed on, and remember their struggle. It also is a time to help those who are in need of help by raising money for the Oncology Patient Assistance Fund.

The program began in 1991 when Dr. Hermon C. Ensor read the names of the individuals being honored.

"I remember the first Lights of Love event," said Danny McAfee, board member. "We had a big, real tree set-up in the hospital lobby. We lit the tree as Dr. Ensor read the names of those being honored and remembered. Dr. Ensor stood up and invited everyone to sing Silent Night, and so the tradition began."

Beginning in 2010, the CRMC Foundation Board of Directors decided to rename the Lights of Love ceremony to include the name of Dr. Herman C Ensor, which is a way to honor the man who did so much, for so many.

"This year's Lights of Love Ceremony proceeds will benefit the Oncology Patient Assistance fund," said Maria Stanford, executive director of the CRMC Foundation.

"The program is run by the Nurse Navigator team at CRMC. Medical services are provided to oncology patients such as funding for various medical needs like PET scans, radiation therapy, lab work, pharmacy needs, and more."

With medical costs being at an all time high, services like these are essential to many who cannot afford the care they need.

The Lights of Love event raises money by gathering donations of $20, $40 or $60, and in return, a light is placed on the tree in honor of someone special.

What a beautiful way to remember a loved one, and to help those who desperately need help along their own path.

According to Stanford, the ceremony was a success, and the tone was one of deep respect for those being honored.

"The 24th Annual Dr. Herman C. Ensor Lights of Love Tree Lighting Ceremony went well and was very touching," Stanford said.

"We had special entertainment by Dr. Mike Lunsford, Maggie and Ellie Lunsford, Dr. Joe Johnson, Cullman First Baptist Church Ladies Ensemble and the Cullman Regional Medical Center Employee Choir. The tone was one of reverence, as each light and tribute to someone special was viewed."

The program concluded as attendees participated in the closing song of Silent Night, and the TJ Tucker family lit the Christmas tree. The tree will remain up and shining brightly for all to see throughout the season. Donations can still be made throughout the holidays. For more information please call 256-737-2565, or go to www.crmchostpital.com/LightsofLove.

LITTLE MISS CANDY CANE CHRISTMAS PROJECT BRINGS HOPE TO THOSE IN NEED

Chelsea Sparks
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CULLMAN - On the last day of November, dozens of babies and young girls gathered at the Cullman Civic Center to strut their stuff in hopes of winning the crown in their division. Divine Royalty Pageants is a new pageant company that was brought from Georgia to Alabama by Kimberly Benitez.

"We decided to help out the families in Cullman that needed Christmas assistance," said Benitez. "We've got a lot of donations for families and our money is going to be used to buy clothes. Our goal was to help our community. I am the director of the Divine Royalty Pageants and just moved here from Georgia. We decided to start a pageant program that was charity based. We have this pageant, and in October we had one that benefitted breast cancer."

The charity benefitting from the pageant was the Divine Angels Program, a charity that helps underprivileged children.

Ava-Klaire Marcinek, the Divine Angels Ambassador, raised the most money for the charity among those in the pageant.

There were several age groups in the pageant, ranging from tiny babies to older girls.

All the girls left with a trophy, and for a lucky few, a beautiful crown. The winners are as follows:

Queens:
Jacee Ball
Makenna Wilkinson
Kason Jeffreys
Lillian Ducote
Ella Dickerson
Victoria Dujon,
Ramsey Harper
Sidni Dunn
Addi Grace Pace
Julie Moorer
Carly Condray

Supreme Queens:
Chloe Condray
Madison Corbitt

Miss Christmas Queens:
Presley-Kate Powell
Victoria Dujon
Madison Corbitt



SONNY RAY PHOTOGRAPHY

The charity based Divine Royalty Pageants provides assistance to various causes.

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EXTENDED FRIDAY HOURS LUCRATIVE FOR MANY SHOPS

Katie Dansby
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CULLMAN - The Christmas parade brought families and friends out to Cullman for not only a festive time, but also an opportunity to shop in all the downtown stores. Many businesses extended their hours on Friday evening, and as a result, received more foot traffic and business. Several reported great results of staying open until 8 p.m. or later.

Rita Thompson, receptionist at Bella Faire Day Spa & Salon, said that business was great during the extended hours Friday evening.

"We had the parade right by our store," she added. "We didn't have a whole lot of foot traffic, but we had some folks come in to shop." She said at least 10 people came in that normally would not have. They also participated in some Christmas fun by handing out goody bags for folks that came in. Rita said they normally close at 6 p.m. on Friday evenings, and after this weekend are willing to extend their hours again.

Jennifer's Treasures, formerly Etc. by Nikki, is owned and operated by Jennifer Bennett. She enjoyed the extra business and said, "It was fantastic." She said they were covered up until 8 p.m. and would love to do it again.

Classy to Sassy owner Stacy Lindsey said that she probably was not affected as much as everyone else. "We did not have any more customers than my regulars last night," she said. She added that many people parked in their area, but did not venture in their direction to shop. "I think the stores a street over did well."

Classy to Sassy has participated in community events such as Hops & Shops for the past few months. Friday evening they ran specials and put out snacks for customers such as cookies and hot cider.

From the Heart owner Eddie Heptinstall said they are normally open until 5 p.m. on Friday evenings and stayed open until 8 p.m. this particular Friday evening.

"Sales were up and it was well worth our time." He appreciated the business and said that they were pretty crowded up until 7:45 p.m.

Peggy Grobe, owner of A Touch of German, said they watched the parade and closed the store shortly after.

"It was a real good day. People came from out of town to see the parade and shop." They had a long day of business, fun, and refreshments, as Friday happened to be their customer appreciation day.

Berkeley Bob's Coffee House owner Bob Keefe enjoyed Friday evening just as much as any other. They typically stay open until 9 p.m. on Fridays because of the bands and music being featured. "We had a good day, but the highlight was before the parade." He noted that when the parade was over most folks left the downtown area.

Vintage West employee Stacey Smith said they were glad to participate in extending their hours. They stayed open until 7 p.m. with normal hours until 5 p.m. on a Friday evening.

"It went well. We had quite a few customers after the parade and we had a great response."

Busy Bee employee Stevie Douglas said, "We were so busy." They had a musician that drew a big crowd and stayed open until around 9 p.m. Those hours are normal for the Busy Bee, but Stevie said, "The parade brought in more business."

Shannon Witcher, owner of If the Shoe Fits, said that extending their hours was quite beneficial. "We had a great night. We were busy since 5:15 p.m. We didn't have a lull at all after our normal business hours."

The business typically closes at 5 p.m., but stayed open until the last customer left after 8 p.m during the event. Witcher is willing to do it again and was thankful for the business she received as a result of extending their hours.

Johnann Moore, co-owner of MoMoShe 103, said that business was good.

"We had a pretty steady flow of people before the parade and after the parade." The business typically closes at 6 p.m. on Fridays, but stayed open until 8 p.m. this particular Friday. Johnann said, "It was definitely worth it. If for nothing else, just the traffic of people finding out we were here."

From restaurants to boutiques to gifts and more, each store expressed an appreciation for the business they received and were more than willing to participate again. A huge thank you goes to all the shoppers and those in the Christmas spirit that made the evening one worth repeating.

SECRET MEALS PROGRAM BENEFITS 115 LOCAL CHILDREN

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - No child should go hungry. That is a statement everyone can agree upon, and in Cullman, local businesses and individuals are participating in Alabama Credit Union's Secret Meals program to help. One of the largest supporters of the program is the Cullman Association of Realtors.

"What we've done is kind of adopted that program," said Beverly Hinkle, association executive. "The last three years we have done an auction and all of the money we have received from selling those items goes to Secret Meals."

Earlier in November, at the Cullman Association of Realtors luncheon, the public relations committee presented a check of $10,000 dollars to the Secret Meals for Hungry Children program. These donations will help many children in our county have food to eat when they are at home.

"We wanted to participate with this charity because it is for our kids," said Hinkle. "I mean, kids are going hungry. We see a lot of charities that raise money for kids in other countries and overseas, but we need to take care of our kids, too."

The program began when faculty at schools noticed children hiding food from lunch in their backpacks to take home to eat over the weekend.

Children were safe from hunger during the week with school lunches, but for many when the weekend comes, food leaves. The Secret Meals program was formed to combat this sad situation, by working with local schools and faculty to discreetly send food home in the backpacks of children.

"We are feeding 115 kids across six different schools," said Laurie Legg, supervisor for the Alabama Credit Union Cullman branch. "We need to raise approximately $18,400 dollars or $160 for the year per child. Our biggest donation throughout the year comes from Cullman Realtors Association, and then we have a bunch of individuals that will donate or sponsor a kid. We also have a lot of churches that donate, we actually just had a $600 donation from a women's group."

The program is constantly looking for ways to raise money to help more kids. From benefit car shows, to selling crafts at their branch office, the Alabama Credit Union is determined to raise the funds needed to help these children. You can purchase their holiday candy centerpieces still at the local branch office and help contribute to a great cause. For more information on this program and how you can help, visit the Alabama Credit Union at 1901 Main Ave SW, Cullman, AL 35055 or call 256-737-9885.



CHELSEA SPARKS/CULLMANSENSE

The $10,000 donation from the Cullman Association of Realtors was raised from a variety of sources.

Drive (from Front)

let this stay in our community."

She said that to be able to make a difference in your own town means a lot to her. "We are a very Christian based company and we are very blessed. It just started with us giving back to the community to help those less fortunate."

She said that when they communicated with Cullman Caring for Kids, the need that they expressed most was for food as opposed to toys.

The most commonly needed items are canned veggies, canned soup, canned meat, canned fruit, condiments, dried pasta, peanut butter, instant potatoes, Mac-n-cheese, spaghetti sauce, dried beans, and bags of rice.

Helping others means a lot to Jessica. She has been working with Action Resources for about a year now and is thankful for their efforts in making a difference in the lives of children.

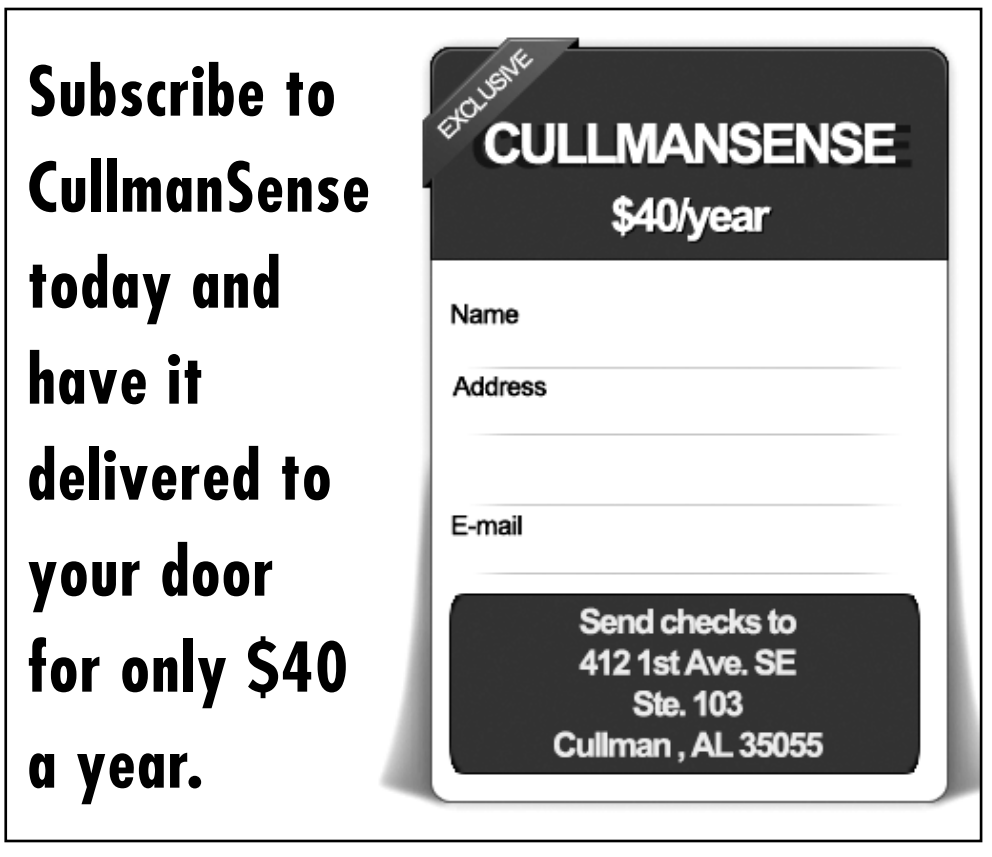
"It means everything to me. I have a huge heart. I would do anything in my power to help children. I would adopt 50 if I could."

The drop off locations are: Action Resources at 40 Co Rd 517 Hanceville, AL 35077 right off the 291 exit, and Action Environmental at 14830 Alabama 91, Hanceville, AL 35077, also right off the 291 exit.

Monetary donations are also appreciated. If you would like to give a dollar amount, you can contact Jessica or Kathy for assistance.

Jessica can be reached at 256-352-7121 or by e-mail at jamaro@action-resources.com.





LOCAL RED CROSS AND EMA SHARE STORM PREPAREDNESS TIPS

Katie Dansby
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CULLMAN - We all need to be as prepared as possible in the event that a storm causes our community to lose power and even water for 3 to 5 days. In order to survive without these conveniences, John Greco of the Cullman Chapter of the American Red Cross, and Phyllis Little, Cullman County EMA Director, have provided some essential storm preparedness tips for you and your family.

Greco emphasized reading the available literature that the Cullman chapter of the American Red Cross passes out. It is free to the public online and at their location on Beech Avenue in Cullman. Greco said, "Being prepared is what people really need to do before a disaster of any kind. That way they will be ready whether it means they are without electricity or water."

One of the documents recommends having one gallon of water per person, per day. "This water does not necessarily have to be store bought. It can be in empty jugs you have filled up yourself," Greco said. He personally has four 24 packs of bottled water for his wife and two pets and about 24 canned goods packed away in case of an emergency. "A good tip for purchasing water is to be on the lookout for when it goes on sale," Little said. She said that buying a little at a time makes it more affordable.

Greco recommended having cash since ATMs may not be working and banks may not be open if the power goes out. Little said that $20-$50 is a safe amount of cash to have, but that it heavily depends on your family size. Greco added that everyone should do their best to keep the gas tanks of their cars at least half full in case gas stations become inoperable.

When you are out of power, you cannot cook the typical things you are used to eating. Greco said, "What you really should have is ready-to-eat stuff like energy bars, snacks, vegetables, fruits, and raisins. Try to find nutritious things with a long shelf life as well as food items with a lot of protein or vitamins."

For the things you already have at home, the American Red Cross recommends keeping the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible. When you are ready to eat, you should use the perishable food from the refrigerator first. They say that an unopened refrigerator will keep foods cold for about 4 hours. Then use food from the freezer. A full freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours, and 24 hours if it is half full if the door remains closed. If the power outage continues for over a day, prepare a cooler of ice for your freezer items.

Greco recommended keeping extra loaves of bread in the freezer.

"When you need it, all you have to do is thaw it and spread on the peanut butter and jelly," he said.

If you already keep food in stock for emergency situations, Greco reminds us to rotate the food so it does not go out of date. He added that the garage is not an ideal place for bottled water and canned goods because of the temperature variation. Food items need to be placed in a controlled temperature somewhere in the house.

Little, said, "Weather radios are a big deal. Not just for thunderstorms and tornadoes, but also for winter storms. They give out weather alerts as opposed to a regular radio."

She said that a battery operated radio is also an ideal item to have if the power goes out. She said to make sure it is programmed correctly with fresh batteries. Weather radios can be purchased at Walmart, Kmart, Handy TV, Walgreens, CVS and Radio Shack. They are typically around $30 and a basic model is easy to program. "It's a pretty inexpensive item to keep your family safe," Little said.

Little also suggested having a car charger for your cell phone, a manual can opener and backup fuel if you use a generator. For food, she said to shop according to how you would eat if you were to go fishing. You need things that can be eaten straight out of the can. "It may not be what you want to eat, but it will sustain you until something else comes along," she said.

Little also said to have flashlights and extra batteries on hand. Batteries can be bought over time and stored away for when they are needed for the radio and flashlights. She added, "Don't wait to be prepared. You need to be thinking and making your plans before the storm gets to you."

WSCC HISTORY PROFESSOR RECOGNIZED BY TEXAS GENEALOGY SOCIETY

Gail Crutchfield
WSCC Contributor

HANCEVILLE - Longtime Wallace State history professor and genealogy expert Robert S. Davis is the recipient of the 2014 Lloyd DeWitt Bockstruck Distinguished Service Award from the Dallas Genealogical Society in Dallas, Texas. The award is in recognition of Davis's respected career as a teacher, writer, researcher and lecturer.

Davis, who has been an instructor at Wallace State for almost 23 years as, said he especially honored to receive the award named after Bockstruck.

"He is one of the nicest people I know, and his books are an enormous help to a great many people," said Davis, who recently cited one of Bockstruck's books in an article he wrote about Austin Dabney, an African American who was wounded while fighting as a soldier in the Revolutionary War. The Dabney research recently appeared in "American Spirit" magazine, a publication of the National Society of the Daughter's of the American Revolution; "Prologue: The Quarterly of the National Archives;" the "Georgia Genealogical Society Quarterly;" and the "Atlanta Constitution."

The article is one of several projects, including a book, which Davis has in the works regarding Dabney, whose story is a much-celebrated tale of heroism, loyalty, love, and respect. Permanently disabled from wounds he received in the war, Dabney joined the household of a white family. For the rest of his life, Dabney supported his benefactors and vice versa, Davis said. Dabney was the first African American to receive a state pension and a federal pension, all as a disabled veteran of the American Revolution. His bravery and loyalty is remembered in monuments, books, and educational online games.

Davis has garnered national recognition for his more than 1,000 publications. Along with history classes at Wallace State, he also teaches continuing education classes on genealogical research in the college library's genealogy center. He is also a popular speaker on book writing with the Alabama Humanities Foundation's Roads Scholars Program, presenting to genealogical and historical societies across the South each year.

Davis has also been interviewed by The History Channel for documentaries about the Civil War, most recently in November for an upcoming four-hour documentary in April commemorating the 150th anniversary of the ending of the Civil War.

His research was recently used to convince the Library of Congress to make the rare move of changing its catalog to reflect that the anonymous book, "American Husbandry" (1775), was the work of Richard Oswald. One of the richest and most powerful men of his day, Oswald wrote the book to promote reconciliation between Britain and its colonies, and he later negotiated the treaty that ended the American Revolution, Davis said.

Shrine (from Front)

Chelsea Sparks
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HANCEVILLE - Christmas is a special time of year for families to get together to celebrate love and fellowship. At the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament, it is a time to celebrate community and their faith. That is why they will be offering horse drawn wagon rides to the public on a few select dates in December.

The Shrine and its beautiful landscapes set the scene for the wagon rides. The horses are raised and cared for on the property and are ready to spread Christmas joy. There is also hot chocolate and a lovely lights display for the evening rides.

"This is our first year having this event," said Jennifer Prybyla, assistant director of pilgrimages for the Shrine. "The nuns love Christmas time and are super excited. We want to people to come enjoy the lights, refreshments and the atmosphere of our Lord."

If you want to participate in this fun, family oriented event, then please RSVP for your spot. Reservations are needed in order to adequately serve this event. The dates and times for the wagon rides are as follows:

Afternoon Rides:

- Friday December 12 from 1-4 p.m.
- Saturday December 13 from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
- Monday December 15 from 1-4 p.m.

Evening Rides:

- December 17, 18, 19, 22, and 23 are all from 5-7 p.m.

Church Christmas Schedule:

December 24

- 6 p.m. Shrine Closes; 10 p.m. Shrine Opens; 10:30 p.m. Liturgy of the Hours; 11:25 p.m. Christmas Carols; 12 a.m. Midnight Mass

December 25

- 7 a.m. Shrine Opens; 7:05 a.m. Liturgy of the Hours; 8 a.m. Mass in Main Church; 10 a.m. Mass in Lower Church; 5:30 p.m. Shrine Closes

The Gift Shop is closed and there are no Guided Tours of the Shrine and the John Paul II Eucharistic Center is closed as well.

The Shrine is located at 3222 co rd 548 in Hanceville, AL. Seats are going fast so RSVP today, or call 256-271-2917 for more information.

"Come experience the winter and Christmas beauty of the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament," Prybyla said. "Enjoy a horse-drawn carriage ride around the property, a beautiful Christmas light display, and the interior beauty of the Main Church and all that Mother Angelica built for our Lord Jesus Christ."

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TRY GRANDMA HENDRIX'S ELUSIVE PEANUT BRITTLE RECIPE

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

My Great Grandmother, Effie Estelle (Brock) Hendrix, could take anything remotely edible and turn it into a mouth-watering delicacy. Fried chicken, homemade biscuits, turnip greens, pot roast, and fresh creamed corn – straight from the garden are just a few of the things she could whip up and have the whole family drooling in anticipation for.

One of the things she was famous for was her crisp, crunchy peanut brittle. She'd pull out her favorite apron, fit it nicely to her waist, and tie the straps into a small bow behind her back.

After that, she'd mix her ingredients together in a cooking pot, she would stand at the stove and stir the concoction until it came to a boil.

It took forever and if she even once stopped stirring, the whole mess would burn and scorch.

As she stood at the hot stove, she'd munch on the small handful of peanuts she'd have on the counter next to her.

She only made the peanut brittle between Thanksgiving and Christmas each year. She must have made dozens of batches of the stuff. Once finished, she'd take the prized candy to all the holiday get-togethers, church events, and socials in town.

People would fight over it, it was so delicious - it was to die for! In my mind, Grandma Hendrix's homemade peanut brittle meant Christmas was just around the corner.

Grandma's birthday was December 25 – Christmas Day, and every year at this time several things would happen.

For one thing, Tupperware bowls could be found all over Grandma's kitchen, each containing a batch of peanut brittle – us children couldn't get enough of it and we were forever getting fussed at for sneaking a piece and ruining our dinner.

Like clockwork, extended family members arrived at Grandma's house bearing festive birthday gifts to give her. She received a lot of bright red poinsettia plants and bags of peppermint candy sticks. She always had a big fat coconut birthday cake.

The coconut stuck to the cake and made it look bright, white, and furry. A couple of maraschino cherries sat on top, right in the middle of the cake - they were the first things Grandma would pluck and pop in her mouth right after we sang Happy Birthday to her.

Each year for Christmas, Grandma Hendrix would give everyone a box of chocolate covered cherries.

She would wrap every single box in festive paper – they looked so pretty. Every time us kids opened our gifts from Grandma, we'd secretly pray it was anything but a box of durned ole chocolate covered cherries!

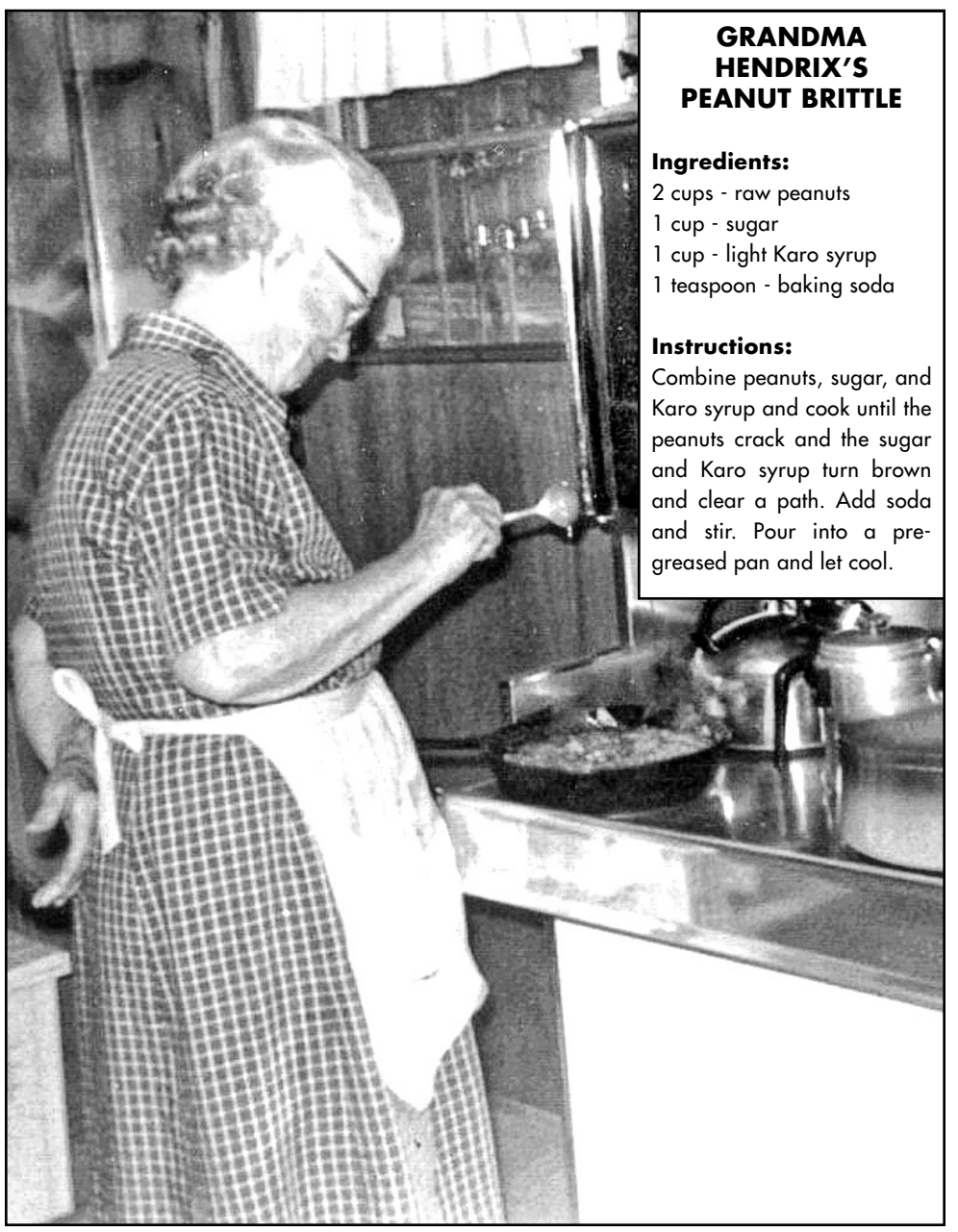
Grandma Hendrix lived to be 101 years old but she spent the last few years of her life in a nursing home.

She suffered from Alzheimer's disease and eventually passed away in the early 1990s.

As an adult, the days after Thanksgiving that lead up to Christmas bring with them a craving for some of Grandma's peanut brittle.

I'll never be able to make it as good as she did, but I still try every now and then. If you would like to give it a whirl, follow the directions to the side.

It is the very same recipe Grandma Hendrix used faithfully. Maybe, just maybe, it will become a part of your Christmas tradition, just like it did ours – back when Grandma Hendrix was with us.



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Grandma Hendrix patiently watched and stirred her peanut brittle concoction until it was ready.

GRANDMA HENDRIX'S PEANUT BRITTLE

Ingredients:
2 cups - raw peanuts
1 cup - sugar
1 cup - light Karo syrup
1 teaspoon - baking soda

Instructions:
Combine peanuts, sugar, and Karo syrup and cook until the peanuts crack and the sugar and Karo syrup turn brown and clear a path. Add soda and stir. Pour into a pre-greased pan and let cool.

MIRRORING HISTORY: DEEP SOUTH CLASSICS

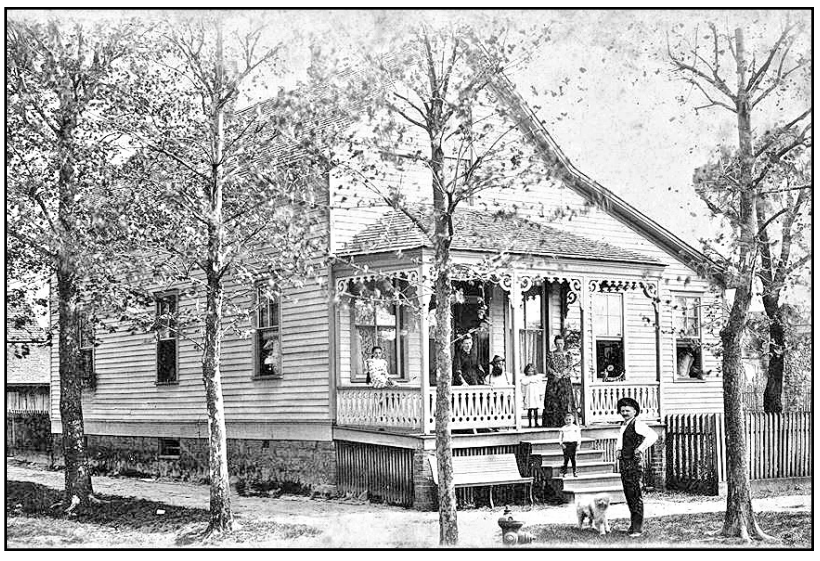
Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - Located at 115 5th Street SE, Cullman, AL, what was once known as "the green house" stands caddy-cornered to Christ Lutheran Church. Today it is home to Deep South Classics. According to the Cullman County Museum, "The dog in the old picture was notorious for chasing kids on their way to school, which was located down the street on the other side of the railroad where the courthouse is today."



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Now the building is home to Deep South Classics.



CONTRIBUTED

The dog that lived at "the green house" was known to chase children after school.

WINTER CONCOCTIONS
HOLIDAY DRINK RECIPE
APPLE PIE ON THE ROCKS

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

If you are having friends over for some holiday drinks, and you really want to impress, then try this little number. Apple pie on the rocks is a drink that is sure to hit your guests' palates in just the right spot!

Ingredients:
- 1 ounce - vanilla vodka
- 1 ounce - Fireball whiskey
- 4 ounces - apple juice
- 1 pinch - ground cinnamon
- Ground brown sugar for the rim
- Ice
- And cinnamon stick for garnish is optional

Instructions:
- Wet the rim of your glass, and gently place the rim in your brown sugar.
- Pour vodka, whiskey, juice, and cinnamon in a martini shaker with a few ice cubes.
- Shake around 10 times and pour into the glass. Be careful not to pour on your sugar around the rim.

Serve chilled.

We want to publish your recipe!
Send submissions to recipes@cullmansense.com

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SWEET POTATOES FOR HUNGRY CULLMANITES FILL THE AGRIPLEX

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - On Thursday morning, at the North Alabama Agriplex in Cullman, an event took place that will benefit many people hurting in our area. The Society of St. Andrew, a national faith based non-profit, is feeding the hungry with a sweet potato crop drop.

The Society of St. Andrew, a national faith based nonprofit, recovers food that is going to waste and distributes it to feed the hungry.

Mary Lynn Botts, the Alabama program coordinator for the Society of St. Andrew, works with local farmers to recover food that doesn't meet market standards but yet is still quite edible, and organizes volunteers to help move this food onto the plates of the hungry.

"This is what we call a crop drop," Botts said of the event. "When we have a sizeable amount of food that we need volunteers to bag it. The sweet potatoes we had today were donated by local grower, Brian Kress. He has been so wonderful to work with. Kress Farm donated 5,000 pounds of healthy nutritious sweet potatoes that were bagged by 50 volunteers into 10 lb bags and distributed to several local agencies that provide food to those less fortunate in the Cullman area."

Roughly 25 percent of Alabamians are food insecure, not knowing where their next meal is coming from while we waste 132 billion pounds of food in this country.

That is enough food to fill a football stadium from top to bottom every single day. With a large percentage of that wasted food being more than edible, organizations like St. Andrew step in to take that food to those in need.

"Rachel Dawsey, of the North Alabama Agriplex Center, coordinated the event and got volunteers of all ages and all walks of life to come and help bag potatoes," Botts said. "The potatoes represent 15,000 servings and were distributed to Cullman Caring for Kids, Grace Episcopal Church Rice and Beans ministry, The Caring Center, Harmony Word of Life Food Pantry, The Crossing, and the Liberty Church Sunshine House in Arab."

According to Botts, when the main event was over, another group of crops was given and the group ended up going to another farm to bag even more food for those in need.

"After we got done with sweet potatoes, we went to the turnip patch," said Botts with a laugh. "The Bagwell Farm had turnips that they donated. So about 40 people went with me to clean turnips."

While the Society of St. Andrew is not a widely known organization, their work is felt throughout the community and across the state. Making sure those around us in need of help never go hungry is a beautiful endeavor, indeed.

Anyone who would like to learn more about volunteer opportunities to help move food onto to the plates of those in need should go to www.endhunger.org, contact Mary Lynn Botts at ALglean@endhunger.org, or call 205-245-3124. You can also follow events on Facebook at Society of St. Andrew-Alabama.

"It is amazing when people come together how quickly the work gets done. Potatoes were bagged and loaded in an hour's time," Botts said. " Volunteers then went to a local farm to harvest turnips and collards from the Bagwell Farm. What a difference they made in the lives of others!"



SOCIETY OF ST. ANDREW

The Society of St. Andrew recovers edible food that doesn't meet market standards and gets it into the mouths of the hungry.

CHILDREN SPREAD CHRISTMAS CHEER AT HANCEVILLE FIRST UNITED METHODIST

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

HANCEVILLE - On Thursday night, the children of Hanceville First United Methodist Church's preschool hosted a delightful Christmas program for the many proud parents, grandparents, families and friends. The children sang and danced to happy Christmas songs while the crowed giggled and craned their necks to ensure they saw the whole sweet little group.

"This is the first year the one and two year olds are doing something together," said Adrian Burtis, one of the teachers at the school. "We're super, super excited. We have been practicing pretty much all this month, last month and part of October."

The one and two-year-old children did the Reindeer Hokey Pokey with the help of their teachers, Laura Taylor, Christina Crandall, and Tanna Garrison. The little ones, some with more gusto than others, hammed it up as they turned in circles in their wobbly Hokey Pokey dance moves. Clearly there was some true talent in the bunch!

Mary Kreps and Caitlin Tebben led the three-year-old class in a heartfelt rendition of "Joy to the World".

The small childrens' large voices melted the hearts of their audience and left everyone wanting so much more.

The spirit of Christmas was truly with this little group and their excitement was infectious. The final group of children to perform for the night was the four-year-old class. Watching their teachers, Tamara Pitts and Adrian Burtis, the gang sang with full emotion and sincerity, "Do You Want to Build a Snowman" from Walt Disney's infamous movie "Frozen".

Then to lighten things up, each of the children were given a set of maracas and together they sang "Feliz Navidad". Shaking their instruments violently to the left – a few to the right – back and forth, the class had a great time showing out for the packed room.

When things settled down a bit, the older children were invited to tell everyone what they wanted for Christmas. The requests varied and each child was quite sure of what they wanted from Santa and each seriously insisted they had been very good all year long.

After the program, Reverend Paul Campbell said a special blessing and invited everyone to enjoy a delicious meal together. The food was out of this world and the smiling faces of the daycare staff who served it up was truly something special.

"All of us teachers would like to thank the parents," said Burtis, "because without them we could not do what we do," she smiled warmly.

If you are looking for a church to attend or are interested in the preschool at Hanceville First United Methodist Church, feel free to contact them. They are located at 704 Commercial Street NE, Hanceville, AL 35077. Their phone number is 256-352-5536 and they can be found online at www.hancevillefumc.org.



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Preschoolers perform with maracas to "Feliz Navidad" as part of Hanceville First United Methodist Church's Christmas program.

Christmas (from Front)

inside her home and out - and it shows!

From the moment you get anywhere near 126 County Road 1468, Cullman, AL 35058 you can see the glow of a sea beautiful Christmas lights coming from her yard.

Then once you turn and approach her property, a sign will tell you to turn to a specific radio station.

After you've fiddled with the radio dial and find the correct station, Christmas music fills your vehicle as you continue your visit through the lighted whimsical yard.

"I have about an acre covered in lights, it's amazing," said Sparks warmly.

"Oh, I don't put them up myself, my yard man Nick Payne and his girlfriend does. It's just unbelievable stuff that he has been able to do," she giggled as she thought about her yard.

Nativity scenes, Christmas packages beautifully wrapped and stacked, Santa Clauses, reindeer and just about every imaginable scenario can be found just by looking through the continuous landscape.

In the trees, penguins in hot air balloons look down at you, while Santa and Mrs. Claus swing away together on a swing. Santa can also be seen on a seesaw with three of his silly reindeer on the other end hanging on for their lives.

The place promises to bring out the child in everyone who passes by and takes a look. But what most folks don't know is that Mrs. Sparks has the inside of her home decorated for Christmas too – and by decorated, I'm talking everything is clothed in nothing but Christmas!

Each room in the house, including the two bathrooms, has a theme. The dining room has all kinds of pink ornaments and various ribbons and candles.

Exquisite, collectable plates and fine china are displayed around a pink centerpiece and a Christmas tree, decorated with pink balls and dangles, stands to the side.

There is a bedroom that is known as the Blue Room, and it has hints of blue scattered throughout.

A Christmas tree covered in blue ornaments stands proudly in the corner and brings out the blue in the other parts of the room beautifully.

The kitchen has a whole counter set up as Candy Land and gingerbread men and women cover the rest of the area. There are singing dolls and snoring Santas if you look carefully.

But the best part about Mrs. Sparks and her Christmas home is the fact that nothing is ever the same two years in a row.

"It takes a lot of patience to put this all out but it's something I love," she said.

"I want people to come out and visit every year, so I have to keep things looking different," she explained while munching on a Christmas cookie.

Inside Mrs. Sparks' home is not open to the public, but everyone is encouraged to drive out and see her wonderful light display.

Again, she is located at 126 County Road 1468, Cullman, AL 35058 and would love for everyone to come out and see it during the holiday season.

"It's really something to see because Cullman doesn't have anything like this," she said with a smile and a wink. "It's just one of those things I like to do and I plan to keep it up as long as I can."

ANNUAL CULLMAN CHRISTMAS PARADE BRINGS FAMILIES TOGETHER TO CELEBRATE HOLIDAY SEASON

Katie Dansby
katie@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - The Cullman Christmas Parade has put another year in the books. Folks came to enjoy the holiday floats, Christmas characters, the tree lighting ceremony and productions by the Cullman High School theatre department.

Rebecca Branch, chair of the Christmas in Cullman Board said, "Everything has had great attendance this year." She thanked the efforts of all the banking, retail, nonprofit, and county organizations that came together to help make all the Christmas in Cullman events a success.

She specifically mentioned Waid Harbison, Beth Kibler, and the marketing department of Cullman County Parks & Recreation and their efforts in putting the plan together for the parade festivities.

Last year the parade was rained out, but the threat of rain this year did not keep people away. The weather was perfect for an evening out with the family. Sarah Orlando walked in the parade with Karma of Cullman.

"Karma of Cullman is a non-profit organization group that helps needy people. They don't take money donations. They take clothing, household items, and toys, and they're helping families this year for Christmas."

Sarah became involved with Karma by seeing their Facebook page. She was glad to walk with them in the parade and said her favorite part was making all the attendees happy. "Seeing smiles on everyone's faces and waving hi to everybody was fun. I had a great time."

Jaylee Canter enjoyed watching the parade roll by. "My favorite part was probably seeing the Cullman High School theatre department because I'm involved in that."

She came because her best friend was in the Charlie Brown production. "It's good," she added.



KATIE DANSBY/CULLMANSENSE

After being rained out the previous year the Cullman Christmas Parade was held without interruption.

She also enjoyed the tree lighting ceremony and said the best part was the Christmas colors.

She said she will definitely come back next year and gave some advice for the folks that did not make it this year. "You definitely need to come next year."

Another parade onlooker, Mandolyn Powell, enjoyed seeing her friends on the Charlie Brown float from East Elementary.

"Whenever my friends called my name from the float and one of them hugged me," she said was her favorite part.

Mandolyn said she had a good time with her mom, dad, and two sisters. She was glad she could come watch her friends.

There are a couple of Christmas in Cullman events you can still enjoy including the 12th Annual Sportsman Lake Park Winter Wonderland that began on December 5 and will last until December 23, and St John's 2nd Annual Christmas Festival and Market on Saturday, December 13. Mark these events in your calendar to help make your holiday season fun and festive!

27TH ANNUAL CRAFT SHOW SHOWCASES CHRISTMAS WARES

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - A wonderland of beautiful Christmas crafts and gifts could be found at the annual Christmas Arts & Crafts Show this past weekend. Vendors of every trade turned out to sell their wares to eager customers at this event hosted by the Cullman City Parks & Recreation at the Cullman Civic Center.

Approximately 70 vendors from across North Alabama and further came to see old friends, make new friends, and to hopefully make some money. Karen Seybold, manager of the Civic Center, spoke about the process of finding these great vendors.

"We scout out potential vendors throughout the year," said Seybold.

"When we see a vendor we like, we give them our card, and then we send out our applications in June. Then we have a committee that makes selections from applications that we have. Everything has to be hand crafted by the vendors. We were happy to welcome a lot of new vendors this year."

Amongst those new vendors were Nancy Clark and Jeanne Rubolin with J N J Originals. Their booth consisted of crotched accessories, beautiful wreaths, signs, and more.

"We drove from Florence to be here today," said Clark. "We did Oktoberfest, and we were asked by several people if we were going to be here for the Christmas show. So I called and immediately signed up. We love Cullman and will come back for anything here. We love the people here, and we always get a great set up when we come here."

Clark was especially pleased with the Christmas craft show.

"This is our first year doing this," she said. "It is very appealing for us to do a show that is all hand crafted. This was an amazing set up, and we lucked out with our spot here right when you walk in, especially since it's our first year. Business has been very, very good at this show. We will be back."

While there were a lot of new faces at the show, a lot of old favorites came back as well. Like Jackie Wade from Heart's Desire in Holly Pond, who sells framed inspirational art and hand-poured candles.

"I have been coming to this show since about 1990," said Wade. "We started out with wooden plaques that I hand-painted with bible verses on them. Then when that went out of style, we started doing framed pictures, and the candles that we make are all hand poured candles."

According to Wade, the Christmas show has always been an event she looks forward to.

"We've been doing this show for years," she said. "I love getting to meet new people, and also seeing all of my old friends that come back every year, or those that use to do the show that visit. It's like a big family reunion every year. This show is great for us since we are out in Holly Pond to let people know who we are and where we are located."

The annual Christmas Arts & Crafts Show has become a Cullman Christmas tradition as this year marked its 27th anniversary. Old friends reconnected and new friends were made. Happy customers were able to buy one of a kind gifts and items, and small businesses were able to network and make money. It was a great day for all.



CHELSEA SPARKS/CULLMANSENSE

Loyal customers from across the state traveled to the annual Christmas Arts & Crafts Show to purchase handmade items.

For more information about the arts and crafts show, call 256-734-9157 or go by and visit them at 510 5th Street SW in Cullman.

For more info on the business Heart's Desire, call 256-796-8615, or drive on out to 555 Co. Rd. 794 Cullman, AL 35055.

You can look up J N J Originals on Facebook, or give them a call at 256-284-2684.

EMS (from Front)

location. As a part of the building and grounds committee, they were responsible for finding a location for the EMS building. "We were tasked with finding a replacement for this location. We looked all over town at dozens and dozens of locations and cost projections and response time." He said that the response time was a critical factor to consider. They knew the building had to be sufficiently located for the sake of the public.

"We kept coming back to this same place and we finally came up with the idea to tear out the wall and use downstairs for the administrative offices. Previously they only used the upper floor for four ambulances with the offices in the back." Now the offices are downstairs and at least a dozen ambulances can fit in the upper level.

"The best feature of its location is the response time. It was the best location we could find," he said. Frey said that the building was purchased using insurance money along with other monetary funds. "We had to be really careful about how much money we spent." The new facility included many critical decisions, but the most critical decision to make as a board was the location. "We looked at so many places," Frey concluded.

Cullman Emergency Medical Services is located at 601 2nd Ave SW Cullman, AL 35055 and can be reached by telephone at: 9-1-1 (emergency) or 256-734-1524.

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.

3rd Annual Art After Hours for Chamber for Charities
The 3rd Annual Art After Hours for Chamber for Charities will take place from 5:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. at TP Country Club. This event, $15.00 for Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce members and $20.00 for future members, is open to all! There will be live music, a silent auction, great art for purchase, games and networking among attendees. Local artists have submitted some of their works for the silent auction. Funds raised will be split between the artists and the local food bank, Caring for Kids. Attendees are asked to bring a toy or canned food item to this event to benefit those less fortunate. REQUIRED reservations must be made by contacting the Chamber at 256-734-0454 or thru info@cullmanchamber.org. Come take part in this annual holiday tradition and share an enjoyable evening with your friends and fellow community members!

'Women's Community Prayer' Group Meeting
All interested women of all faiths and churches are invited to attend the newly formed 'Womens' Community Prayer' Group meeting which meets at 10 a.m. at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in their Chapel. This prayer ministry is open to women of all churches and faiths who wish to pray for our families, our city and our country. For additional information please contact Nancy Spurgeon, 256-737-0580. This prayer group also is open to those who would like to participate but cannot attend. They are welcome to join as 'Partners in Prayer'. Please call and get connected.

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.

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.

'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

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.

COA Retiree & Senior Citizens Christmas Party
Today is the annual COA Retiree & Senior Citizens Christmas Party which will be held at the McGukin Civic Center in Cullman. Doors for this highly anticipated event open at 9 a.m. Bring your Christmas spirit and get ready to 'ring in the season'!

Saturday

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.

Christmas Festival and Dinckelberg Outdoor Market
Today is the annual Christmas Festival and Dinckelberg Outdoor Market sponsored by St. Paul's Lutheran, St. John's Evangelical Protestant and Christ Lutheran Churchs. This event will take place at 512 22nd Avenue SE from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. There will be a free children's inflatables and carnival area, over 40 vendors, live music and carriage rides. Also a live interactive walk-through featuring the 'Story of the Birth of Jesus will take place during the day and bring to life the real meaning of Christmas! For additional information or to obtain a spot to set up your booths, please call 256-734-0344.

Next Monday

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

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Looking Ahead

Ceremony of Carols with Cantani della donna
Cantanti della donna, Cullman's premier women's ensemble, will present Benjamin Britten's Ceremony of Carols on Tuesday, December 9th, 7:00 pm at the Hartselle First Baptist Church. Accompanied by Harp, Britten's Ceremony of Carols is a real holiday treat. Cantanti della donna and the Cullman Community Band will hold a JOINT concert at WSCC, the Evelyn Burroughs Center for the Arts on Monday, December 15th at 7 p.m. All are free. For more information call 256-736-2622.

LOCAL ENTERTAINMENT
Sponsored by Busy Bee Café

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

TUESDAY
- Pickin' Under the Pavilion at the Senior Center at 6:30 p.m.
- Square Dancing Lessons at East Point Community Center from 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- Kayaking lessons at the Cullman Wellness and Aquatics Center at 6 p.m. and 7:15 p.m.
- Trivia Night at Rodney G's at 7 p.m.
- Happy Hour at Moe's from 3-7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY
- Karaoke Night at Grumpy'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
- Live Trivia at Busy Bee Café from 6-8 p.m.
- Kayaking lessons at the Cullman Wellness and Aquatics Center at 6 p.m. and 7:15 p.m.
- Open Mic Night at Brothers from 8 p.m. to close
- Happy Hour at Moe's from 3-7 p.m.
- Karaoke Night at Cadillac Ron's at 7 p.m.

FRIDAY
- Live Music at Brothers
- Live Music at Moe's
- Happy Hour at Moe's from 3-6 p.m.
- Live Music at Cadillac Ron's from 8 p.m. to close

SATURDAY
- Live Music at Brothers
- Live Music at Moe's
- Happy Hour at Moe's from 3-6 p.m.
- Live Music at Cadillac Ron's from 8 p.m. to close

BUSY BEE CAFÉ HAPPY HOUR SPECIALS
Wine Wednesdays • Thirsty Thursdays
Fill'er Up Fridays • Sudsy Saturdays
LIVE TRIVIA EACH THURSDAY 6-8 P.M.

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THE BLESSINGS ARE SHARED AT MOMOSHE 103:

NEW CLOTHING STORE HELPS SUPPORT LOCAL CAUSES

Katie Dansby
katie@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - A new clothing store in the Warehouse District has arrived for the shoppers of Cullman to peruse. MoMoShe 103 is excited to now be a part of the local shopping community. The store launched on November 8, just in time for Christmas in Cullman Open House.

Owners and mothers Kay Shabel and Johnann Moore have been friends for 20 plus years and have shared many holidays, family events, and other activities together over that time.

"MoMoShe is a spur of the moment walk of faith. The opportunity presented itself at a time in our families' lives when we least expected it. God has opened the door and has continued to pave the path and guide us through this new adventure. We feel blessed that we have been so well received by the community and with that we wish to give back," Shabel said.

To give back to the community, the shop holds a philanthropy day every Saturday.

This means that 10 percent of their sales each Saturday will be donated to a worthy cause within the Cullman community.

For the first week, the store donated funds to Brooks Place Child Advocacy Center.

The following week, funds went to Cold Springs Baseball.

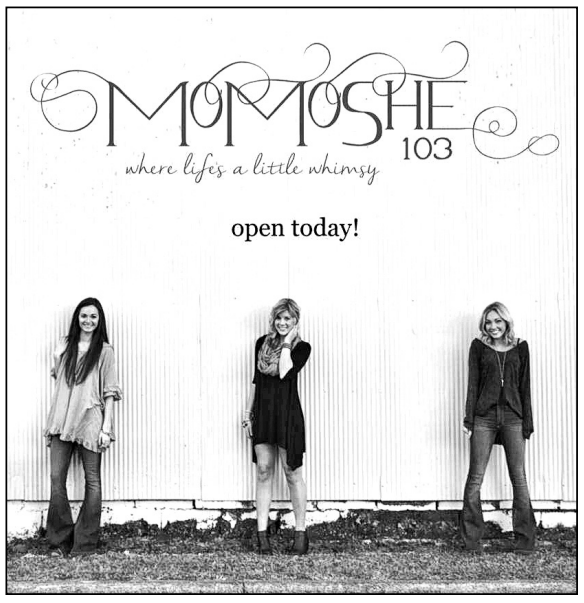
Their jewelry and gift items, many of which are made by individuals or local vendors, also support worthy causes.

"We are excited about the opportunity to share our blessings with our Cullman family," Shabel said.

The two ladies named the store after a combination of their daughters' names, Morgan Moore – MoMo, and Shelbi Shabel – She. The two daughters have been instrumental in helping design and inventory the store.

MoMoShe 103 offers clothing and accessories suitable for high school girls through adult women.

"We would term our clothing as trendy casual. Our attempt was to create a comfortable, urban chic environment that would allow our customers to casually browse in a relaxing, fun environment. Our décor is reflective of our diverse interests," Kay said.



CONTRIBUTED

MoMoShe 103 attempts to create a urban chic environment that is relaxing for customers.

Be sure to visit MoMoShe103 while you are doing your Christmas shopping for a fresh take on fashion. Kay and Johnann look forward to meeting new customers and are gracious for the support they have already received from customers and community members.

SPORTSMAN LAKE PARK'S 12TH ANNUAL WINTER WONDERLAND RECEIVES HIGH ATTENDANCE

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - Sportsman Lake Park's 12th Annual Winter Wonderland is now in full swing. From Highway 31, beautiful lights can be seen shining and sparkling through the night. For a small fee, folks can enter the park and slowly drive through the area to see just exactly what the park has up its sleeve this year.

On the drive, nativity scenes, elves, and all sorts of Santa Clauses can be enjoyed. On the hills, a sprinkling of lighted reindeer can be seen in the distance, watching carefully as the cars drive slowly by. Christmas wishes from various local businesses can be seen at different points along the way.

"We have been twice as busy as we were when we first opened up last year," said Delitha Marchman, park manager.

"We have had twice as many people this year. It has been great. Last night we had 253 cars come through, and each car had at least two to three people in it. On our biggest night last year, there were only 96 cars," she smiled. "Needless to say, we're really excited!"

Not only are the twinkling lights something special to see, but Santa Claus is on site each night, too. He will be taking requests and marking things down on his list.

Have you been naughty or nice? This is your time to discuss your case with the jolly old man while there's still time.

Each person who visits Santa will receive a candy cane. Hot chocolate is available for purchase for all those who are cold and thirsty.

There is one more attraction at this year's Winter Wonderland - a Victorian horse and carriage! The carriage will be available to all those interested in taking a ride around the park.

"We've had a lot of children come and see Santa Claus because they can come and see him for free. Five dollars for a car full of people is not a bad price at all. We've even had people come by the truck load," she giggled. "But they've had a great time."

If you are interested in seeing the Winter Wonderland at Sportsman Lake Park for yourself, feel free to go by and join the fun.

From now until December 23, the park will be open from 5-9 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 5-10 p.m.

The park is located at 1544 Sportsman Lake Road NW, Cullman, AL 35055.

Price List:

- $5.00 a car to enter the park
- 50 cents for hot chocolate (sold in the concession stand)
- Visit and pictures with Santa (with your own camera) FREE!
- $4.00 a person for a carriage ride (age 5 and under free)
- $3.00 a person for a train ride (age 1 and under free)

The schedule for December 5-23 is as follows:

- Monday - Thursday 5-9 p.m.
- Friday - Sunday 5-10 p.m.

Carriage rides will be available:

- December 5 & 6
- December 12 & 13
- December 14 - 22

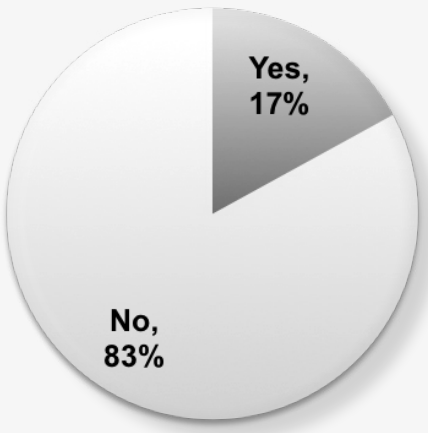


FACEBOOK

Everyone who visits Santa receives a candy cane.

Poll

Did you participate in Black Friday?



This Week's Poll
Do you favor the lottery in the state of Alabama?
Vote Today at CullmanSense.com/Poll

cullman city parks & recreation

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

www.cullmanrecreation.org
256-734-9157

- **Annual Christmas Arts & Crafts Show** will be at the Cullman Civic Center on Friday and Saturday December 5-6. The show will feature handmade items only such as jewelry, clothing, wood working, outdoor items, home items, gifts, and much more. The event will be free to attend and hours will be 9am-9pm on Friday and 9am-5pm on Saturday. Call 256-734-9157 for info.
- **Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony** will be held as part of Christmas in Cullman on December 5, following the Christmas Parade through downtown at 6pm. The Tree Lighting will take place at Depot Park and also include free photos with Santa, entertainment, and more. The event as well as the parade is free to the public.
- **Phone Calls from Santa:** Sign up to have your child receive a FREE call from Santa. Registration is on a first come, first serve basis, and spaces are limited. Sign-ups will open Dec. 1 at the Civic Center. Call 256-734-9157 for more info.
- **Ten Years Younger classes** held at the Cullman Civic Center every Tuesday at 10am with Ann Caretti. Classes are $45 for 6 weeks. Call 256-734-9157 for more information.
- **Latin, Swing, and Ballroom Dancing Classes** at the Cullman Civic Center, Thursdays at 6:30pm for beginners and 7:30pm for advanced classes. Register at the Civic Center or call 256-734-9157 for more information.
- **Rock Climb at Hurricane Creek Park!** Come join the 1st Time Rock Climbing program, Saturday mornings at Hurricane Creek Park. Group rates are available, and no experience is required! Call ahead at 256-734-2125.
- **Yoga Classes** are offered at the Cullman Wellness & Aquatic Center as well as a host of other fitness classes including Pilates, Zumba, spin, class, aerobics, water aerobics and more. Classes are offered 7 days a week. Check the front desk or call 256-775-SWIM for class schedule and times.
- **Youth Archery Classes** are held every Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday at the Cullman Civic Center. Classes are $40 per month and are available for beginners, intermediate, and advanced archers. Bows are provided, or you can bring your own. Register at the Cullman Civic Center or call 256-734-9157 for information.

What's Online

From Trees to Art: Meet Master Craftsman Jarrod Smitherman

Cullman County is home to a variety of talented artists. For example, Mr. Jarrod Smitherman is a Vinemont High School teacher by day and master craftsman by night. Jarrod has the ability to take plain wood and turn it into usable art. Each item is unique because no two...

qrne.ws/288



Grace Café: Free Food and Fellowship

If you are looking for an opportunity to socialize, enjoy live music and most of all eat, then plan on visiting Grace Café at Grace Episcopal Church. The café opens in the parish hall every fourth Tuesday to serve heaping portions of delicious food and enjoy warm fellowship. Lunch is served from 11:30...

qrne.ws/289

Former employee now New Owner of Cutie Patooties

There are some stores in Cullman that are old favorites. Establishments that have been around for years and everyone knows the place you are referring to when you bring up the name. Cutie Patooties, is one such place, and after years of business is still going strong, but under...

qrne.ws/290

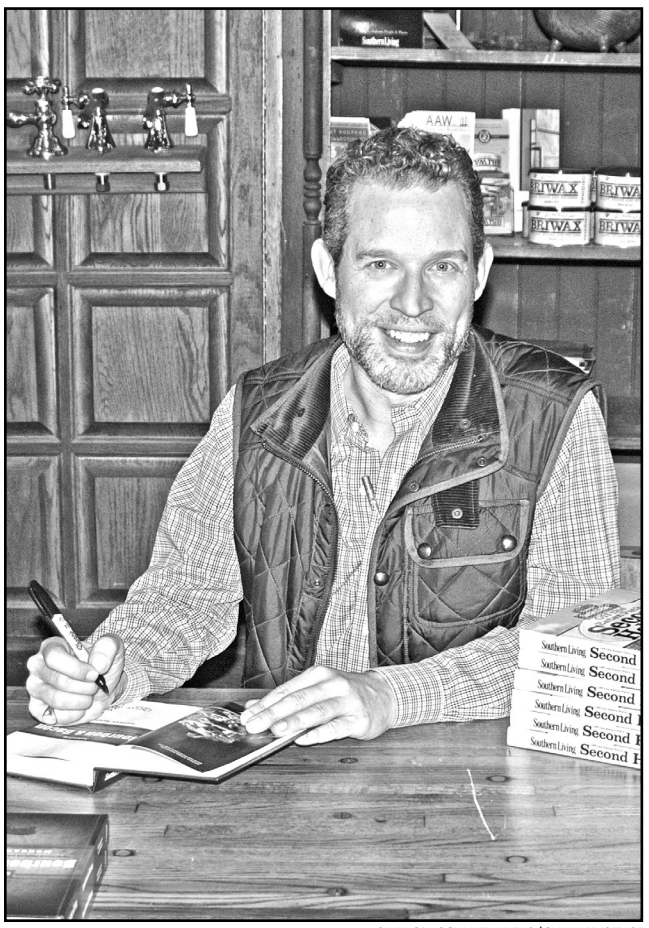
THERE'S "BOURBON & BACON" AT SOUTHERN ACCENTS: *AMERICAN GRILLED* JUDGE SHARES FAVORITE RECIPES

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - On Saturday Southern Accents hosted author Morgan Murphy. The personable Murphy signed copies of his new book "Bourbon & Bacon" and mingled with his fans. A lover of Southern Cuisine, Morgan is also a judge on the Travel Channel's television show *American Grilled* and has authored several other books including the "Off The Eaten Path", which includes a recipe from Cullman's own Rumors Deli.

"My latest book, 'Bourbon & Bacon', is number one in *Wine and Spirits* right now," Murphy explained.

"It's a collection of 150 of my favorite recipes. About a third of the book is my own recipes, another third are from my favorite chefs across the South, the other third are the best of Southern Living's archives. I combed their archives for the best bacon and the best bourbon recipes."



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Murphy's entertaining 150 recipe book gives recommendations on bourbon and bacon to buy.

"I've visited dozens of distilleries and pig farms across Kentucky and the rest of the South interviewing farmers and master distillers," he continued.

"I give recommendations of which bacons to buy and why you should buy premium bacon, and then give a lot of recipes that use both of those ingredients. I then give a history of bourbon and then there are 75 bourbon recommendations for people who may not be familiar with bourbon as bourbon can be overwhelming."

Murphy looked right at home as he sat and signed copies of his book at Southern Accents.

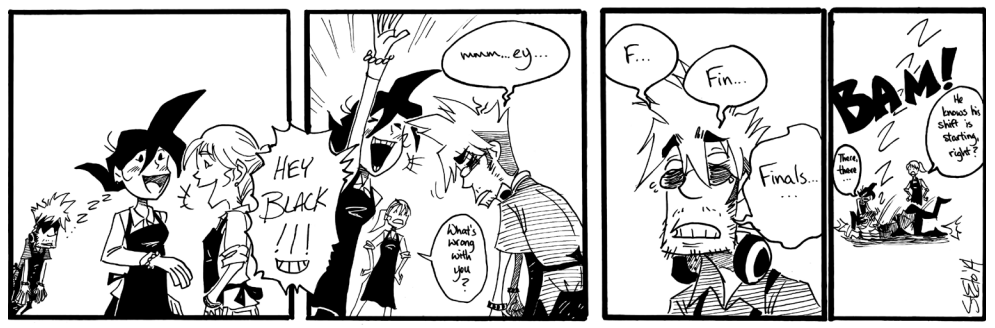
A true southern gentleman, he explained all the various aspects of bourbon, as compared to other common alcoholic drinks.

"Bourbon is the other southern drink – it's sunshine in a glass," he smiled warmly. "So I try to distill that, if you will, for the average reader."

If you are a fan of bacon, bourbon, or the combination of both, you will enjoy this entertaining book by Morgan Murphy. If you missed the book signing at Southern Accents on Saturday and would like to purchase a copy of this book, or one of Murphy's other books, go to www.morganmurphy.co.

COMICS

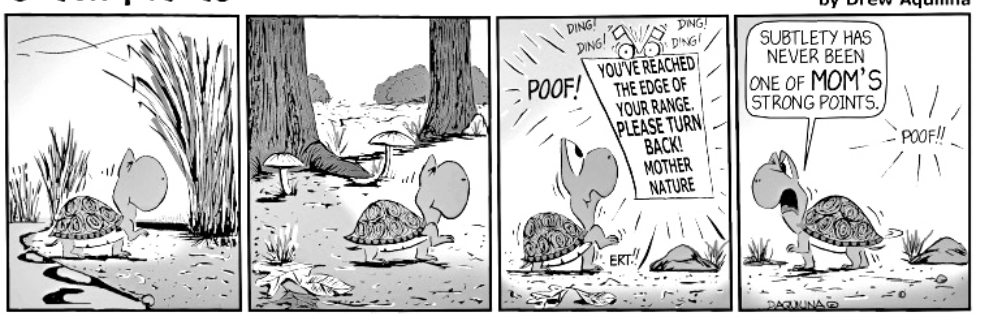
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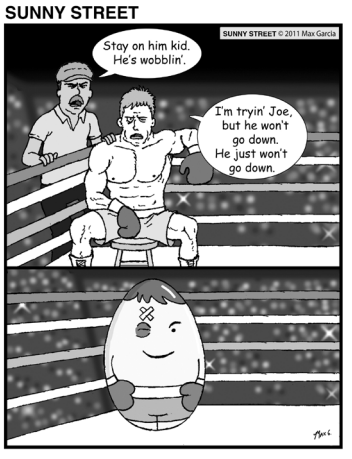
MAMA'S BOYZ www.jerrycraft.net **JERRY CRAFT**



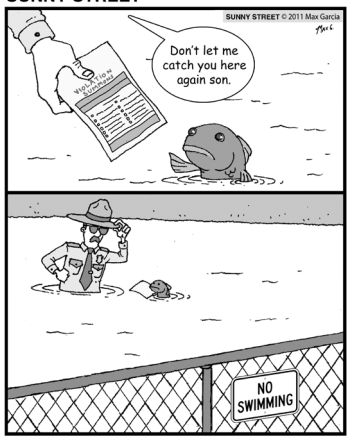
Green Pieces© by Drew Aquilina



SUNNY STREET



SUNNY STREET



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CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS WITH DINNER AND A SHOW: STONE BRIDGE FARMS HOSTS DINNER THEATER

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - For those that are looking for family entertainment at affordable prices this Christmas season, you might want to head to Stone Bridge Farms. The event venue that has made a name for itself within the community for their food and atmosphere for all occasions is offering yet another holiday event.

"The Christmas Extravaganza is on the 15th," said Event Coordinator Janet Fortner. "We will be opening doors at 5 p.m. Santa will be here for the kids that purchase tickets, and those kids will be able to take a photo for free with those tickets. Then at 6 p.m., we will be serving the meal."

One of the best things about Stone Bridge Farms is their delicious food. Always cooked fresh and mouthwatering, the plated meal is sure to satiate your appetite. With ham, dressing, mashed potatoes, green beans, rolls, and dessert, it is a perfect holiday meal.

"While the meal is going on, we will also have entertainment," said Fortner. "At 7 p.m., The Factory Dance Studio has a few acts like ballet, then ballroom dancers, and then around 7:15 p.m., we will start the nativity story. We will be showing a live nativity story that will have live animals in the show."

The show will wrap up around 8 p.m. Tickets are on sale for $12 per person, and for a night of food and fun, you cannot beat that price. To reserve your table for this event, please call Stone Bridge Farms at 256-734-9765, or go by and visit in person at 281 County Road 717, Cullman, AL 35055.

"One of the reasons Ron opened the Brown Stone Centre was to do dinner shows like this," Fortner said.

"This will be our first dinner show. We want to get our name out in the public more, and let people know that we are more than just a wedding venue. We want to bring the community out here, and let them have fun, and see that we are much more than weddings alone."

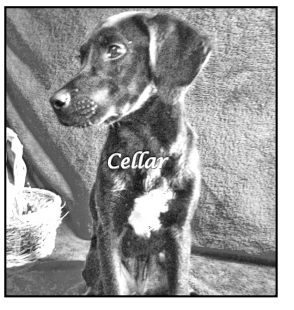
PETS OF THE WEEK

BrandyButter TinselPie



Hello! My name is BrandyButter TinselPie, and I am about 2 yrs old. I am a Pit Bull mix, and I currently weigh 50 lbs. I am a stray but if no one claims me, I will go up for adoption on 12/10/14 at 9 a.m. I am full of life and I love to play. I am ready for my new family and forever home! Please come visit me today and you will fall in love with me.

Cellar



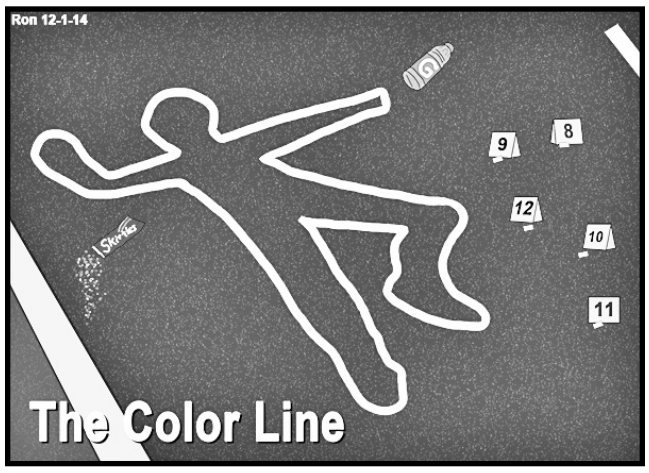
Hello! My name is Cellar, and I am about 6 months old. I am believed to be a Lab mix, and I currently weigh 17 lbs. I am spirited and I enjoy company. I can't wait to meet my new best friend and forever companion. Come visit me today, and I will steal your heart!

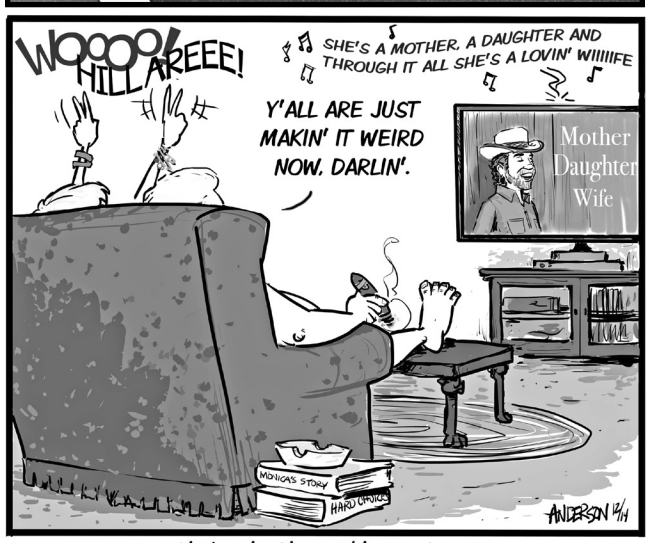
ADOPT THESE PETS TODAY

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





theinsolentlemon.blogspot.com

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Back Issues

OPINION

LUCK IS NOT A SECURITY POLICY

Robert F. Dodge, M.D.
PeaceVoice

We live under the constant threat every moment of every day of nuclear annihilation. The existence of 16,300 nuclear weapons on the planet places our very survival in great peril. Whether by plan or accident a nuclear attack has no meaningful medical or humanitarian response. As chronicled by Eric Schlosser in his book "Command and Control," the number of times we have come close to nuclear disaster is mind boggling and it is a matter of sheer luck that we have not experienced a nuclear catastrophe. Luck is not a security policy and ultimately will run out unless we change our thinking and work to abolish nuclear weapons entirely.

The specious argument of nuclear deterrence has been a major driving force of the global nuclear arsenals. Under such outmoded and misguided thinking, if you have one weapon then I must have two and thereafter you must get three, providing the driving force of the arms race. Non-nuclear states are enticed to develop their own weapons just to have a seat at the table. This hardly demonstrates leading by example.

Recent scientific studies have demonstrated the potential deaths of two billion people from a limited regional nuclear exchange using ½ of 1 percent of the global nuclear arsenals.

The climatic changes from such an exchange are now predicted to last 20 years, placing millions more at risk. Again, no adequate medical or humanitarian response to such a scenario. As with any other massive threat to public health from Ebola to Polio to AIDS and TB, we must prevent this before it happens.

Non nuclear nations across the globe in concert with civil society are demanding a change and freedom from being held hostage to the nuclear powers. The nuclear powers are obligated under Article VI of the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty to work in good faith to abolish nuclear weapons yet all nuclear nations are working to modernize their weapons, including the U.S with proposals to spend a trillion dollars over the next 30 years.

This can hardly be called a good faith effort and has led to the tiny non-nuclear nation of the Marshall Islands, home of 12 years of U.S. nuclear testing, to courageously bring suit against the U.S. and all nuclear states for breach of the NPT treaty.

Next week the Vienna Conference on Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons will be hosted by the government of Austria and more than 150 nations representing 3/4 of the nations of the world will be in attendance, along with international organizations, the Red Cross and Red Crescent, academic experts and representatives of civil society, including Physicians for Social Responsibility, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons and the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation among others.

The Vienna meeting follows upon two prior conferences, one in Oslo, Norway, in 2013, attended by 127 nations, and one in Nayarit, Mexico, last February, attended by 146 nations. The United States and U.K. were conspicuously absent at both conferences. Among all of the nuclear weapons states, only India and Pakistan sent delegations to the Oslo and Nayarit conferences.

In an historic move, the U.S. has announced it will send an official delegation to the Vienna conference and this week following suit the U.K. has announced that it too will send a delegation. This shift of position led by the United States and U.K. is to be applauded as the first two members of the P5 nuclear nations to step forward.

When he came to office, President Obama promised that he would seek the security of a world free of nuclear weapons. We can hope that this decision to attend the Vienna conference is just the first step toward further meaningful action in their abolition. It provides an opportunity for the U.S. to lead by example and take the bold steps necessary to eliminate all nuclear weapons once and for all.

OPINION

BEYOND FERGUSON: THE DEEPER ISSUE

Michael N. Nagler
PeaceVoice

It can only be a good thing that the attention of the nation is focused on the police killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO, and its aftermath. However, if the debate continues to be on the details of this particular case – many of which will likely never be known – or even on the growing problem of police heavy-handedness, or even the besetting problem of racism in America, we will never reach a solution to these tragedies.

As one minister from the region pointed out, every time a black person is killed by a white police officer, the country is split in two. What we need is a national dialogue on unity, on healing. I agree; but I think we need to go even further.

We need to remember the prophetic words that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. pronounced from the pulpit of Riverside Church in New York City on April 4, 1967, in his famous sermon called Beyond Vietnam: "The war in Vietnam is but a symptom of a far deeper malady within the American spirit," he said, and to cure this malady "we must rapidly begin the shift from a thing-oriented society to a person-oriented society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights, are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, extreme materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered." King instinctively knew and often said that racism was a form of violence, so until violence itself was addressed racism would never leave us. And he was right.

I am not in the habit of patronizing the mainstream media, but I did see that even as the reports and debates over Ferguson rolled on last week they were interspersed, on the TV set in the men's locker room at the gym I go to, with a "reality" show where a woman sneered in rage against someone else (not being able to hear the sound from the room I was in only made the mental state of the people clearer). Sure enough, the word RAGE in huge letters came on the screen, evidently the name of this show or the whole program, and indeed the more she raged the more the audience roared in approval.

Am I watching a gladiatorial game in ancient Rome or a reality show in America, I asked myself. My point is this: if we do not want the brutality of some policemen, or of anyone else, we will have to stop the brutalization of the human image that has become, even since King's day, a norm of popular "entertainment."

No act of violence occurs in a vacuum; it occurs in an atmosphere, a climate, a culture. In the Beyond Vietnam speech King connected the dots between the racism of our northern or southern ghettos and the violence that pervaded our "policy and values."

We can specify today that the way we're supporting wrong policies and wrong values is very largely with the dehumanization, what he called the "thing-orientation" of our commercial media. A lot of good research has established this point – research that is no less valid for its being largely ignored.

Of course, there are other things we can do to address the kind of violence of which the tragic killing of Michael Brown has become an icon. We can stop militarizing the police – a blatant violation of the principle, enshrined in the Posse Comitatus Act in this country, that in a democracy military forces are not to be used against its own people.

We can greatly spread and support the establishment of peace teams that have been so effective – often moreso than, and appreciated by, local police – in making police intervention unnecessary in certain community situations and calming disturbances that are likely to occur after a tragedy like this one. But measures like these by themselves will not go far enough unless we are also addressing the root cause, the cause that underlies racism itself, which is violence.

And since a large part of today's violence comes from the images of who we are and how we are to relate to one another, and since these images are put before us most effectively by our violent media, there is one simple step every one of us can take: not to watch them. This is the platform on which we can build the world of trust and peace we seem to be crying for, a world in which not only police brutality but all kinds of violence are all but gone.

Michael N. Nagler writes for PeaceVoice and is Professor emeritus at the University of California, Berkeley and author of The Nonviolence Handbook and The Search for a Nonviolent Future.

POSITION AVAILABLE

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