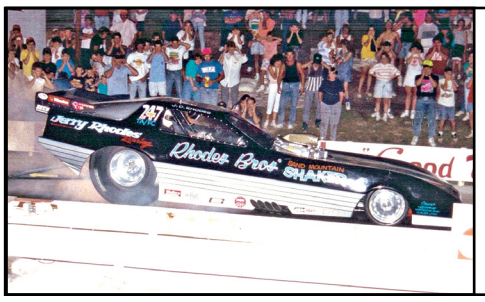
SERIES 5 • ISSUE 2 • JANUARY 12, 2015

CULLMANSENSE COMMUNITY MATTERS



THE HISTORY OF BAILEYTON "GOOD TIME" DRAG STRIP P4



CHELSEA SPARKS/CULLMANSENSE

BROOKS' PLACE HELPS THOSE WHO CANNOT HELP THEMSELVES P9

CASHIER AT BETHEL EXXON REDDYSTOP ROBBED AT KNIFEPOINT P2

THE BIG ONE THAT GOT AWAY
SCALES SEAFOOD MARKET CLOSES ITS DOORS P2

CHAMBERS FARM AND GARDEN SUPPLY: FEED, SEED, AND EXPERTISE P6

CRMC FOUNDATION AWARDS $6,000 FOR ONCOLOGY PATIENT ASSISTANCE P3

CHRIST COVENANT HOLDS PUBLIC FORUM ON RAISING CHRISTIAN CHILDREN P6

BR. LINUS KLUSCARITS MAKES SOLEMN PROFESSION OF VOWS P7

OUTSTANDING CITIZENS

TEACHING FOR THE FUN OF IT

Former English teacher Bonnie Bjornstad volunteers time to teach language to children and adults alike

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - Cullman County is chocked full of outstanding people – People who go above and beyond their daily lives to be of assistance to others in the community who need help. They ask for nothing in return and usually shy away from recognition. From the woman who cleans the church every week that goes unnoticed to the man who runs a business that helps support local charities, we are surrounded by a lot of really great people. CullmanSense would like to honor these outstanding citizens by sharing their stories with you.

The first Outstanding Citizen in the series is Mrs. Bonnie Bjornstad. Bonnie has been married to her husband David for 45 years and has two sons and two grandchildren. A mem-

p4

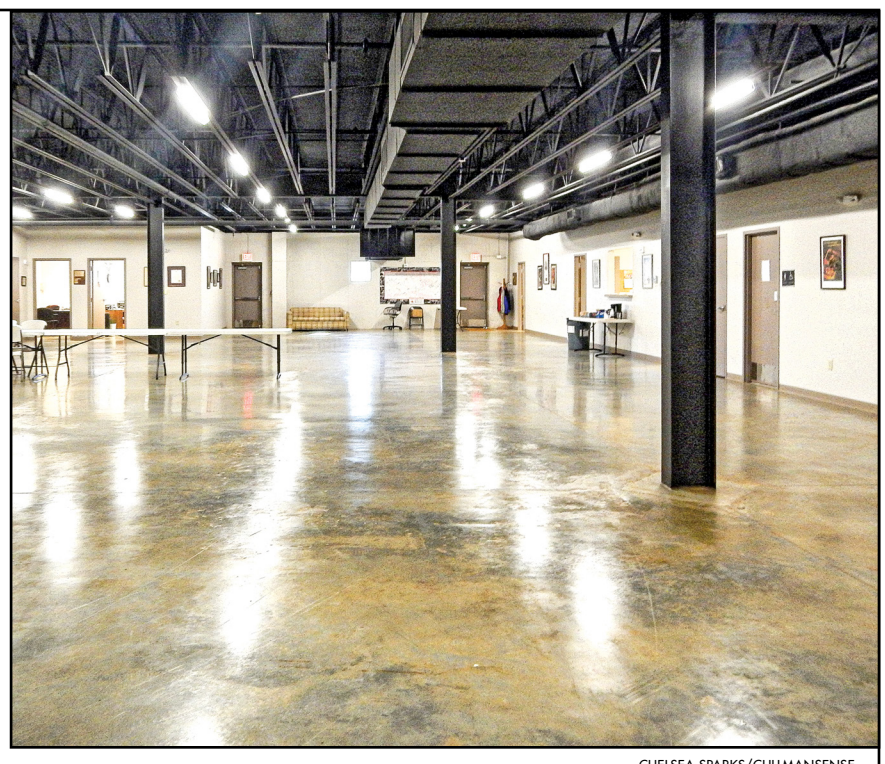


SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Bonnie finds teaching children to read very rewarding because it is critical for success in life.

SOMEWERE TO GO WHEN THE WEATHER GETS COLD

7,000 SQUARE FOOT COMMUNITY STORM FACILITY CAN HOUSE UP TO 400 PEOPLE DURING SEVERE WEATHER AND EXTREME COLD P3



CHELSEA SPARKS/CULLMANSENSE

The shelter has two-foot thick reinforced concrete walls and is a certified safe room by FEMA.

SCHOOLS FACE DIFFERENT WINTER WEATHER CONCERNS

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - Winter is in full swing, and that means heavier jackets, raised thermostats, and occasional school closings. This past week, Cullman County Schools were forced to delay classes for two days due to frigid temperatures, while Cullman City Schools were still opening at their regularly scheduled time.

There are a few reasons why there seems to be a difference of how the city and county handle significant weather situations, according

p6

NEW STATE TOURISM BOOK FEATURES JOHNNY'S BARBECUE

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

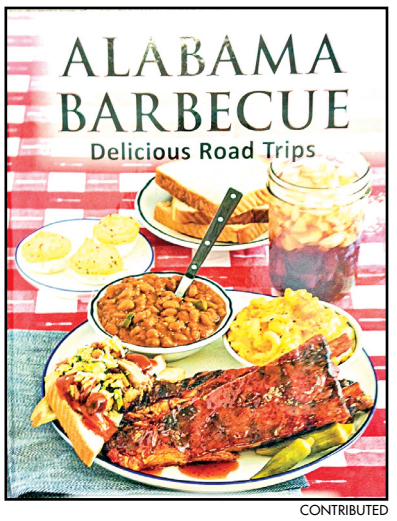
CULLMAN - Johnny's Barbecue has been in business for more than 52 years serving smoky barbecue to the masses. They are known for their friendly service, huge potatoes, and award winning barbecue. It is for these reasons and more that you can find their name in the new book released by the Alabama Tourism Department, Alabama Barbecue: Delicious Road Trips.

"The book is designed as a road trip guide for barbecue lovers," said Lee Sentell, state tourism director. Included in the book are legendary barbecue restaurants, promising newcomers, a profile of the "Top Ten Barbecue Folks" in the state, and a special recipe section.

Annette Thompson, former travel editor for *Southern Living* and president of the Society of American Travel Writers, and photographer Art Meripol took their own road trip across Alabama to explore the barbecue culture in the state.

"A recent survey revealed that the highest percentage of restaurants in Alabama are barbecue versus those in

p2



CONTRIBUTED

Alabama Barbecue: Delicious Road Trips is a guide for barbecue lovers.

GARDEN CITY LOOKS FORWARD TO 2015

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

GARDEN CITY - The beginning of a new year typically brings changes and improvement plans for both the citizens of Cullman County and the individual townships throughout. Garden City may be one of the smaller areas, but they have plans for big changes.

"We are planning to add a pavilion at the walking trail park this year," said Garden City Mayor, Tim Eskew. "We are going to go for a grant to do that."

The walking trail Eskew spoke of is located near the Town Hall. "I am also hoping, at this point, to go back to the proposed community center," Eskew continued.

"We are going to try to get a community center. It is something we have had on the plans for a while, but we've never really been able to get it off the ground yet, but it's one of the things we plan to do."

Garden City was described by

p5

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CASHIER AT BETHEL EXXON REDDYSTOP ROBBED AT KNIFEPOINT

Noah Chandler
noah@cullmansense.com

BETHEL - A cashier at the Bethel Exxon Reddystop came face to face with a robber armed with a hunting knife early Friday afternoon but was left unharmed as the suspect fled the scene.

"An armed robbery did take place early today at the Bethel Exxon. A male subject came into the store with a knife and held up the cashier at knifepoint before stealing in excess of $200," said Cullman County Sheriff Chief Deputy Max Bartlett. "Once he had the money, the male subject fled on foot to a nearby wooded area."

Bartlett said witnesses spotted the suspect changing clothes before entering into the wooded area.

"We had great cooperation with witnesses who spotted the suspect enter into the woods. They were able to describe the clothing he changed in to and were also able to give us a general location of where to begin our search," he said.

Deputies caught up to the suspect, Eric Gletty, 39, as he was returning to his home.

"They were able to spot him as he neared his residence and were able to apprehend him on his property," said Bartlett. "The deputies observed him throwing items into the doorway of the home. Those items recovered included money, a long knife, and a wooden toy pistol."

Eric Gletty, 39, is currently being detained at the Cullman County Detention Center and has been charged with Robbery - 1st degree. His bond is set at $60,000.

"We are all thankful no one was injured in this robbery," said Bartlett.

"Gletty suffered minor abrasions from where he was going through thick brush, but no one else suffered any injuries. I am thankful for the witnesses who came forwarded and for the deputies who responded quickly to capture the suspect."



CULLMAN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Eric Gletty, 39, is being detained at the Cullman County Detention Center and has been charged with Robbery - 1st degree.

HANCEVILLE LAYS GROUNDWORK TO TIE CITY TOGETHER

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

HANCEVILLE - The small but beautiful town of Hanceville has many things to be proud of. It is home to one of the best community colleges in the state, if not the country for starters. Beautiful parks and conscientious and caring citizens are at the core of what makes Hanceville special.

The town has seen hardship since the year that the April 2011 tornadoes ravaged parts of the town, but the community and those that govern it continue to move forward. It is a new year for Hanceville, and the Mayor and City Council look forward to seeing a lot of work evolve in the way of infrastructure.

"We got several big projects in the works," said Mayor Kenneth Nail. "We're closing out a couple of grants on a lift station upgrade. We've also got a big sidewalk project coming and hope to get started before spring that should tie a lot of places together. By the time it is finished, we should have several miles of new loops around Hanceville."

The new sidewalk additions should allow more pedestrian's space to walk safely from place to place around town.

"We're really looking forward to giving our citizens safer places to walk," said Nail. "We've been pushing for this for a long time. In the 30s, there was a sidewalk built on Blountsville Street that only got halfway down the street so we are going to tie in there, and also we're going to go down Dean Avenue that will tie into Commercial Street."

There will also be several hundred feet that will run down College Drive behind Hardee's that will run down to Restoration Church.

Nail also stated that there is also the possibility of new housing coming to the area.

"I've had a company call us," Nail said. "It's still very preliminary, but there is a possibility of around 58 new apartments coming to the area. So we're looking forward to that."

A lot has already been happening in the way of road work in the city. US Highway 31 that runs straight through the city has been under construction for many weeks.

"We're looking forward to them finally finishing up Highway 31," Nail said. "We are also getting a new pedestrian crosswalk and a signal at the intersection in front of Hardee's. We have a couple of blind residents, which that should really help. Of course, we have also put in a new traffic lights in front of the new nursing building at Wallace."

Wallace State is a crucial asset to the Hanceville community, according to the city council pro tem,

"One of my top priorities is the college here," said Jimmy Sawyer. "The college is so important to our city, and in the past, we have had a good working relationship with them. I really want to focus on the college in this next year to help them in any way that we can to promote their growth."

It would seem that 2015 will be the year of new infrastructure for the city. Mayor Nail and the Council hope that tying the different areas together will help to bring more cohesion to the city. Councilman Sawyer says that he is proud to represent the city of Hanceville that has always been his home.

"I love this city," Sawyer said. "I have lived here all of my life. I believe that we are a great town and when I go to bed at night I still feel safe here. Our police force and fire protection are as good as you will find anywhere, and it is just a great place to live and raise your family."

For further information call 256-352-9830. Hanceville Town Hall is located at 112 Main Street SE Hanceville, AL 35077.

Book (from Front)

any other state. That gives our state the bragging rights to declare ourselves The Barbecue State. Now that's not official, but nobody else can match our claim to be so devoted to one food group, assuming that Barbecue is a food group. If it isn't, it should be," said Sentell.

Among the 75 restaurants featured, Culllman's own Johnny's Barbecue made the cut. It is an exciting opportunity for the business to receive attention from all over the state.

"With so many Bar-B-Q restaurants in the state, it is an honor and quite humbling to be asked to be included in the recent book, Alabama Barbecue: Delicious Road Trips," said Gary Wiggins, Johnny's co-owner. "We have been family owned and operated going on 53 years now and we continue to work on serving the customer a quality product."

Johnny's has continued to grow over their 53 years, learning new and innovative ways to bring fresh barbecue to hungry patrons.

"This past year, we have worked on growing our delivery, catering, and vending side of the business," said Wiggins. "By vending at several events in the city and county, we have met people from out of town that have never heard of us. We have also had long time customers that request and support us at these local events. It has been a great experience going out to the people and allowing many to experience Johnny's for the first time."

There are a lot of things that have contributed to the success of the restaurant, but it all comes back to the loyal customers according to Wiggins.

Part of that repeat success comes from the hard work of the staff to help ensure all aspects of the restaurant run smoothly.

"We also take a lot of pride in maintaining a clean environment for both our customers and our employees. Without the support of many local repeat customers over the years and many faithful employees that have been with us a number of years, we could have never managed to stay in business for as long as we have," said Wiggins.

"Our carry out business continues to grow and we are constantly looking for new ways of packaging in order for the customer to enjoy a good meal when they get back to work or home. Customers have always and will continue to be first at Johnny's," he continued.

To order copies of the book, contact Carl Bates of Advance Central Services Alabama at 205-325-2237 or at cbates@acsal.com. The book is also available at Books-A-Million stores and online at amazon.com.

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THE BIG ONE THAT GOT AWAY: SCALES SEAFOOD MARKET CLOSES ITS DOORS

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - The city of Cullman has lost one of its best catches – Scales Seafood Market has closed its doors, leaving many seafood lovers around town in shock. The market, which was located at 221A 2nd Avenue SE, Cullman, brought the flavors of fresh seafood straight from the Gulf Coast into our homes earlier last year.

Scales held its grand opening on July 2, 2014 and then closed its doors just five months later on December 27, 2014. While they were here, Cullman residents were able to enjoy a variety of fresh seafood at affordable prices.

Will Dowdy and Dan Stricklin co-own the market as well as Brothers Kitchen and Pourhouse Restaurant. The restaurant is still going strong and will continue to offer the same fresh seafood from the Coast.

"The (seafood) market was having trouble sustaining itself, so we had to shut it down," said Dowdy.

"There was really not a big enough market or demographic here in Cullman for a fresh seafood market. People like the convenience of being able to buy it at the grocery store. It just didn't work out for us – You never know until you try."

In talking about the other reasons for the markets closing, Dowdy continued.

"We tried it. The timing was just poor on it – we probably should have started this time of year as opposed to the middle of summer," he said. "Our location was convenient to the restaurant, but it wasn't really optimal."

Even though the citizens of Cullman have lost Scales, they can take comfort in the fact that they can still get their seafood fix from Brothers.

If you or someone you know has not had a chance to check out Brothers Kitchen and Pourhouse Restaurant yet, now is a great time to go.

They are located at 216 1st Avenue SE, Cullman, AL and can be called at 256-735-4240.



FACEBOOK

Open for only five months, Scales Seafood Market's early closure is attributed to timing and market size.

CRMC FOUNDATION AWARDS $6,000 FOR ONCOLOGY PATIENT ASSISTANCE

Mary Beth Sellers
CRMC Foundation Contributor

CULLMAN - The Cullman Regional Medical Center Foundation recently awarded the CRMC Nurse Navigation Services Department a $6,000 grant to help oncology patients' in need of medical assistance.

The Foundation established the Oncology Patient Assistance Fund in 2001 to assist cancer patients with various medical expenses.

Over the past year, the Nurse Navigation team helped approximately 35 cancer patients specifically with medical needs for PET scans, medications, radiation treatments, x-rays, medical supplies, lab work, and medical bills.

"The Foundation is proud to be able to give back to local cancer patients seeking treatment," said CRMC Foundation President, Stephanie Jowers. "We are grateful for the Nurse Navigation team and what they do for our oncology patients."

For more information about the Oncology Patient Assistance Fund or other giving programs, contact the CRMC Foundation at 256-737-2565 or crmcfoundation@crmchospital.com or visit crmchospital.com/foundation.

Cold (from Front)

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - The new Beech Center has been a great asset to the Cullman County Center for the Developmentally Disabled (CCCDD), but it is also the new home to the Cullman Red Cross. The tornadoes of April 2011 destroyed the previous building. Fortunately, a union was formed that has proven to be mutually beneficial for all.

"It is actually a 7,000 square foot community storm facility," said CCCDD Executive Director Terry McGill. "And the Red Cross rents the space from us. Red Cross is our post storm agency, and our community shelter is a pre-storm."

The shelter is large enough to house close to 400 occupants. It has two-foot thick reinforced concrete walls that are strong enough to withstand massive amounts of wind and abuse. It is also a certified safe room by FEMA.

While the Red Cross volunteers are not tied to all uses of the building, they will help out when needed. McGill explains how the shelter works when the area is in use for severe weather.

"Basically what happens is when the Cullman County EMA says there is a tornado coming or it's freezing, they will call Chief of Police Kenny Culpepper," McGill said. "And he will supply a police officer, a fireman and an EMS worker. When it is in use as a warming station, the city will assign someone to come watch the place. Red Cross volunteers will help us with that from time to time."

The Red Cross' new facilities have been a dream come true to the team of volunteers who work there on a regular basis. The CCCDD has given a stable place for the Red Cross to house equipment and offer top-notch care to the residents of Cullman, according to Denise McClendon.

"I wasn't a volunteer when the tornadoes came through," she said. "As I understand it though, it was a very confined space. As far as the cots and supplies, everything was in storage units all over town. So when it was time to rebuild, the CCCDD came to us and said that they wanted to work out a shelter into the design of the building, and that they wanted to team up."

The shelter is a wide-open room, but the Red Cross has designated certain segments for different uses in the event of an emergency.

The sizable storage space in the back ensures that all supplies are close at hand when needed.

Large and surprisingly lavish bathrooms come equipped with showers and are handicap accessible. The half kitchen allows the team to store some perishable food and put plates of food together should the need arise.

The Red Cross currently has 24 total volunteers and board members, with 12 of those being very active in the group.

They are always looking for more people to help take care of the needs of Cullman and surrounding counties. To get updates on shelter openings for storms or warming stations, you can check out the Cullman EMA at Facebook.com/CullmanCountyEMA as regular updates are posted there. You can also call the Cullman Red Cross for more details on openings or ways you can help or volunteer at 256-734-0921.

The Beech Center and Red Cross (basement level) is located at 1803 Beech Avenue Southeast, Cullman, AL 35055.

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THE HISTORY OF BAILEYTON "GOOD TIME" DRAG STRIP

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

BAILEYTON - Are you looking for hotrod infused, family friendly, fun? Then head out to the races in Baileyton, Alabama!

The Baileyton "Good Time" Drag Strip was started back in 1966 by Mr. Jack Walker, who named the drag strip because he wanted everybody to have a "Good Time" while enjoying the racing action. After nearly 50 years, he continues to operate the strip and folks from all over the state come to race, holler, and have a good time!

While Jack runs the business, he also has a team of help that ensure things run safe and smoothly.

Sharron Walker, Jack's wife, handles the concessions, while Vance Easterwood, his daughter Lou Ann Easterwood, grandson Russ Easterwood, and Russ' wife Sasha do the rest.

Not everyone can drive a race car at the track, so there's always something for everyone going on. Children, as well as the adults, go nuts over the drag strip's mascot. When it makes an appearance, the crowds go wild.

"The track mascot is the Ole Tater Hauler," Vance explained. "This is a 1953 GMC truck, driven by Russ, that does a wheel stand all the way down the track," he said with smile.

As if the Ole Tater Hauler wasn't enough, there are usually some really interesting people there. The best part about this is – they usually bring their souped-up cars with them.

"A lot of known drag racers have passed through the Good Times. Bill 'Grumpy' Jenkins and 'Dyno' Don Nicholson was a big event back in the 70s when Grumpy was king of NHRA Pro Stock. Various Funny Cars have been to the track including the famous Bunny Burkett," and with a twinkle in his eye, Vance told all about it.

"Annually in June we have a favorite Jet Car at the strip. The jet car runs a J85 Westinghouse right out of a fighter jet. This car approach speeds of near 200 MPH in the 1/8 mile!"

Not only is the "Good Time" Drag Strip a local favorite, but it's gotten national attention too.

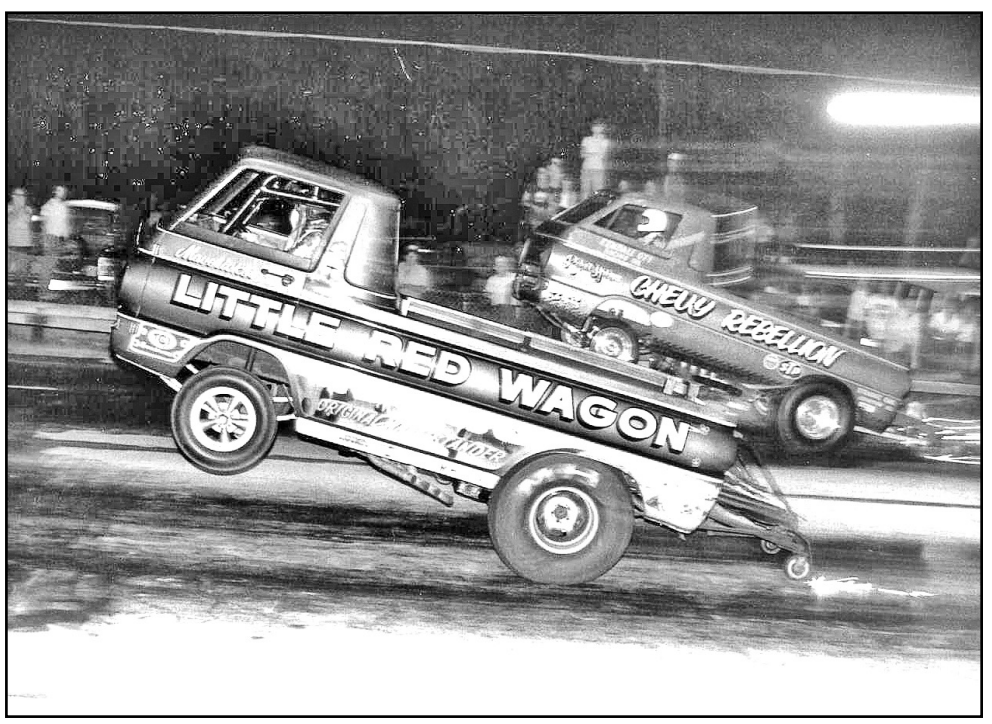
"Last year Doc and Monza from the Discovery Channel's Street Outlaws paid us a visit, back in September," Vance added. "Monza had just broken his hip and could not run, but he brought the nasty split bumper Camaro to the track," he chuckled as he thought about it. "The guys were impressed with the people in Cullman and in the area and want to return this year. We will see..."

According to Webster's Dictionary, drag racing is "a contest in which people race cars at very high speeds over a short distance; an acceleration contest between vehicles." There are all sorts of different variations of drag racing and "Good Times" Drag Strip's a great place to go to see the different ones in action.

"Special races are held for the street scene throughout the year," Vance began. "Regular racing runs every Saturday night from the first Saturday in April until October or November, depending on the weather. Pro Bracket, Foot Brake and Motor Cycles/ Jr. Dragsters classes all run on Saturday. Friday night are reserved for the grudge racing, testing, tuning, and the guys and gals that want to practice and get into the hobby."

If you haven't had a chance to visit the Baileyton "Good Times" Drag Strip, you should take a visit to the eastern portion of the county to see what it has to offer.

The Baileyton "Good Times" Drag Strip is located at 1682 County Road 1719, Baileyton, AL 35019. For more information you may contact them at 256-796-2892 or visit their webpage at www.baileytondragstrip.com.



VANCE EASTERWOOD

The family run Baileyton "Good Time" Drag Strip has been in operation for nearly 50 years.

"WARM COATS ARE LIKE WARM HUGS"

Noah Chandler
noah@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - The Red Door Emporium is continuing to accept donations of winter coats to help provide children in the area with an added layer of protection this winter.

"Warm coats are like warm hugs. Hug a kid every morning that you will never see," said Bill McCartney, owner of The Red Door Emporium. "Many kids in Cullman County still need warm coats and The Red Door Emporium is collecting, checking and sending to Cullman Caring for Kids for distribution."

McCartney said the response has been good thus far but there is still a need for more donations.

With the donations going to CCFK, a wide variety of coats are still needed to help properly supply children in the area.

"The response has been great but more are needed for toddlers through age 14 in particular. Check your closets and drop off new and like new coats at The Red Door Emporium."

The Red Door Emporium is located at 324 4th Ave. SE, next to The Cullman Times, and are open Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. until 5 p.m. or Saturdays 8 a.m. until 1 p.m.



BILL MCCARTNEY

Tina Strandlund and Caitlyn Hall hold some of the coats that are ready to provide warm hugs on cold mornings.

Help (from Front)

ber of Sacred Heart Church, Bonnie considers her volunteer work to be the work of the Lord and she just can't seem to get enough of it.

Over the years she has worked as a volunteer with Meals on Wheels, Life Care Hospice, and the Red Cross, among other things. But teaching holds a very special place in her heart.

"Teaching is fun," Bonnie said with a whimsical smile. "I've had some really wonderful adventures in teaching. Teaching children to read is very rewarding - If they don't learn how to read, they will never be successful in life. Reading is fundamental," she said with gusto. "We can make it fun, but they have to learn how to read well."

Because she is a former English teacher, Bonnie has many tricks up her sleeve to ensure her young students learn without losing interest.

"I use a number of media sources – books that I've bought and books I borrow from the library," she explained.

"I have flash cards, letter tiles, and programs on my Kindle that helps to teach phonics. It helps keep things from getting so onerous."

Bonnie also teaches English as a second language to people of all ages. She recognizes the importance of being able to have every possible tool available to help in various situations.

The English language is just one of those tools. Even though helping Japanese citizens learn English is her favorite, she truly enjoys helping everyone learn.

"First of all, they need to learn survival English," she explained. "They need to learn English for the various scenarios they may find themselves in, like going to the gas station or to the bank. I also teach them how to use the 911 system. You've got to know how to use 911 – It's crucial!"

In Bonnie's opinion, any place can be a classroom; she is very accommodating and easygoing. She feels that wherever the student is most comfortable, that's where they will learn the most. However, Bonnie doesn't keep her students in one place the whole time – they get to learn English in totally different atmospheres.

"I usually just pick a location that is convenient. We've met at the library, the Family Life Center at Sacred Heart Church, my home, or their home - just whatever is appropriate. We also take field trips to various places," she said.

"For example, I've taken them to the grocery store because they have to learn how to read things in there. I would love to have a few more students because I would like some more things to do for the Lord."

Her zest for life and love of people make for a better world. If you or someone you know needs help with reading, English, or anything for that matter, get in contact with Bonnie. She can be reached by phone at 256-739-6278 or by e-mail at bjcudnall@aol.com. She would love to hear from you, but even more importantly, she would love to help.

"I'm looking for service projects. I really, really do want service projects. I'm 68 years old and time's a wasting! I need things to do. I know there are needy people out there; I just can't seem to hook up with them fast enough," she giggled.

If you know someone that you consider to be one of Cullman's Outstanding Citizens, please contact me at sharon@cullmansense.com. We would love to feature them in future editions of the paper.

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CLARKSON COVERED BRIDGE: FLOODED WITH HISTORY

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

BETHEL - The Clarkson Covered Bridge, or sometimes called Legg Bridge, was built over Crooked Creek back in 1904. The property it was on was owned by a local mail carrier by the name of James W. Legg. The total cost of the bridge at the time was $1,500.00. The bridge was originally named the Legg Covered Bridge after the landowner because he saw the need for transportation improvement in the area, so he supplied much of the materials.

In 1931 a flood destroyed half of the bridge. Luckily most of the pieces were recovered downstream, and the bridge was able to be rebuilt the following year. It was reconstructed with help from a contractor hired by Cullman County. Ironically, it cost of $1,500.00, the same amount it cost to build originally.

The covered bridge remained in service to motorized vehicles until 1962, when it was bypassed by a nearby concrete bridge. In 1975, the Clarkson–Legg Covered Bridge was restored by the Cullman County Commission as part of the American Bicentennial Project.

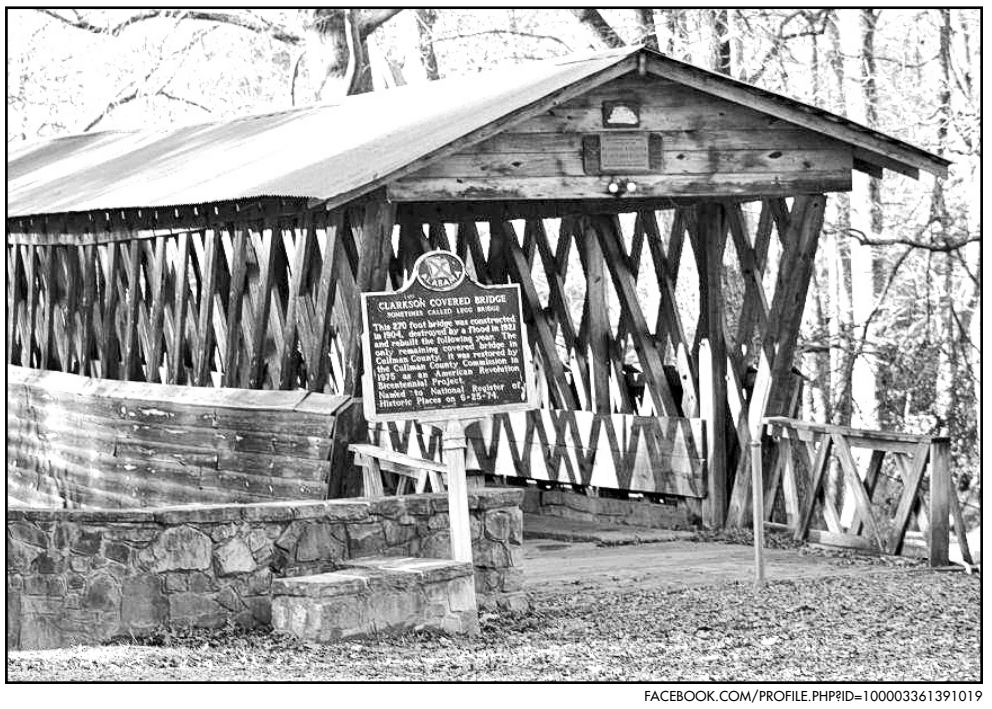
The rest of the project added a gristmill and log cabin, which is located at what is now called Clarkson Covered Bridge Park. Nowadays, a number of festivals and activities are held at the park, including an annual event hosted by the county called Old-Fashioned Days.

Before the bridge was even thought of, skirmishes took place at Crooked Creek and Hog Mountain as part of the American Civil War on April 30, 1863. The activity took place in the same vicinity Clarkson Covered Bridge now stands. The skirmishes were part of a series of engagements that had taken place throughout Cullman County. On that day, a group of men led by Union Army Colonel Abel Streight were being pursued by forces led by Confederate Army General Nathan Bedford Forrest.

The predicament was the result of a failed attempt by Colonel Streight's group to cut off the Western & Atlantic Railroad in Middle Tennessee, which was supplying Confederate Army forces commanded by General Braxton Bragg. This was later known as Streight's Raid.

A historical marker stands in front of the bridge that reads as follows:

"The Clarkson Covered Bridge – Sometimes Called Legg Bridge - This 270 food bridge was constructed in 1904, destroyed by a flood in 1921 and rebuilt the following year. The only remaining covered bridge in Cullman County, it was restored by the Cullman County Commission in 1975 as an American Revolution Bicentennial project. Named to National Register of Historic Places on 6-25-74."



FACEBOOK.COM/PROFILE.PHP?ID=100003361391019

Designated with a historical marker, Clarkson Covered Bridge is the only covered bridge in Cullman County.

Clarkson Covered Bridge Park is located at1240 County Road 1043, Cullman, AL, 35057.

For more information about the bridge, visit their webpage at www.cullmancountyparks.com/clarkson.html and keep up with them on Facebook at www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100003361391019.

MIRRORING HISTORY - HOLLY POND: FROM DR. E.G. SANDLIN'S HOME TO GUY HUNT LIBRARY

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

HOLLY POND - Deep in the heart of Holly Pond, the Guy Hunt Library and Museum stands where Dr. E.G. Sandlin once lived.

Located at 60 Lions Park Road, Holly Pond, AL, 35083 the library/museum combination is host to many valuable resources and historic information about the town of Holly Pond and the former Governor Guy Hunt.

Dr. E.G. Sandlin came to Holly Pond in 1927 when the town lost its only doctor, Dr. H. E. Watts who had died in April of that same year.

By 1930, Sandlin had completed a two story house, complete with a basement.

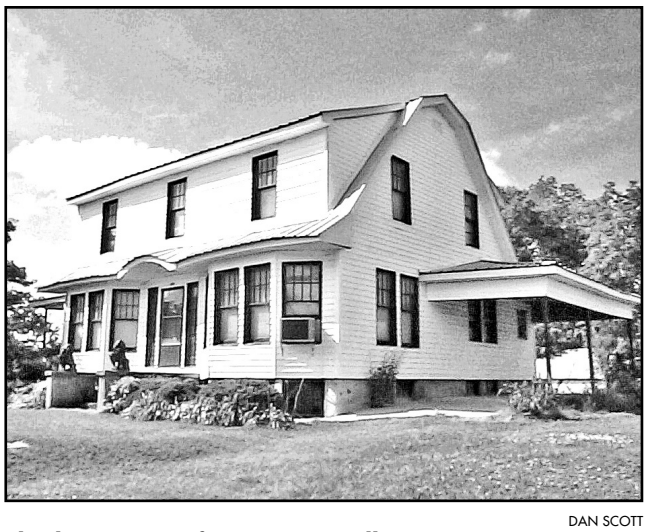
He used the upstairs area as the family's living area and the basement was used for his medical practice.

The home was torn down in 2010 to provide space for the Gov. Guy Hunt Library & Museum.



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

The Guy Hunt Library and Museum resides where Dr. E.G. Sandlin's home once stood.



DAN SCOTT

The basement of Dr. E.G. Sandlin's two story home was used for his medical practice.

Garden City (from Front)

Mayor Eskew as a "great place" and one where the "people that live there take pride in their community."

The new pavilion and community center will bring people together in a way they haven't been able to in the past. Garden City is growing and is definitely something to watch.

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CHAMBERS FARM AND GARDEN SUPPLY: FEED, SEED, AND EXPERTISE

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - Located adjacent to the old train depot and across the railroad tracks is one of Cullman's finest stores – Chambers Farm and Garden Supply. Chambers Farm and Garden Supply has everything you need to grow your garden, feed your animals, and more.

"We are a locally owned and operated independent store," said Jimmy Wells, who has worked for the company for over 25 years. "Our primary feed lines are Tucker Milling and Southern States Coop. We are an independent Southern States dealer," he said with a smile.

Chambers carries a complete line of animal and pet supplies such as food and health products. They have a huge selection of garden and field seeds, lawn seeds, bedding plants, soils, and hay. You can also find flowering annuals and perennials, as well as garden and farming chemicals and fertilizers.

"We have people who literally come from all over the state to purchase garden supplies," said Wells. "We have the largest variety of garden seed and vegetable seed in North Alabama. We've got more varieties from the real common stuff to the open pollinated varieties."

"The men behind the counter are knowledgeable when it comes to farm and garden supplies and are willing to talk your ears off if it isn't busy," satisfied customer James W. from Marietta, Georgia said.

From the friendly, laid back atmosphere to high quality products, Chambers Farm and Garden Supply is a one stop shop for all your farm and garden needs. They also offer their customers a vast array of expertise in things such as landscape design.

If outdoor wildlife is more your speed, Chambers has a birding expert, along with a livestock expert on staff to answer any questions you may have.

Want to start bee keeping as a hobby? Chambers has what you need. Does your dog or cat leave your house smelly? Stop by and pick up some pet odor candles and spray – they will freshen things up for you. Have a horse but no saddle? Yep, you guessed it. Stop by Chambers and you'll be able to load one up. In other words, whether you own a farm, grow a garden, or have animals to care for, Chambers Farm and Garden Supply have all you need to do it all.

If you haven't had a chance to check out Chambers Farm and Garden Supply lately, stop by and see for yourself what they have to offer. They are located at 302 1st Ave NW, Cullman, AL, 35055 and are open Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. until 5 p.m. and on Saturday from 7:30 a.m. until 2 p.m.

For more information call 256-734-3894. Like them on Facebook by going to www.facebook.com/pages/Chambers-Farm-and-Garden-Supply/153716781381673.



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

In addition to carrying pet, farm animal, and garden supplies, Chambers Farm and Garden Supply also lends a variety of expertise to customers.

CHRIST COVENANT HOLDS PUBLIC FORUM ON RAISING CHRISTIAN CHILDREN

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - A public forum was held at Christ Covenant Presbyterian Church on Thursday night to discuss raising Christian children in the modern age. Speakers for the night were radio personality Rick Burgess from the Rick and Bubba Show and Terry Taunton, director of the Fixed Point foundation.

The Fixed Point Foundation was established in 2004 with the intent of opposing the secular viewpoint. They have sponsored many highly publicized events at universities ranging from Oxford to UAB. Larry Taunton and the foundation have debated many notable minds such as Christopher Hitchens, Richard Dawkins and Peter Singer.

Thursday's forum entitled "Passing the Torch" was a focus on how parents of the Christian belief system can help cultivate those beliefs in their children. The lecture portion of the program consisted of Taunton and Burgess speaking on the top ten things parents need to keep in mind when raising children in modern times.

Topics about the public school system, discipline and secular influences were just a few of the topics covered at the two-hour event. Ten total angles were brought out and each one was discussed at length. Rick Burgess first spoke about the changes that have happened in the region that has sparked the desire to do these public forums.

"In this part of the world we were once called the Bible Belt," said Burgess. "I think now unfortunately we have turned into the church belt, which is a completely different title. People go to church now because it is tradition or it's part of the culture, but it is not at the center of the decisions they make."

Taunton seconded the sentiment and added that parents focus too often on occupation.

"The spiritual training of your child must be your number one priority," Taunton said.

"The pastor of Christ Covenant Presbyterian and I were sitting in his office earlier, and we were talking about how often good parents put so much time into equipping their kids occupationally. There is a lot of talk about 'You need to think about your major', or 'You need to intern'. Then we turn around and do almost nothing but drop the kids off at church or youth group and hope they will figure it all out."

At the end of the program, the audience had their turn to ask questions about issues that were important to them.

One man in the crowd asked whether Facebook for teens was a bad idea, while a mom in the audience wanted to know how to continue to teach while her child was in college. Both Burgess and Taunton took their time answering questions in as much detail as possible, as many members of the audience took notes.

For those of the Christian faith, it was a rare event and highly informative night to hear tips from those who share their ideas on parenting and life. Information on the Fixed Point Foundation and a DVD of the lecture can be found on fixed-point.org.

You can also contact Christ Covenant Presbyterian located at 1310 Saint Joseph Drive Northwest or call 256-739-0505.



CHELSEA SPARKS/CULLMANSENSE

Rick Burgess and Larry Taunton talk on stage about Christian parenting in the modern age.

Weather (from Front)

to Cullman City Schools Superintendent Dr. Doreen Griffeth.

"Cullman County Schools have to worry about the ability for their buses to run in extremely cold temperatures," she said.

"They also have to worry about students standing out in the cold at bus stops. The majority of our students in Cullman City Schools are transported by car and are dropped off at the doors of our schools."

Griffeth stated that the transportation issue is probably the biggest reason why you might see the county schools closing, when the city is staying open.

Specifically, when the temperature drops to freezing or below it can keep a bus from starting at all. This was the reason for the latest school delay in the county, as well as the safety of students who normally have to wait outside at bus stops.

According to Griffeth, their only concern as far as dropping temperatures is the students' well being. To help with that problem, city schools adjust their drop-off and pick-up protocol.

"Our school leaders are alerted during cold weather to have doors open for students to come inside instead of waiting outside on cold mornings," Griffeth said.

"At the Primary School, and at East and West Elementary, we have inside dismissals when the temperatures are so cold so that our students do not have to wait outside in the cold for their ride home."

The school system takes their cues from the Emergency Management System to determine the best course of action.

"If we have weather concerns, we contact the Emergency Management Agency and the police to check for the safety of our roads and any other upcoming concerns," Griffeth said.

"They help us make the decision to delay, close or to operate under normal school hours based on facts they know. Our student and staff safety is always the first concern when we make the decision to change school operating hours."

Dr. Griffeth explained that since the city is not equipped to handle major winter weather events like those of last January, that it is always better to err on the side of caution.

"The main lesson I have learned is to keep in touch with EMA and the police as I make the decision whether to close or delay. They have people out in the elements to help me make that final decision. Cullman City does not have snow removal equipment and that has to be taken into account when the snow starts accumulating. If snow is sticking to the roads, it is best to dismiss schools and get our students and staff members home quickly and safely."

Cullman County Schools Superintendent Dr. Craig Ross was unavailable for comment.

THE KING IS 80, Y'ALL: CELEBRATION OF ELVIS PRESLEY'S LIFE RAISES DONATIONS FOR RICE & BEANS MINISTRY AT GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Shannon Embree
Contributor

CULLMAN - Last Thursday many people around the world remembered and celebrated what would have been Elvis Presley's birthday. He would have been 80 years old. Grace Episcopal Church of Cullman celebrated "The King" with a performance open and free to the public, accepting only donations. What better way to raise funds for the Beans & Rice Ministry than an Elvis tribute?

This wasn't your typical Elvis tribute performance though. Incorporating live musical performances, trivia, dramatic readings, short sketches, and comedy, Love Y'all Café food ministry's Elvis tribute was entirely scripted by Mr. Ben Johnson, more commonly known as Ben South. The performance gave off an improvised, interactive, theatrical vibe. Ben South's focus for the last 20 years has been southern and on "southern stuff". Just like his website, Southernness.com, his Elvis tribute had "Southernness" written all over it.

At 7 p.m., there was almost a full church with several members of the community in attendance, both church members and non-members. Sara Baker has been a Cullman resident and Grace Episcopal church member for 34 years. She is also a member of the Good Samaritan Health Food Bank, Committee for Church Cooperation, Vestry Parish Counsel, and president of the Episcopal Church Women Community Outreach. Sara was very pleased with the outcome for the event and looked forward to just "having a good time".

Sitting solo in the back was one of the younger attendees. Elementary Education major Ben Miller is a student at Wallace State, a member of the Wallace State Singers, and works at Chick-fil-A of Cullman. He heard about the event straight from Mr. Ben South himself.

Miller said, "Ben South comes in all the time and tells me about his plays." Miller is not a member of Grace Episcopal, he attends Crosshaven Church between Hanceville and Cullman, but he is an Elvis fan and "cracks up every time" he hears his favorite song "You Ain't Nothin' But A Hound Dog".

When asked what he expected from the performance, Miller responded, "To be kinda astounded really. He's [Ben South] a really, witty character so I expect nothing less."

Southern felt stories of Elvis were told. The Arnold Street Band turned out the lights for their performance of "Are You Lonesome Tonight?" and changed a few of the words in the song "Just A Closer Walk With Thee", creatively renaming it "Just A Bowl Of Rice And Beans".

Mr. James Green's performance received a standing ovation; and Wayne Miller immediately followed him doing a dramatic reading of "Suspicious Minds" as "Sir, Bubba Olivia", opening with his sarcastic opinion of the last performance saying, "Eh, that was pretty good". His reading was a crowd pleaser igniting much laughter.

Choir and Wallace State Singers Director Tiffany Richter has an extremely busy schedule, as well as two young children at home. Richter was happy to contribute to the event.

When asked why she chose to prepare a performance, she said, "I love Ben Johnson, so even before I knew what it was about, I said of course. But I wanted to do what I could to help raise awareness about this new ministry in the community."



CONTRIBUTED

Grace Episcopal Church of Cullman celebrated Elvis Presley's 80th birthday with a fundraiser featuring live musical performances, trivia, dramatic readings, short sketches, and comedy.

On piano, Tiffany brought down the house with her jazzy rendition of "You Ain't Nothin' But A Hound Dog". Three of Wallace State's Singers group also contributed a beautiful, three-part harmony performance of "Fools Rush In", with Joel Burks on guitar, Sarah Walker as lead vocal, and Brad Steele on piano.

Before the closing of the event, Jerry Jacobs said a few words expressing his gratitude to everyone involved and his pride for having started the 18th Episcopal Church in the dais to have the Beans & Rice ministry, which began nine years ago in Clanton, AL.

Dr. Shannon Green who was introduced as "sharing the same southern DNA" as Elvis, closed the event with the final sing along of "If I Can Dream".

Free beans and rice are available with no qualifying or any other information from 9-11 a.m. on every third Saturday of the month at Grace Episcopal Church.

For more information, call the church at 256-734-6212 or visit them online at GraceCullman.Dioala.org.

BR. LINUS KLUSCARITS MAKES SOLEMN PROFESSION OF VOWS

Joyce Nix
St. Bernard Contributor

CULLMAN - Br. Linus Kluscarits professed solemn vows as a monk of St. Bernard Abbey on Saturday, January 3, 2015. The ceremony began at 10:30 a.m. and was celebrated in the Abbey Church on the eve of the Feast of the Epiphany with Abbot Cletus D. Meagher, O.S.B., as main celebrant.

In his homily, Abbot Cletus said, "Just as the magi sought the Christ child, so a monk is to seek God always. Br. Linus joins our community to set out on a pilgrimage of faith. We welcome him as he sets out on a task of seeking union with God with the monks of this Abbey."

Br. Linus is a native of Allentown, PA where he was the second of five children born to William and Alice Klucsarits. He was given the name, Paul Thomas Klucsarits, when he was christened. When he began his novitiate at St. Bernard Abbey in June of 2011, he received the name, Br. Linus, as his name in religion. On January 6, 2012, the Feast of the Epiphany, Abbot Cletus received his first vows. His time in monastic formation at St. Bernard reflects his previous experience of monastic life at St. Vincent Archabbey.

A product of Catholic schools, Br. Linus attended St. Charles Seminary in Philadelphia, PA. He is an alumnus of Gallaudet University where he earned a BA in philosophy and obtained his MA in sign language interpreting.

He earned a second master's degree at UAB studying Education with a focus on teaching English as a second language. He taught ESL at St. Bernard for the past two and a half years. In addition he implemented the ESL Summer Program.

During the vows ceremony, Br. Leo Borelli served as the Masters of Ceremonies. Br. Raphael Pattarozzi was the organist. His niece, Carolyn Best sang the response during the ceremony. Nephews, Thomas and Dominic Best, brought the gifts for offertory. He was also joined by his sisters- Margaret Best and Ann Fitzgerald.

Br. Linus is currently on leave from the faculty of St. Bernard Prep School as he completes his seminary studies at St. Meinrad School of Theology in Indiana.



ST. BERNARD

Br. Linus Kluscarits stands with Abbot Cletus Meagher.



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 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.

Walk the Pines

Join the ladies each Monday, Wednesday & Friday at 8:15 a.m. to Walk the Pines. Call 256-739-0738 for more info.

Domestic Violence Survivors Support Group

Victim Services of Cullman sponsors a Domestic Violence Survivors Support group meeting every Monday from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. in the old Cullman County Board of Education building. Childcare is available. For more information please call 256-775-2600. CRISIS HOTLINE 256-734-6100.

TUESDAY

Cullman Caring for Kids in Need of Donations

If you are able to contribute to Cullman County's Community Food Bank, the 'Caring for Kids' organization, they would be grateful. Non-perishable food items are needed, and of course cash enables them to purchase needed products to fill their empty shelves. Please call 256-739-1111 to see how to help or mail checks or money orders to Cullman Caring for Kids, P.O. Box 698, Cullman, Alabama 35056-0698. Thanks in advance for anything you can do.

Knifty Knitters and Crocheters Tuesday Afternoon Meeting

The Knifty Knitters and Crocheters meet at the Cullman County Public Library each Tuesday from 2 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. The library provides the supplies for persons wishing to learn basic crocheting or knitting. There is no charge. All ages and knowledge levels from beginners to expert are welcome. For more information contact Lesia Coleman at 256-734-2720 Ext.

Ladie's 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.

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.

Cullman's VFW Post 2214

Invites everyone 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.

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.

NEXT MONDAY

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!

UPCOMING

CRMC to Host ACLS Certification Course

Cullman Regional Medical Center will be hosting an ACLS (Advanced Cardiac Life Support) Certification Course on Wednesday, January 21st at 8:30 a.m. The class will be held in the Depot Room of the Community Education Center in Professional Office Building II. This is an instructor-led classroom course that highlights the importance of team dynamics and communication, systems of care and immediate post-cardiac-arrest care. It also covers airway management and related pharmacology. ACLS is designed for healthcare professionals who either direct or participate in the management of cardiopulmonary arrest and other cardiovascular emergencies. Cost to attend this class is $150.00 per student. Each student will also need an ACLS Support Book, which is not included in the cost of the class, BUT IS REQUIRED TO COMPLETE THE COURSE. Books may be purchased for $35.50 through the CRMC Education Instructor, but must be ordered and paid for in advance. For more information or to enroll in the class, call 256-737-2635.

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LOCAL ENTERTAINMENT
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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.
- Ladie's Auxiliary VFW Dance at Post 2214 starting at 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 at 6 p.m.
- Live Trivia at Grumpy's at 7 p.m.

FRIDAY
- Live Music at Brothers starting at 7 p.m.
- Live Music at Moe's starting at 7:30 p.m.
- Happy Hour at Moe's from 3-6 p.m.
- Live Music at Cadillac Ron's from 8 p.m. to close
- Live Music at Grumpy's starting at 7:30 p.m.

SATURDAY
- Live Music at Brothers starting at 7 p.m.
- Live Music at Moe's starting at 7 p.m.
- Happy Hour at Moe's from 3-6 p.m.
- Live Music at Cadillac Ron's from 8 p.m. to close
- Live Music at Grumpy's starting at 7:30 p.m.

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BROOKS' PLACE HELPS THOSE WHO CANNOT HELP THEMSELVES

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – There is a two-story house in Cullman just by the middle school that does incredible work. The small and unassuming house has been filled with immense amounts of pain, but also works everyday to turn that pain into healing. Brooks' Place is a non-profit child advocacy center that works with children and families who are victims of physical and sexual abuse.

To say that this work is important would be an understatement. When a child is suspected to have been physically or sexually abused, Brooks' Place is there to help local officials like law enforcement get the information they need.

"We have two interview rooms," said Executive Director Gail Swafford. "One is where law enforcement, DHR, law and the District Attorney might sit and watch. Then in the upstairs room is where we would take the child and let them play. We'll talk with them and try to get the information we need. All the while, the officials are watching the live video."

The reason the office for Brooks' Place is set up like a house is not coincidence, according to Swafford. The idea behind it is to create a safe and homey space those children and their caregivers feel comfortable.

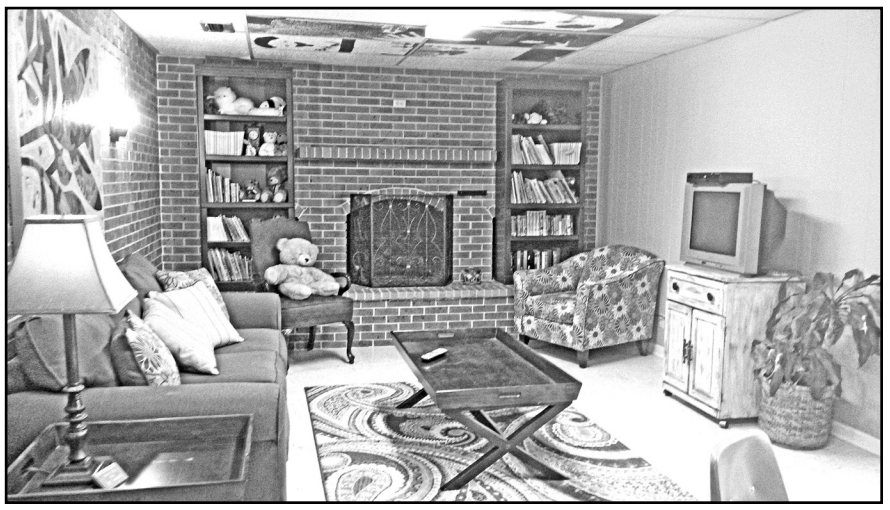
The numbers of interviews conducted for suspected abuse in the Cullman area are probably much higher than you might think.

"As far as interviews go, we probably see around 250 per year from Cullman," said Swafford.

"It is sad, and it's something that a lot of people might not think happens in our little town. That is just the tip of the iceberg though, because statistically, it has been shown that 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys have been assaulted. Many of these studies survey adults who say they never told anyone about their attack."

Swafford went on to say that it is not the stranger that is the culprit most of the time.

"It's not the stranger danger like we were told a long time ago. It is relatives and friends of the family. Kids know that it is going to upset the family, and a lot of times that is what keeps them silent their whole lives. It is why I tell every child that comes forward that they are my hero, because it takes a lot of courage to tell someone."



CHELSEA SPARKS/CULLMANSENSE

An interview room for victims was painted by a volunteer to help children be more at ease.

The services provided by Brooks' place span much further than interviews and casework.

They also work hard to prevent juveniles who are at high risk of becoming offenders themselves through rigorous counseling.

"Part of our program, too, is dealing with juvenile sex offenders," Swafford said. "We provide individual, group and risk assessments for the court to determine if they can be at home and get treatment or if they need to be inpatient. The reason it was started was because of early pioneers who would survey men in prison who were convicted of a sex crime and find that their behavior started when they were teens."

Brooks' Place is staffed with forensic interviewers and victim advocates, as well as those who handle the administrative side of the non-profit.

Their team ensures that not only do these children and their families receive help through the legal process, but also help to get other needs met like food, clothing, or financial help.

With low funding and staff, the team is still able to provide quality care, something Swafford attributes to education and a cohesive atmosphere.

"We have been able to attend specialized training sessions in trauma and behavioral therapies," she said.

"In terms of personnel, there have been changes. We are down to two full-time and three part-time which is difficult, but we all come together as a staff, and with other agencies. We're a very cohesive team that works together to meet the needs of these families."

For more information about Brooks' Place, located at 1003 4th Ave. NE Cullman, AL 35055, call 256-739-2243.

HANCEVILLE ELEMENTARY RAISES FUNDS FOR NEW CURTAINS

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

HANCEVILLE - The Hanceville Elementary PTO set out this past weekend to try and raise money to purchase new stage curtains for the school's gymnasium. This past Saturday from 12-5 p.m., pageant, prom, and bridal dresses went on sale at unbelievably low prices.

"The PTO sponsored the dress sale," said Heather Murphree, vice president of the Elementary PTO.

"Everything we make this particular school year goes to replacing the shabby curtains here in the gym. The school has no funding for this, so that's why we are making it our priority to help with this."

The high school and middle school, as well as other local groups, could benefit from upgrading the curtains and cleaning up the stage area. It is not a cheap endeavor, however.

"It would be a great asset to everyone if we can clean them up," she said. "These curtains have been here for 20 years or more. They are very expensive because they have to be fireproof. We are estimating that we need to make around $6,500.00 dollars to replace them."

The sale was based on a consigner's set up. Local businesses like the Jimmy Hale Mission, Just Repurposed, and Cash USA helped to make the sale possible.

Anyone in the area that wanted to sell their prom, pageant, or bridal gowns could bring them in and was required to pay $10 dollars per dress. Minus the $10, participants kept all the profit from their dress sale.

Unfortunately, the sale was not as big a success as the PTO had hoped. They will, however, have more fundraisers in the near future that they encourage everyone to participate in.

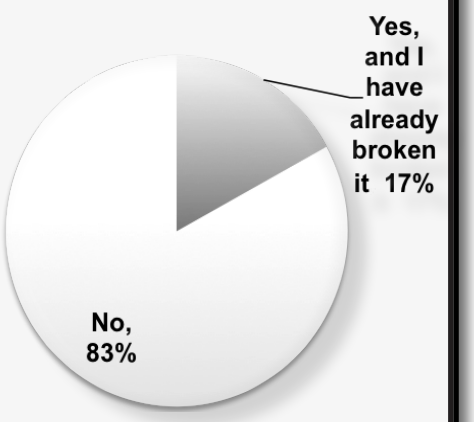
"In March we are going to start an Avon sale," said Murphree.

"And then in April, we will team up with Krispy Kreme for a fundraiser as well. I think this is important because this shows how limited our schools are. They need our help because they can't even set aside the funding. We all need to take pride in helping our school."

To contact the Hanceville Elementary PTO call: President - Tonya Mitchell 256-507-3858; Vice President - Heather Murphree 256-339-2122; or Communications - April Graves 256-352-5567.

Poll

Did you make a New Year's resolution?



This Week's Poll
Have you had a cold or the flu this season?
Vote Today at CullmanSense.com/Poll

cullman city parks & recreation

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

www.cullmanrecreation.org
256-734-9157

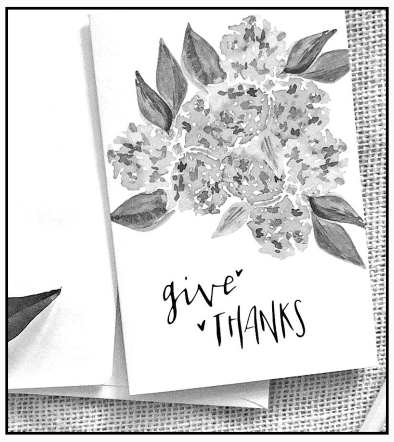
- **Missoula Children's Theater Presents Aladdin** at the Cullman Civic Center on Saturday, January 24. Auditions for the show will be open to ages 5-18 and will take place on Monday, January 19 at 3:30pm at the Civic Center. Practices will take place at 3:30 each afternoon leading up to the show, which will take place at 2pm and 6pm on Saturday, January 24. Call 256-734-9157 for info.
- **Baseball & Softball Registration** for boys and girls ages 4-14 will take place Jan. 15-Feb. 15 at the Cullman Civic Center. Cost is $90 which includes jersey, hat, and trophy. Games will be played through the week at Heritage Park and the Field of Miracles; practices start first of March. For more information, call 256-734-9157.
- **Youth Tennis Registration** will be held through January 14 at the Cullman Wellness & Aquatic Center. Cost is $50 for the 8 week session, 3 weeks of practice and 5 weeks of matches and play. Ages 4-14 can register and will be placed based on skill level.
- **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.
- **CP&R Archery Classes** are ongoing and take place each Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday afternoon for beginner, intermediate, and advanced archers. Cost is $40 for the month. Call 734-9157 for more information.

What's Online

THE ART OF LETTERING WITH JOYFUL PAPERY

Have you ever seen a quote that really stuck with you, or helped you through a difficult time? Most of us have, and a lot of us will write it down or print it out, and stick it on the fridge. Well if you happen to call on one local Cullmanite, Emily Karwoski, you can have that quote in beautiful scripts to frame at more than...

qrne.ws/303



IT'S A TOUGH JOB, BUT SOMEONE'S GOT TO DO IT

With the increase in crime throughout the United States, law enforcement is in high demand. As much as we depend on our local police and deputies, who do they depend upon? Are they safe while walking the beat day in and day out? Officers are specially trained when they take the job, but is there a little...

qrne.ws/304

HEALTHCARE OF THE 1920S AND 1930S

In the early 1900s, sanitariums were places where people afflicted with Tuberculosis (TB) were taken and placed so that they may receive simple treatments that mainly consisted of a proper diet, fresh air, and lots of rest.

qrne.ws/305

FRESH FACES AT CANTANTI DELLA DONNA: RECENT AUDITIONS YIELD NEW MEMBERS FOR GROWING VOCAL GROUP



CHELSEA SPARKS/CULLMANSENSE

Director Laura Doss listens to auditionees as they sing 'Amazing Grace' as a group.

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - The premier all-women ensemble, Cantanti Della Donna, held open auditions on Tuesday and Thursday to any woman in the area with a knack for singing. Participants were asked to prepare a short selection of their choice and to bring a copy of the music for the provided accompanist.

Cantanti Della Donna is run solely off membership dues and donations. The group performs at various churches and schools like Grace Episcopal Church in Cullman, Hartselle First Baptist Church, and Wallace State Community College.

The women who audition come from all walks of life and vary in age.

The minimum age requirement for the group is 18 years old, and the group has well established members who are 50 years and up.

"I'd like to thank everyone for coming out and showing interest in our group," said Director Laura Doss to auditionees.

"I am new to this group as well, but I'm very excited to work with everyone. I think this is going to be a great year. We have some amazing music lined up."

Laura Doss has all the credentials required to run the semi-professional choral group. She has served on the faculty of the Alabama School of Fine Arts in Birmingham since 1996.

She directs the ASFA Choir and Vocal Chamber Ensemble, teaches private voice, music theory, aural awareness, and sight singing.

She is also an adjunct music faculty member at Samford University.

A graduate of Samford University and the University of Montevallo, Laura holds a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance and a Master of Education.

The group's accompanist, Alice Butler, has been working with Cantanti since the beginning and is thrilled to help bring beautiful choral music to Cullman.

"I think this group is just wonderful," Butler said. "I was so happy to see that we had this in Cullman when I moved back from Birmingham. I was involved with some groups down there, so it is nice to have a group that I can be involved with."

Another long standing member of the group, Linda Schgier, says that she is happy to have a place where she can just be a participant and not the teacher.

"I teach and so it is fun to be a part of something where I don't have to do what I normally do day to day," she said. "I teach piano and play for the church, but I love to sing. I am usually the accompanist and never get to sing, so this gives me a place to do that."

Fresh singers, music and a brand new director should make for an exciting year for Cantanti Della Donna.

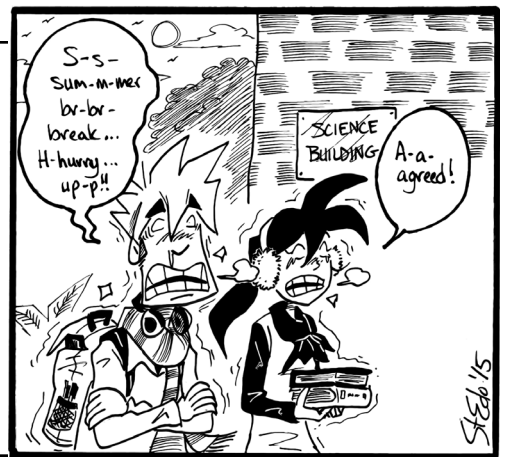
Practices will begin the week of January 12, and their first concert will be held at Grace Episcopal Church in Cullman on April 21, 2015.

For more information contact Laura Doss at 256-708-7110 or e-mail dossfarms@charter.net.

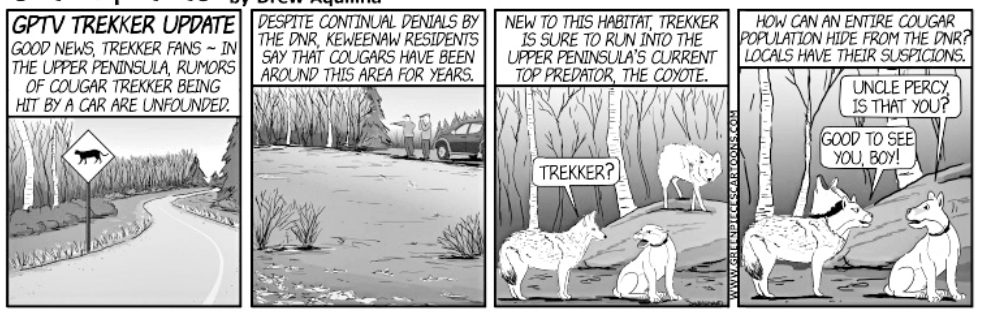
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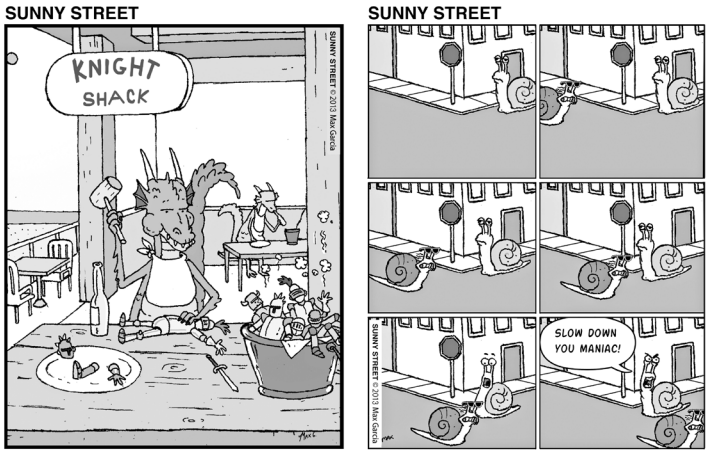
COMICS

WHITE & BLACK
"Til the Next Va-Va-Vacation"
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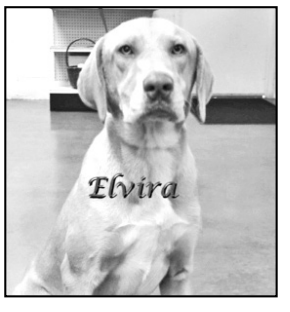
PETS OF THE WEEK

Trinket



Hello my name is Trinket and I am about 8+ yrs old. I am a Lab mix and I currently weigh 104 LBS. I am currently in foster care so if you are interested in me, please call the Shelter for info on my foster parent. I am full of life and I love to play, so come by and take me home because I'm ready for my forever home!

Elvira



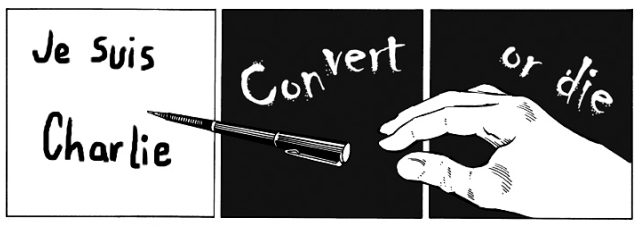
Hello my name is Elvira and I am about 2 year old. I am believed to be a Lab mix and I currently weigh 56 lbs. I am full of life and I love to play. Want you take time to come by to visit me and I promise you'll fall in love!

ADOPT THESE PETS TODAY

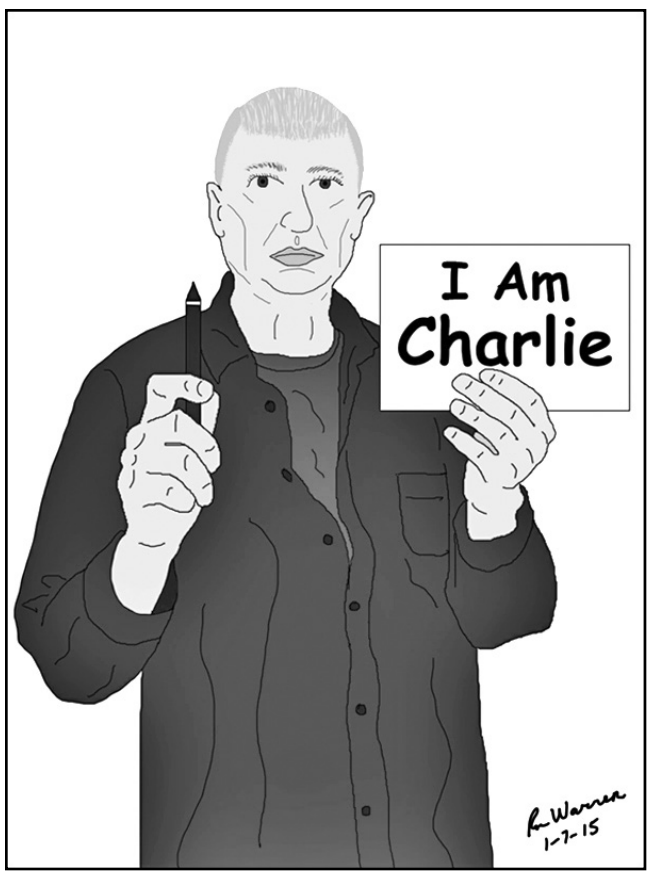
Both of these dogs have an adoption fee of $90 that will include their general exam at the Vet, vaccines, wormer, rabies shot, microchip, spay/neuter, and free 45 days of pet health insurance. Pet Depot will give you a bag of food (you pay taxes) as their way of supporting adoption.

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



Viva La France





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Community Matters

Publisher Noah Chandler

Editor Dustin Isom

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

Back Issues issues@cullmansense.com

Sports Josh McBrayer, Johnny Thornton

Newsroom Editor Natalie Bonner

Reporters Chelsea Sparks, Sharon Schuler Kreps

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OPINION

FIGHT TERROR AGAIN AND AGAIN
OR END IT BY NOT PARTICIPATING IN ITS CREATION

Patrick T. Hiller
PeaceVoice

The cycle of violence. When will it be interrupted? The attack on Charlie Hebdo was another incident of "Terror in [fill in the blank]... attackers part of [fill in name of terror network]". It was an incident of homegrown terror, since the attackers were French-born second-generation immigrants. It is time to shift away from ineffective, reactive tactics, and strategies of dealing with this kind of terror toward conflict transformation, by transforming the structures leading to terrorism.

Let's be clear. The assassins in Paris did not avenge the Prophet and their horrific violence cannot be reconciled with Islam. They were not noble, holy warriors, they were violent criminals. They killed 12 people and in addition to those lives, the lives of their families were destroyed. Their attacks opened space for further destructive cycles of conflict, support for security crackdowns, and virtually endless military campaigns as we still are seeing in the post 9/11/01 global war on terror. If we continue on this path we "condemn the global community to ongoing terror", as political scientist Lindsay Heger argues in her piece Redrawing our Strategy on Terror.

Here's the usual:
At the height of conflict several things take place. First, we tend to see generalizations as we hear in the "clash of civilizations", "us versus them", or the "battle between Islam and freedom of speech." Second, there is stereotyping, as we can see in the generalizations and assumptions about all members of a group. In this case a group as large and diverse as the 1.6 billion Muslims in the world. Third, there are knee-jerk reactions like calls for "collective detention" or "nuke them" by many so-called internet trolls. These often come with dehumanization of the other group. Fourth, tit-for-tat tactics are used as we can see in the attacks on Mosques in France. Fifth, the issues are changed deliberatively as we can see in US mainstream media commentators using the attack to promote torture or criticize New York City's Mayor de Blasio's politics. Sixth, emotions are exploited, fear is installed, and drastic measures are advocated as we see in far-right National Front political party leader Marine Le Pen's call for a referendum on reinstating the death penalty. All these are destructive, but very commonly used approaches of dealing with conflict. All these are ways of us participating in the cycle of continuing terror.

Here are some immediate better ways:
First and foremost, national and international law enforcement and judicial processes for individuals and groups involved in acts of terror.

Second, a call for unity from the international community, political, cultural and religious leaders condemning all forms of violent extremism.

Third, a societal response of answering hatred with love and compassion, as we have seen in Norway's dignified response to the mass murder by islamophobic Anders Breivik.

Here are some long-term responses addressing broader, structural changes:
First, terrorism is a political problem. The colonial history and the current violent western presence in the Middle East as well as the arbitrary support for some dictators are key to providing terrorists with a support base without which they would not be able to operate and even exist. As we see this support base now goes far beyond the Middle East and has reached the suburbs of Paris and inspires other unconnected lone-wolf terrorists. Lindsay Heger argues correctly that we need to create creative governance solutions aimed at de-linking terrorists from societies. This applies just as much to groups like Boko Haram in Nigeria as it applies to the Muslim immigrant population in France.

Second, terrorism is a social problem. The gunmen were French-born descendants of Algerian immigrants. It is nothing new that there are tensions between the predominantly white, Christian, French society and mainly Muslim first and second generation immigrant populations of African origin. The majority of immigrants belong to the economic lower class of society. Poverty, unemployment, and crime are common issues the young, male immigrants are facing.

Third, terrorism is a cultural problem. Muslim immigrant populations in Europe need to be able to freely develop and express their sense of self and sense of belonging. The politics of integration must allow for diversity and co-existence without imposed assimilation and inequality.

Some might argue that these suggestions have flaws, that they are not perfect, that they will never work, and so on. Yes, they have flaws, they are not perfect, and sometimes we do not know the outcome. What we know for sure is that more militarized security, sacrificing our rights, and more military campaigns makes us participants in terror. And they definitely do not work unless our intent is to recruit more terrorists.

Terrorists will be part of us as long as we don't address the root causes and as long as we participate in it. Terror ends when we stop creating terrorists and when we stop participating in it.

Patrick. T. Hiller, Ph.D., syndicated by PeaceVoice, is a Conflict Transformation scholar, professor, on the Governing Council of the International Peace Research Association, and Director of the War Prevention Initiative of the Jubitz Family Foundation.

OPINION

CONGRESS SLASHES CONSERVATION

Traci Bruckner
Center for Rural Affairs

When thinking about the $1.1 trillion spending bill passed by Congress last month, one might ask, what does Congress have against conservation?

They made huge cuts to conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) that supports conservation practices on cropland, pastureland, and rangeland, totaling $402 million over ten years.

This cut means 2.3 million fewer acres enrolled in the program.

This anti-conservation spending bill also cut the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) by $136 million for this fiscal year.

While the CSP is designed to reward farmers and ranchers who have a history of integrating conservation, EQIP will help them develop a conservation practice for the first time.

Both programs support practices such as cover crops, diverse cropping systems, as well as rotational grazing practices on pasture, rangeland, and cropland restored to a grass-based system.

These are the conservation-based farming practices we need more support for, not less. This is especially true in the face of climate change impacts on agriculture, and the increased need to protect and restore water quality.

So while they cut the conservation programs that help farmers and ranchers integrate risk management through conservation-based farming practices, they left intact the unlimited federal crop insurance premium subsidies and farm program payments that encourage risk taking and agriculture consolidation by the nation's largest and wealthiest farms.

This is an anti-farmer, anti-conservation bill that is representative of crisis-driven legislation stemming from a dysfunctional Congress. Join us and fight for annual spending bills that are forward-looking, and create opportunity.

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2006 Chevrolet 1500
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2007 Chevrolet 1500
was $21,900 NOW $16,997



2011 Chevrolet 1500
was $20,900 NOW $16,902



2013 Chevrolet 1500
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was $34,900 NOW $31,386



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was $38,900 NOW $35,777



2014 Chevrolet 1500
was $46,900 NOW $39,990



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2014 Chevrolet Impala
was $27,900 NOW $22,870



2014 Chevrolet Impala
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2014 Chevrolet Impala
was $27,900 NOW $24,772



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2013 Chevrolet Malibu
was $19,900 NOW $16,777



2014 Chevrolet Malibu
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2010 Chevrolet Malibu LTZ
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