SERIES 5 • ISSUE 6 • FEBRUARY 9, 2015
CULLMANSENSE
COMMUNITY MATTERS


GUITARS AND MORE, LLC

GUITARS AND MORE, LLC COMING TO CULLMAN P4


CHELSEA SPARKS/CULLMANSENSE

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LOCAL VET REDUCES RATES AS PART OF SPAY/NEUTER AWARENESS MONTH P3


CHELSEA SPARKS/CULLMANSENSE

Elementary students enjoy pizza day in the CDC's lunchroom.

IT'S ABOUT THE WE, NOT THE ME

FORMER COACH LOOKS TO CREATE NEW CULTURE AT CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Chris Chambers was not expecting to end up where he did. He was happy and content at his school, J.B. Pennington, coaching baseball. It would seem that the powers that be, however, had another plan for him.

Two years ago, Chambers was asked to take a position that would not only change his P4

LARGEST JOB FAIR IN COUNTY HISTORY TO BE HELD AT END OF FEBRUARY

Will Hogue
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CULLMAN – On Saturday, Feb. 28, several Cullman agencies and departments are combining their specialties to present the largest job fair in Cullman's history. Individual companies in Cullman have had job fairs before, "but nothing like this," assured Assistant Director Dale Greer of the Cullman Economic Development Agency.

"What really made this job fair possible," said Greer, "is the [Cullman Economic Development Agency's] relationship with industry and other agencies within Cullman."

The job fair will be held on the campus of Wallace State Community College.

"We will have tents at each of the main entrances to point P2

CHAINSAW ARTIST CARVES STOOLS OUT OF STUMPS

FOUNDRY RESCUE MISSION AND RECOVERY CENTER'S FIRST GRADUATE TAKES SCULPTING TO A NEW LEVEL P4


CONTRIBUTED

David Hall specializes in creating benches, picnic tables, and chairs.


SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Hall receives most of his wood from trees that have fallen during storms or by donation.

SMITHSONIAN EXHIBITION COMES TO WSCC

Sharon Schuler Kreps
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HANCEVILLE – Last Thursday, a private reception was held at the Evelyn Burrow Museum at Wallace State. The reception served as a sneak peak at the much talked about Smithsonian Institute exhibition "The Way We Worked".

The traveling exhibition, "The Way We Worked", made its stop in Cullman County, settling in at The Evelyn Burrow Museum on the campus of Wallace State Community College in Hanceville. The exhibit will be at Wallace State from February 9 to March 20.

The Alabama Humanities Foundation was expressly chosen to host "The Way We Worked" as a part of the Museum on Main Street project. The Cullman area is one of only six communities in the state selected for the honor. The exhibit has been viewed in Valley, making previous stops in Athens and Pell City. From Cullman, it will travel to Demopolis and later to Dothan.

The project, which is a national, state and local partnership, brings P3



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Cullman is one of six communities in Alabama chosen to host the Smithsonian Institute's exhibition "The Way We Worked".

"LOVE MY LIBRARY" MONTH: CCPL WAIVES FINES

Sharon Schuler Kreps
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CULLMAN – February is known as the month of valentines and love, but the Cullman County Public Library System refers to it as "Love My Library" month. This means that from February 1-28, 2015 the library is granting amnesty, or forgiveness for fines.

"In honor of 'Love My Library' month, if a patron has overdue fines, or fines for using the incorrect book drop, we will waive the fines if they come to the library in person," said Library Director Max Hand. "If they have lost their library card or if it's torn up or broken, we will replace or upgrade their card free of charge this month as well. This is a $3 value." P2

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AL CHIEF JUSTICE ROY MOORE ORDERS PROBATE JUDGES NOT TO ISSUE SAME-SEX MARRIAGE LICENSES

WBRC Staff
Contributor

BIRMINGHAM, AL (WBRC) – Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore issued an order in which he instructs state probate judges to neither issue nor recognize a marriage license for same-sex couples late Sunday night.

The order states, "Effective immediately, no Probate Judge of the State of Alabama nor any agent or employee of any Alabama Probate Judge shall issue or recognize a marriage license that is inconsistent with Article 1, Section 36.03, of the Alabama Constitution or § 30-1-19, Ala. Code 1975."

The order goes on to state that if any probate judge fails to follow the state's constitution, "it would be the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer of the State of Alabama, Governor Robert Bentley... to ensure the execution of the law."

The 11th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals in Atlanta rejected the State of Alabama's request to issue a stay pending an appeal of the State's ban on gay marriage.

That rejection paved the way for same-sex marriages to begin on Monday.

GOOD HOPE RESIDENTS LEARN THE ART OF SEVERE STORM SPOTTING AND WEATHER SAFETY

Sharon Schuler Kreps
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GOOD HOPE – On Tuesday meteorologists Jennifer Saari and Chelly Amin from the National Weather Service in Huntsville came to the Good Hope Town Hall. The two discussed severe storm spotting and weather safety. When the meeting was over, those who attended the class were officially certified weather spotters. The National Weather Service in Huntsville, Cullman County EMA, and the City of Good Hope sponsored the event. "The National Weather Service needs real-time reports of hail size, wind damage, flash flooding, heavy rain, tornadoes, and waterspouts to effectively warn the public of inclement weather. Spotters will always be needed as the important link between radar indications of severe weather and ground truth.

Storm Spotter volunteers serve as severe weather spotters for the NWS and local emergency management programs, and generally have two things in common - an interest in the weather and a desire to serve their community," according to the National Weather Service.

"Tonight we are teaching people how to give severe weather reports to the Huntsville office and to emergency managers," said Saari, "so we can all work better together as a team during severe weather events or even winter weather events. I want to get to know my community better so I can get alerts out better and more efficiently," she smiled. "It's all about your safety and what you are seeing."

The class is open to everyone interested. "We offer these classes to all our counties in the spring and we'll do a select few in the fall as well," said Saari.

"We also do hospital and school talks throughout the year to reach out to everybody. We also do a deaf and hard of hearing talk as well, once a year, usually in the spring."

If you or someone you know are interested in becoming a severe storm spotter, go to weather.gov/chs/skywarn. For specific information about local weather, go to the National Weather Service in Huntsville's website at srh.noaa.gov/hun. Make sure to follow them on Facebook at facebook.com/NWSHuntsville and on Twitter at twitter.com/NWSHuntsville.

Library (from Front)

Patrons must visit the library to verify identity and request their fines be removed. Keep in mind, only overdue fines will be waived, not fees for lost or damaged items. If you or someone you know owes overdue book fines or needs a new library card, get to the library and take advantage of this generous event.

The Cullman County Public Library is located at 200 Clark Street NE Cullman, AL 35055 and their phone number is 256-734-1068. Their hours of operation are Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Tuesday and Thursday 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Saturday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Fair (from Front)

people in the right direction," said Greer.

As far as qualifications go, potential applicants should be authorized to work in the U.S., have no felony convictions in the past seven years, possess a high school diploma or G.E.D., and not be a full time employee at any of the three hiring companies."

The inspiration for the event came from a successful job fair held in Tuscaloosa in September of last year, which was attended by over 1,100 people and yielded 400 new employees.

Although there aren't many qualifications to be eligible to apply for an interview with one of the three companies, Greer explained how it is a competitive atmosphere when applying for a job at one of the automotive production companies: "The technology in these facilities requires a trained worker with more than a G.E.D."

Registration is currently open at CullmanJobsNow.com. Although people seeking employment will be able to register at the job fair on the day of the event, both Greer and Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce President Leah Bolin stressed the importance of registering as soon as possible.

"I like to call it a 'hiring fair,' instead of a 'job fair'," said Greer.

The company the applicants select on their registration form will interview the applicants on site at the job fair who have registered online.

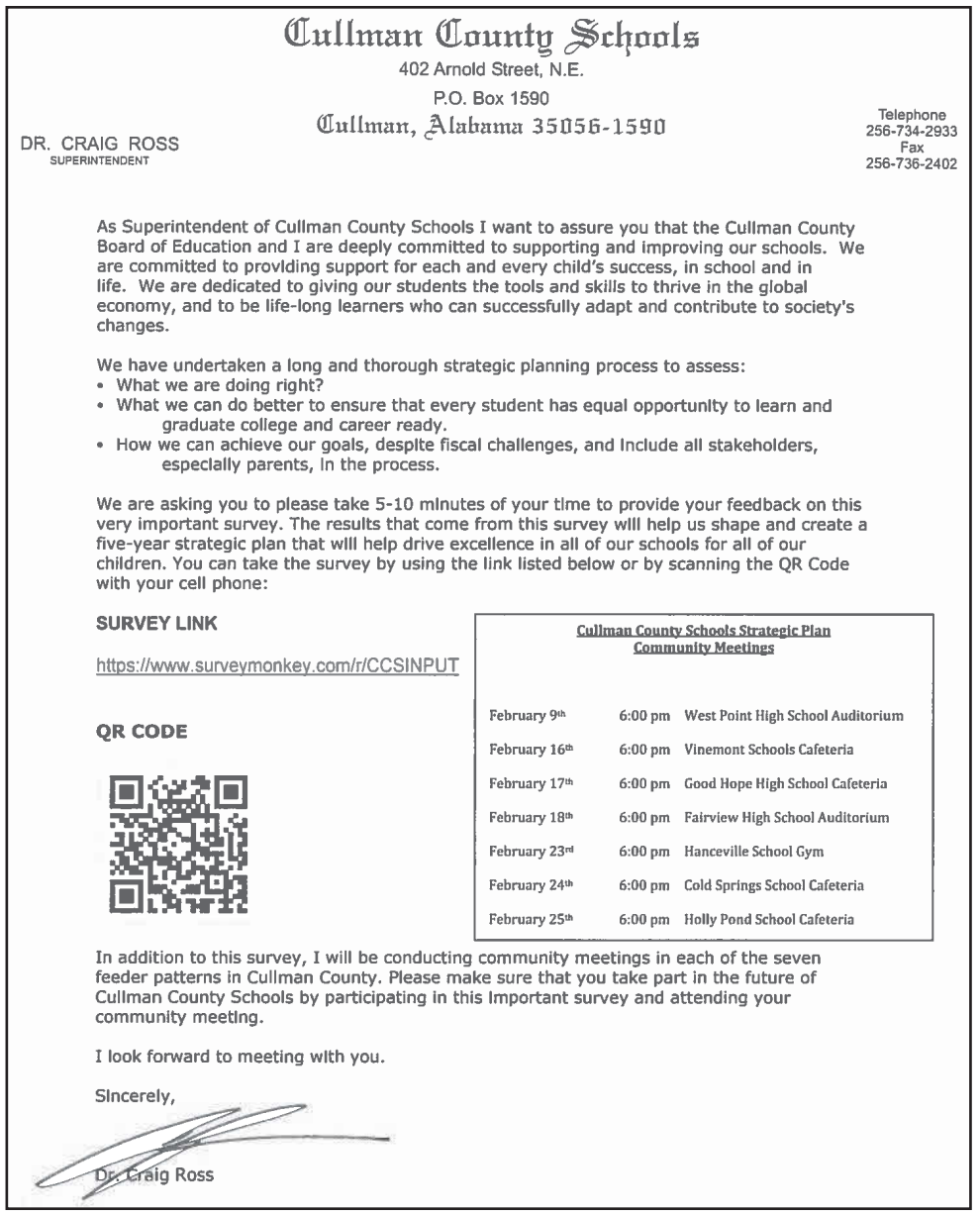
Bolin explained the range of people that the city hopes will come out to the job fair as located within an hour radius of Cullman, including Birmingham and Huntsville.

"We're recruiting people to commute, and we're recruiting people for relocation to Cullman," Bolin said.

As far as those who don't make the cut and are left out of the groups selected by Topre, Yutaka and REHAU, "The applicant's files will go into a database," said Greer.

"And companies who are looking to hire people in the future will go to those names and consider them to be hired."

The website CullmanJobsNow.com will close on February 24 while applicants get assigned and sorted out. The website will re-open on March 1 and will remain open for people to submit their résumé.



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SUPERINTENDENT

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As Superintendent of Cullman County Schools I want to assure you that the Cullman County Board of Education and I are deeply committed to supporting and improving our schools. We are committed to providing support for each and every child's success, in school and in life. We are dedicated to giving our students the tools and skills to thrive in the global economy, and to be life-long learners who can successfully adapt and contribute to society's changes.

We have undertaken a long and thorough strategic planning process to assess:
- What we are doing right?
- What we can do better to ensure that every student has equal opportunity to learn and graduate college and career ready.
- How we can achieve our goals, despite fiscal challenges, and include all stakeholders, especially parents, in the process.

We are asking you to please take 5-10 minutes of your time to provide your feedback on this very important survey. The results that come from this survey will help us shape and create a five-year strategic plan that will help drive excellence in all of our schools for all of our children. You can take the survey by using the link listed below or by scanning the QR Code with your cell phone:

SURVEY LINK

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CCSINPUT

QR CODE

Cullman County Schools Strategic Plan
Community Meetings

February 9th	6:00 pm	West Point High School Auditorium
February 16th	6:00 pm	Vinemont Schools Cafeteria
February 17th	6:00 pm	Good Hope High School Cafeteria
February 18th	6:00 pm	Fairview High School Auditorium
February 23rd	6:00 pm	Hanceville School Gym
February 24th	6:00 pm	Cold Springs School Cafeteria
February 25th	6:00 pm	Holly Pond School Cafeteria

In addition to this survey, I will be conducting community meetings in each of the seven feeder patterns in Cullman County. Please make sure that you take part in the future of Cullman County Schools by participating in this important survey and attending your community meeting.

I look forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely,

Dr. Craig Ross

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FAIRVIEW HIGH SCHOOL FISHING TEAM MAKES A SPLASH

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FAIRVIEW – In its second year, Fairview High School's fishing team is gearing up for the long season ahead of them. Many may not know, but the newest sport to hit high schools all over the state is fishing. Last year, Fairview High School became the first in the county to boast a fishing team. Out of the 67 existing teams in Alabama, Fairview finished 36th.

The Alabama Student Anglers Bass Fishing Association (ASABFA) hosts tournaments all over the state, but instead of big money prizes, they offer scholarships to the winning teams. Three Alabama colleges have angling teams so far, with Alabama University and Auburn University soon to follow.

This year, not only will they be fishing in the ASABFA tournaments, but they will also be starting a new trail this season. The Alabama Bass Nation, a sister program to B.A.S.S., will be sponsoring the trail. There is also talk of an additional trail that will have an adult and a high school team member fishing together.

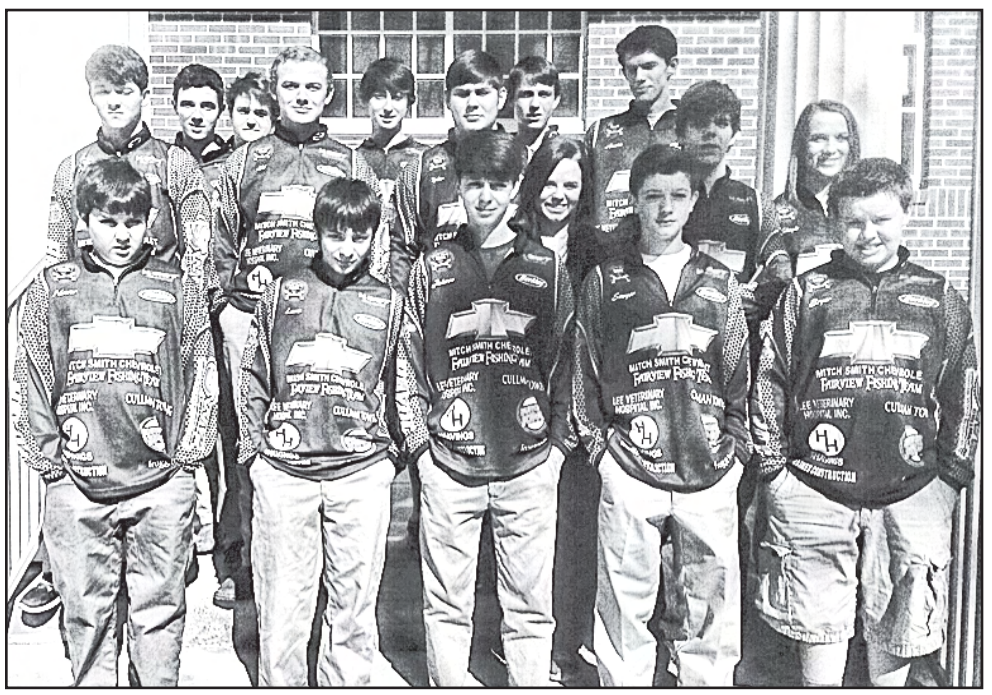
Fairview's team is comprised of male and female students ranging from grades 7-12. With only two seniors on the team, these kids will be fishing for Fairview's team for years to come. They have also reeled in sponsorship by Simcoe Wood, Mitch Smith Chevrolet, Walmart, Berkeley Bob's and Abu Garcia.

Aggie fishing team coach, Heath Daniel, bragged on the involvement of all the parents, his assistant coaches and his nine boat captains. "Without them, all of this couldn't happen so successfully." He also said, "If other parents would like to see what our fishing tournaments are like, we will be having our county tournament on June 20." With all schools in the county having teams, everyone will be represented at the county tournament. This includes Cullman High School.

Coach Daniel and his team of 17 young men and women begin their season on Valentine's Day at Wheeler. They will be fishing from February 14 until July.

Tournament Dates:

- February 14 – Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge, Decatur
- March 7 – Neely Henry Lake, Gadsden



ALEX THORNTON/CULLMANSENSE

Fairview High School's fishing team consists of Sawyer Daniel, Bryar Chambers, Isaac Chandler, Jack Chandler, Cannon Twilley, Austin Scott, Noah Garnett, Hunter House, Lance Gandy, Cameron Bailey, Eli Denney, Shayla Denney, Mckayla Waters, Blake Kent, Cody Fallin, Tyler Pendergrass, and Jake Roberts.

LOCAL VET REDUCES RATES AS PART OF SPAY/NEUTER AWARENESS MONTH

Chelsea Sparks
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CULLMAN – February is a month we often associate with love, but it is also National Spay/Neuter awareness month. Many clinics across Alabama will be participating in some way to spread awareness and offer deals on the service. Northside Veterinary Hospital is reducing their rates in an effort to not only kickstart business for spring, but also to reduce the overpopulation of cats and dogs.

Starting the week of February 16, Northside will be offering discounted rates for spay and neutering pets. "We will be booking as many appointments as possible for that week," said Susie Dickerson, DVM. "We will move on into the next week if the first week fills up. Price will vary depending on sex and weight."

According to Dickerson, it will cost $55 to spay female cats and $35 to neuter males. Also, female dogs under 60 lbs. will be $85 dollars to spay, and females over 60 lbs. will cost $100. To neuter your male dog that is under 60 lbs. it will cost $70, and over 60 lbs. will be $85.

"We participated in a spay and neuter week last year and had a lot of numbers," said Dickerson. "And typically our spay/neuter prices are pretty low anyway but we wanted to do some discounts so that those who have a stray in the neighborhood might be able to bring them in. This is the time of year where cats and dogs start getting pregnant and we have that big boom of puppies and kittens."

Any animal shelter will tell you about the importance of fixing your animals. Stray dogs and cats having litters is often detrimental to both mother and puppies, with lack of food and shelter, many animals suffer unnecessarily. Dickerson wants the public to know that animals like cats do not have to be tamed to be brought in and fixed. She says if you can catch it, they can operate.

"We have two doctors and two surgery rooms set up and we are ready to be busy," said Dickerson. "We see our share of unwanted animals that need homes, and if there is a way to help then we try to. We also want people that have wild or feral cats to know that if they can catch them in a live trap and bring them in, then that is fine. You catch them, and we will fix them."

Dickerson asks that everyone book his or her appointment in advance so that the hospital does not over book. Spay and neutering will start on Feb. 16 and run through Friday, Feb. 20. They will book appointments into the next week should the need arise. Call 256-734-5557 to book an appointment or to obtain more information. Northside Veterinary Hospital is located at 1933 Saint Joseph Drive NW in Cullman.

Exhibition (from Front)

exhibitions and programs to rural, cultural organizations as a way to explore both the people and the professions that sustain American society.

"We are very happy to have so many people come out on this cold winter night to be with us," said Elaine Fuller, director of the Cullman County Museum. "We had people here tonight that told their stories. For instance, Joe Brindley told the Brindley family story. We also have some artifacts that people have not seen before, so we are anxious to see everyone's reactions to the things we have."

Mr. Brindley wasn't the only person at the event telling his history. Richard Buettner was there, sitting on a Buettner Brother's Bench and telling the crowd the Buettner family story. Mr. Bud Moon was there talking about the King Edward cigar plant. Moon was a chief mechanic at the plant for years and knows all about King Edward. "One thing that makes Museum on Main Street a success is the amount of local community involvement," said Armand DeKeyser, executive director of the Alabama Humanities Foundation. "You are very lucky to have the number of mayors and a community that is obviously involved. You have a great executive director who has been real active and very helpful in making this thing go forward. I congratulate you now, I can just tell by looking at this that it is going to be really, really successful. The exhibits look wonderful!"

Both the Cullman County Museum and Wallace State Community College encourage you to come out and see the amazing display of Cullman County history. Remember, the exhibit will be here for a limited time only, so make plans to visit anytime from February 9 to March 20. The Evelyn Burrow Museum at Wallace State is located at 801 Main St NW, Hanceville, Alabama 35077. For more information call 256-352-8457, follow them on Facebook at Facebook.com/TheWayWeWorkedCullman and visit their website at CullmanSmithsonian.com.

Subscribe to CullmanSense today and have it delivered to your door for only $40 a year.



GUITARS AND MORE, LLC COMING TO CULLMAN FEBRUARY 21

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CULLMAN – Business and industry are both booming in Cullman, and now even more companies are taking notice. Guitars and More, LLC is a quickly growing music shop that originated in Gardendale, Alabama. After seeing the amazing happenings in the way of music, art and business in Cullman, the business has decided to expand its reach here by opening a new store.

Guitars and More was started by Dustin Honeycutt and has become a staple music stop for all musicians, both professional and amateur, in the Gardendale area. Eric Gibson, general manager of the Gardendale store, said that the response to their store was intense and things took off from there.

"We were at our first location for eight months and the demand was just so insane that we completely outgrew the store in that time," Gibson said. "We had to find a place and quadruple the size of the store."

Gibson then said that their sights turned to another area that has been in need of a solid retail outlet for instruments, Cullman.

"We looked at Cullman and realized there was a vacuum," Gibson stated.

"There is no solid music store offering out there that carries premium brands so we decided to make a move and Cullman was the place to go. Mainly because Cullman is an amazing city, like the cool little warehouse district and downtown, and every time you turn around there is something hip going on like a street festival or music festival."

According to Gibson, he and the owner Dustin Honeycutt, were also impressed with the up and coming music scene that is sweeping across the city.

"There is a really hip rock scene up there too," he said.

"We came up to sponsor the Bikers, Bands & BBQ that was put on by Deep South Tattoos, and man, there was some of the best rock bands I have seen in a long time, and they were all out of Cullman. It's just amazing what is happening."

The new store will feature only premium lines of guitars, drums, amps and many more instruments.

Gibson has been playing guitar for 25 years and is immensely proud of the quality of their product line.

"These are premium guitars and equipment," Gibson said.

"There is no budget stuff in here. Every line has an entry level to it, but we do not sell the weird off brands where quality is an issue. You can get quality and not break the bank."

The new location will be located at 1405C 2nd Ave SW by Tobacco for Less where Cash Mart was formerly located.

The grand opening will take place on February 21, and Gibson says everyone is encouraged to come out and see what Guitars and More, LLC has to offer.

"We are excited for the opportunity to involve ourselves in the community," said Gibson. "It is up and coming and we want to be on board."

CDC (from Front)

job title, it would change his life and the lives of teachers and students at the Cullman Child Development Center (CDC).

"I'm an old coach," said Chambers. "I've been a coach for 21 years, and a special educator for 17 years. I was perfectly happy coaching and teaching at J.B. Pennington High School. So I thought I was just keep teaching and coaching. I have seen seven different administrators in my career, some were really great and some were lacking. After the last one I was with, I thought that maybe it was time that I start looking for a job in administration. I was never looking very hard though."

Then Chambers got a call from Cullman County's former superintendent, and a shift that Chambers could not have predicted happened.

"One day I was out mowing the baseball field," said Chambers.

"And it was Mr. Billy Coleman. He asked me if I had ever thought about applying for this position he had here in Cullman County. He said he would like me to at least come and interview, so I did. About four days later I was back out on the baseball field when I got the call and he offered me the job."

From that point on, life changed for Chambers and his family, but it also changed for everyone at the school.

Under his leadership, the school has been revitalized, and there is a sense of excitement brewing at the school. According to Chambers, his first goal was to set up a network of support not only within the school, but in the community as well.

"My career has been spent with secondary special education students," said Chambers.

"And Mrs. Mitchell, who I call our local genius, was hired and her career has been spent with small children. So we make a good team, and we came in together and hit the ground running. We are trying to change the culture, and start saying 'yes' more than we say 'no'. We went out and started talking to the community, getting our stakeholders and parents involved."

In two years time, Chambers and his staff have painted the school from a drab, dull yellow to a light and calming blue.

They have set up more means of communication for the teachers and support staff, and Chambers has also brought in new technology that better enables students to learn, and teachers to educate more effectively.

"What I am doing is coaching all over again," Chambers said.

"One of my main goals here is to change the culture. I want people to have the feeling of 'what I say means something', because our teachers and aides are where the rubber meets the road. I can preach to them all day, but they have to understand that it is the 'we' not the 'me'. It's all of us together, and they have a voice. Empowering our teachers is so important, so we made a faculty and student committee where they can plan things like faculty dinners and field trips."

A grant for new iPads, light diffusers for sensory sensitivity, new printers for faculty, and a more cohesive team has revitalized the area where our special needs kids grow and learn.

In addition to these achievements, the school has also turned from the one stop for special needs students to a place where they are constantly working to transition out to mainstream schools.

"When I first came here, this was a place where kids came here, stayed here and never transitioned out," Chambers said.

"So now we have a transition program in place. We have several that are scheduled to transition out this year. Transition is hard, because you have to be very open and transparent and realize that this not only affects the child, but the parents, teachers and other staff. It is not easy, but it is worthwhile."

Principal Chambers and his entire staff have done incredible work for the special education community in this county in a mere two years time.

According to Chambers, what has been done is the tip of the iceberg for the overhaul that he hopes to see in the system.

CDC is located at 17600 U.S. 31 Cullman, AL 35058 and can be reached at 256-739-0486.

Chainsaw (from Front)

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Hidden away on a beautiful farm is a man who can turn an old piece of wood or a fallen tree stump into fine furniture. But the best part about his work is that he does it all by only using a chainsaw. David Hall has taken his God-given talent and put it to good use.

"I basically get a chainsaw and make furniture," Hall said shyly.

"I also make smaller things like flower pots, bowls, boxes and whatever else I can see in the wood. My grandfather taught me how to make split rail fences, build bridges and make these chairs. And the rest just started coming to me. I started making furniture about six years ago."

Hall's specialty is long wooden benches, rustic picnic tables and chunky chairs that sit comfortably.

He usually gets his wood from the trees that have fallen during storms or by donation. Whatever the size, he can use all the tree stumps and wood with which he comes into contact.

Not only is Hall a gifted artist, but he is also the Program Manager at the Foundry Farm. Additionally he is the Foundry's first graduate.

Humble and kind, he remains at the farm and helps other young men who have struggled with the same addiction issues he had.

The Foundry is a rescue mission and recovery center. Their mission is to restore hope and rebuild the lives of the addict, the ex-inmate and the destitute through Christ-centered recovery, re-entry and rescue.

"I had pretty much given up on life and was dealing with a lot of hurt. I didn't really know how to process it. I just couldn't make sense of anything," Hall explained.

"They [the Foundry Farm] allowed me to come here. It was just so peaceful," he smiled.

"The people that were here loved on me and encouraged me for no reason other than that's what God told them to do... And I had to know more about it. It changed everything for me. Without the Foundry, none of my dreams would have been realized again."

Hall's handiwork can be seen scattered throughout the property at the farm.

Campsites and meeting places are adorned with his long benches and chairs. He has also taught some of the current residents of the Foundry Farm the skill of chainsaw-made furniture.

"I donate a piece of my work to Wallace every year for their scholarship fund," he added.

"I usually take one of the guys that I've been mentoring and counseling with me. They allow him to speak about what he's doing as well as how he's doing. I also do some things for local businesses."

Hall doesn't do his chainsaw work as a business; he mainly does it because he enjoys it.

He also uses some of the money he's earned from the sales of his work to go towards a scholarship for another young man in need of the help.

After all, someone donated the money to get him the help he needed from the farm nearly six years ago.

He is a firm believer of paying it forward. Unfortunately, his work has suffered a setback recently.

"Last Tuesday somebody broke in and stole all my big saws, so we've been put on hold for a while," he shook his head sadly.

"But God's been great through it; some people raised some money and replaced one of the saws so that was enough to keep me going."

If you or someone you know would like to donate any fallen or cut trees, David would be glad to take it off your hands and make something wonderful out of it.

Also, if you have any information about his stolen saws, he would like to hear from you.

He can be reached by e-mail at dhall@thefoundryonline.org or by visiting his Facebook page at facebook.com/CustomChainsawCreations.

For more information about The Foundry, visit thefoundryonline.org.

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AVE MARIA GROTTO CREATOR BROTHER JOSEPH ZOETTL LEAVES HIS MARK IN CULLMAN

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CULLMAN – Saint Bernard's own Brother Joseph Zoettl was a Benedictine Monk who humbly created what has become one of Cullman's most beloved attractions – the Ave Maria Grotto. Using small items such as marbles, beads, seashells, costume jewelry, tile, pottery and other similar things, the monk was able to make perfect miniature replicas of beautiful buildings and religious structures from all over the world.

Joseph Zoettl was born in Landshut, Bavaria on January 24, 1878. As a youngster he was involved in an accident that left him with a hunchback. As a teenager, he immigrated to the United States and settled in Cullman. Before long he began studying at the brand new Benedictine monastery – St. Bernard. He proudly took his vows in 1897.

After he served in the monastery for several years, Brother Joseph was assigned to run the monastery's power plant in 1911. He worked 17-hour days for 30 years and was, even by a monk's standards, a withdrawn, quiet man.

While Brother Joseph worked in the power plant, he began to take up a few hobbies, such as experimenting with building things using concrete. The first thing he constructed was a church, which is still in existence today.

A year later he began working on some small oriental buildings, which were later called Little Jerusalem.

Before long, what we now know as the Ave Maria Grotto was built in what was an old rock quarry located at St. Bernard.

The grotto was built without blueprints or plans, Brother Joseph used postcards and pictures found in magazines and newspapers to create his masterpieces.

On May 17, 1934 the Ave Maria Grotto was dedicated and Brother Joseph continued his work for the next 40 years. He used materials that were sent to him from all over the world. He built his last model, the Basilica in Lourdes, at the age of 80, in 1958.

Sadly, Brother Joseph passed away on October 15, 1961 at the age of 83 years old. He was buried in a special bronze coffin. The cost and quality of the coffin represented the esteem in which his fellow monks held him.

The grotto has made the abbey famous; thousands of people come from all over the United States each year journey to see the works of this great monk.

Ave Maria Grotto is located at 600 Saint Bernard Drive, Cullman, AL 35055. For more information, call 800-722-0999, visit their webpage at avemariagrotto.com or like them on Facebook at facebook.com/avemariagrotto.



FACEBOOK.COM/AVEMARIAGROTTO

Brother Joseph Zoettl was known as a withdrawn and quiet man.

MIRRORING HISTORY: YORK'S STANDARD SERVICE STATION

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

PHELAN – York's Standard Service Station was located across Highway 31 from the Wells Motel & Café. The older picture was from the grand opening in 1955. Charles York ran the station until 1987, and owned the property until 2014 when Ricky Peek purchased it from him.

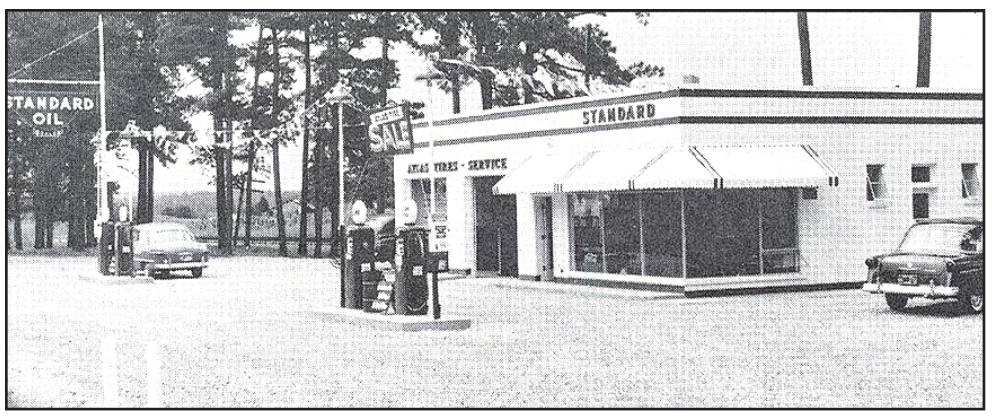
One story about the establishment states that on May 20, 1977 a deer jumped through the big front glass window into the office, and made a mess of the office before lying down and dying in there.

The deer had run across the highway, was going around the station when a train went by and spooked it. The deer turned around and headed back across Highway 31 when a car almost hit it.

As a result, the deer turned around and ran back towards the station. When the deer saw the reflection of the woods across the highway in the glass window, it dove through it and died moments later.

POSITION AVAILABLE

Program Facilitator needed for local domestic violence intervention program.
Full time, BS degree required. Send resume to: vsoced@vsoccullman.org



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

York's Standard Service Station opened in 1955.



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Today the service station building is vacant.

You are Invited
to the*link* of Cullman County's
Annual event
flourish
Thursday, March 5th
11:30am til 1:00pm
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RSVP
Tickets $25 by Feb 18th
the*link*
Get your tickets at www.linkingcullman.org/events

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OUTSTANDING CITIZENS

MEET JERRY JACOB: FOUNDER OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN CLINIC

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Cullman County has a lot of very special and loving citizens. Jerry Jacob is one of them. A reverend and deacon at Grace Episcopal Church, Jerry has been instrumental in spreading the Word of God within the church and by his service in the community.

Being the Business Manager at Saint Bernard, Jerry is a very busy man. Thankfully he took a few minutes out of his day to sit down and talk about his role in the creation of the Good Samaritan Clinic located at 401 Arnold St NE Suite A, Cullman, Alabama 35055.

The Good Samaritan Health Clinic is a fully functioning medical clinic with onsite lab for blood work and prescription medications (non-narcotic only).

The clinic serves all Cullman County residents who are uninsured and meet the qualification requirements.

Their goal is to greatly impact their patients' health in a positive, long-term way, as well as to keep them employed.

"I don't know what it would be like to be without healthcare," Jerry said.

"I could imagine it though. And I could also imagine not having enough money to get it and how absolutely devastating it's got to be to a person's feelings and so forth. They must think, 'I'm at the bottom and I'm going to die sooner than I should because I can't afford my health!'"

"Look at what it means to be healthy enough to work, to be an active part of a family," he continued, "and what it means to the economy and to this community to have people who aren't spending 8, 10, even 20 nights in the emergency room in a year's time, taking away resources from the ER that they cannot pay for - and given a prescription they cannot fill. And they are still sick when they show back up," he softened.

> **"The Clinic makes incredible sense in many different aspects, but the main reason is to love your neighbor."**
> Jerry Jacob, Founder of The Good Samaritan Clinic

"The Clinic makes incredible sense in many different aspects, but the main reason is to love your neighbor. That's the biggest reason for the clinic."

Jerry's obvious love for others shines through in everything he does. He's not one to seek praise or credit for the wonderful things he has been involved in, including the Good Samaritan Clinic.

Even though he was instrumental in the birth of the clinic, he'll quickly give credit to everyone in town who helped in the project. Humility is a word that describes Jerry and there are not a lot of people who can claim that quality.

"It was such a blessing to be able to do it [open the clinic]," Jerry said humbly. "I know who is not in charge – I wasn't in charge," he smiled. "I know it takes somebody to look after the details and make sure things are done properly, but way too many things happened that we had no control over. I'm not the being that needs to be recognized."

We are lucky to have a gentleman like Jerry as a friend and neighbor. God is really working through this man in many different ways.

Whether ministering in church or helping the poor in the community, Jerry loves people and wants to help them. He is certainly a fine example of one of Cullman's many outstanding citizens.



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Along with his role at The Good Samaritan Health Clinic, Jerry Jacob is also a reverend and deacon at Grace Episcopal Church and the Business Manager at Saint Bernard.

If you or someone you know cannot afford healthcare, the Good Samaritan Clinic may be able to help out. They are located at 401 Arnold St NE Suite A, Cullman, Alabama 35055. Their phone number is 256-775-1389. Like them on Facebook at facebook.com/pages/Good-Samaritan-Health-Clinic/476642269015721 and visit their website at GSHealthClinic.org.

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.

CULLMAN COUNTY HAS A NEW SPELLING BEE CHAMP

FAIRVIEW MIDDLE SCHOOL'S LEXY GAMBRILL IS A NATURAL BORN SPELLER

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

FAIRVIEW – On Monday, children from all over Cullman County gathered together to compete in the annual Cullman County Spelling Bee. Twenty-Five anxious boys and girls stood bravely on the big stage in Fairview's auditorium and spelled their hearts out.

"This is the 88th spelling bee for Cullman County," said Denise Schuman, Cullman County Spelling Bee Coordinator.

"It is the preliminary for the State, so whoever the winner is tonight will go on to compete in the state spelling bee. We have kids here from 25 schools, including city schools, county schools and private schools. Our contestants this year were from 4th grade through 8th grade."

Most think spelling bees consists of a bunch of children taking turns spelling words correctly, but Monday night's bee was a little different.

"We will alternate between spelling rounds and vocabulary rounds," Shuman explained.

"In the spelling rounds, kids are given a word and they are to spell it. In the vocabulary rounds, they are given a word and then a sentence and they will choose the correct answer. For example: The vocabulary word is Porridge. The question is, 'What is porridge is made from? A. grain or B. fur?' and they would have to answer. They can be eliminated for not being able to spell the word correctly, or not getting the vocabulary word correctly."



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Assistant Cullman County Superintendent Brandon Payne stands with 2015 Cullman County Spelling Bee winner Lexy Gambrill.

The night's winner will represent Cullman at State on March 7 at the First Methodist Church in Alabaster. But that's not the only thing the winner will get. "The winner will walk away with a lot of neat prizes," Shuman beamed proudly.

"He or she will receive a beautiful trophy from Awards Palace, an ice cream cake from Dairy Queen, a gift card to Moe's Original BBQ, and $100 cash from Mitch Smith. All the contestants received a t-shirt compliments of Peoples Bank and Battleground Screen Printers."

She added, "They also got a day pass for their family to the Aquatics Center, free bowling games, free sandwiches from Chick-fil-A and a couple other things. We've had a lot of community support for them."

After a tough competition and 10 rounds of spelling bee action, Fairview's Lexy Gambrill became Cullman County's 2015 Spelling Bee Representative.

Lexy, a 6th grader, is the daughter of Fairview Principal Chris Gambrill and wife Valerie. Lexy has always loved words and enjoys spelling them around the house.

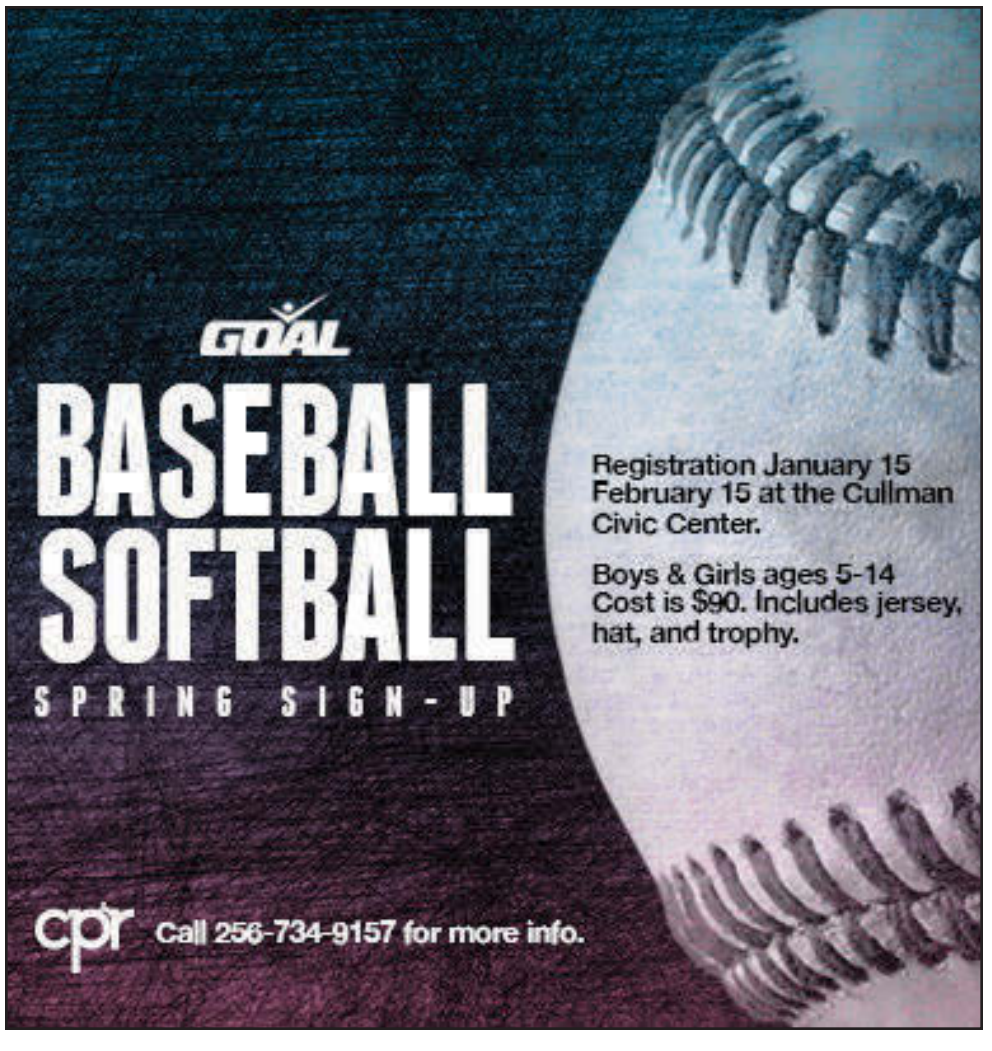
Her hobby has proven to come in handy this year as she takes home the prized title of the county's top speller.

When asked what she planned to do with the cash and gift card to Moe's, Lexy had the following to say, "I plan to repay my momma back for my sister's Christmas presents," she giggled. "I love Moe's BBQ. My favorite thing is their barbeque nachos."

If you weren't able to make it to this year's spelling bee, there is still a chance to watch it. The Cullman County Spelling Bee will be aired on WCQT this year. TV-27 can be found on broadcast channel 27 (antenna) and Cullman Charter cable channel 16.

Air Times

- Thursday, February 5 at 7 a.m.
- Friday, February 6 at 7:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.
- Saturday, February 7 at 8 p.m.
- Sunday, February 8 at 7:30 a.m.





CHELSEA SPARKS/CULLMANSENSE

Perrie Elrod, Tonya Dunn and Adriann Basch, along with volunteers, simulate a trauma scenario.

LEARNING CONSEQUENCES

CRMC TRAUMA PREVENTION CLASS TEACHES YOUNG ADULTS THE IMPACT OF THEIR DECISIONS

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – The Trauma Prevention Program for teens at Cullman Regional Medical Center is entering its fifth year of education and service. In that time, hundreds of teens have come through the program and will hopefully leave with a better understanding of how the smallest of decisions can have the greatest of impacts.

The program works in conjunction with the County District Court Office to help youth get a clearer picture of what can happen when it comes to poor decision-making. The majority of these participants are referred to the program because of a traffic violation such as speeding or running a stoplight; still others can sign up for the educational experience alone.

"There was a lady that wrote a thesis on it [the program]," said Perrie Elrod, education coordinator for the Trauma Prevention Program. "So Birmingham Hospital started it, and our judges here in town like Judge Chaney asked us to start the program. So we raised the money to get the program started, and it is now self-funded by the court ordered $50 participation fee."

The unique aspect to this program is the personal and hands-on approach. Students witness a staged 'code' situation where healthcare professionals simulate what happens when you are brought into the ER as a trauma patient. Catheters, IVs and even a chest tube are placed with rapid efficiency as the team paints the picture of how there is no time to waste in a trauma scenario.

"When this person started their day, this was not on their list," Chaplain Tony Tidwell said, gesturing to the mannequin playing the patient.

"How did they get from starting a normal day to this point? Well, it all involves the decisions they made. We are not here to beat you up, but we do want you to walk out of here more aware of the decisions you make. A lot of you are in here for speeding, and most of the time it is because you were going to be late to class or to work. Think about how much time you're actually going to save by speeding. Maybe 3-5 minutes? Is it worth it?"

Following this exercise, teens were split into two groups where they were shown both the emergency room (ER) and operating rooms. Tonya Dunn, ER manager and coordinator, guided the class to their trauma rooms where emergency cases are worked on.

"I want you to look up," Dunn said to the teens. "For many, those ceiling tiles are the last thing they ever see. That is what we are trying to prevent. I do not want those tiles to be the last thing I see, and I don't want them to be the last thing you see."

The operating room is a hard part of the program for many to stomach, as graphic images from patients seen by the surgeons and nurses at CRMC are shown. A simple mistake of speeding cost one woman the basic function in her leg, and many surgeries after, she was thrown through a windshield; each slide painted the picture of the consequences that could happen from a lapse in judgment.

By the end of the program, some students were taking a second look at the decisions they make.

"This program is pretty eye-opening," said Savannah Mork, 18. "A lot of people don't think of the consequences when they're doing something, they just live for the moment. I realize now that anything can have consequences, like speeding or running a stop sign, any of it can have an effect."

Kelsey Damis, 19, thought that the class was much more engaging than the typical driving course.

"I've been to driving school before," said Damis, "and I will say that it is interactive. You're not bored the whole time, which gives you more incentive to pay attention. I learned some things from driving school, but I mostly just heard rules of the road, which I already knew. It wouldn't make me rethink how I drive like this [program]."

One of the older participants, Sam Martin, 21, also stated that the program was much more engaging than the typical classes you would take.

"This has made me more aware of how I drive," Martin said. "But it has also made me think of how it affects others on the road. Like they told us, I don't want to be in a situation where I come out fine, but it affects a whole other family. I really enjoyed this program, and it was definitely eye-opening."



Looking for a Super Opportunity?

Wallace State Community College and community partners will host the

Cullman Jobs Fair

College of Nursing Center

February 28th

8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Industries represented include:

- REHAU Incorporated
- Topre America Corporation
- Alabama Cullman Yutake Technologies

Participants are strongly encourage to preregister by visiting

cullmanjobsnow.com

and complete the online application

2017847

For more information call the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce at 256-734-0454

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- Industrial Maintenance – Must Have Experience!

Must be able to pass drug screen and background check.

TO APPLY COME TO OUR OFFICE AT 1637 TOWNSQUARE SW CULLMAN

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.

City Council Meeting
The City Council Meeting will be held at 7 p.m. at City Hall. Meetings are held on the second and fourth Mondays of the month.

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.

'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.

"Called to Write" Meeting
This group is a collection of writers in the Cullman area who meet the second Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at Books-A-Million.

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 at 256-595-0515 or Rita at 256-507-0358.

Church Group Wednesday Nights at CWAC
Youth groups, Sunday School Classes and other Church groups are invited to take part in 'Church Group Nights at Cullman Wellness and Aquatic Center every Wednesday night from 6 p.m. until 11 p.m. Please call 256-775-SWIM (7946).

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.

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.

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.

Seed Starting and Light Making Workshop
This workshop will cover the basics of starting vegetable, herb and flower seeds and how to keep them alive! There will be an optional light making workshop at the end, so that you can provide your seedlings with enough light. $5 program, $15 for light workshop. Take home your tray of seedlings and lighting system. This workshop will be from 6-8 p.m. at the North Alabama Agriplex. Call 256-297-1044 for more information.

"Brothers Hypnotic" Screening
The South Arts' Southern Circuit Tour of Independent Film at Wallace State Community College resumes in February with a free screening of the documentary "Brothers Hypnotic." The movie will be screened on Thursday, Feb. 12 at 6 p.m. in the Recital Hall of the Burrow Center for the Fine and Performing Arts.

Friday

'Wii Bowling' at the Donald E. Green Senior Center
The entertainment for senior citizens is 'Wii Bowling' at the Donald E. Green Senior Center starting at 1 p.m. Everyone is invited. Come enjoy some exercise (but not too physical!) and fellowship with friends. They bowl every Wednesday and Friday afternoons at 1 p.m.

Nimble Thimble Quilt Guild of Cullman
Members of the Nimble Thimble Quilt Guild of Cullman will gather at the Colonel Cullman Museum starting at 9:30 a.m. All interested quilters are invited to attend this meeting. items for sale books, cookbooks, seasonal toys and gift items, and other great deals for the shoppers! Further info 256-737-2600.

Saturday

Happy Valentine's Day
There are a variety of fun and romantic activities for you and your significant other to enjoy right here in Cullman on this special day!

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

Next Monday

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

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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.

LOCAL ENTERTAINMENT
Sponsored by Busy Bee Café

Monday
- 79 cent wings at Rodney G's Hickory Grill from 6-9 p.m.
- City Council Meeting at 7 p.m. at City Hall.

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.
- Trivia Night at Rodney G's at 7 p.m.
- Happy Hour at Moe's from 3-7 p.m.
- "Called to Write" Group meeting at 7 p.m. at Books-A-Million

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
- 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.
- Brothers Hynoptic Screening from 6-8 p.m. at WSCC Burrow Center
- Seed Starting and Light Making Workshop from 6-8 p.m. at Agriplex

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
- Happy Valentine's Day
- 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

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

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MOMS HELPING MOMS EXPO SEES STRONG TURNOUT

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com



CHELSEA SPARKS/CULLMANSENSE

Crowds shop and talk at the 2nd Annual Moms Helping Moms Expo.

CULLMAN – Moms from across the county came out to shop and learn at the 2nd annual Moms Helping Moms Expo on Saturday. The expo is an extension of the popular Facebook group founded by Tiffiney Crawford and Heather Self, which works to create a supportive group for moms from every walk of life.

The expo took place at First United Methodist Church in Cullman. The group has two goals for the expo, according to co-founder Heather Self: to highlight local businesses which moms like and to create a stronger local community of moms.

"We have 36 vendors here today," Self said. "We had a much better turn out this year with it just being our second year. We had so many people advertising for us, it has really been a blessing. It has also been a blessing for these small business owners. That is really where our heart is because many of these vendors are stay-at-home moms who are doing this out of their house."

One such small business owner is April Powell, who owns the business Taters & Tutus with her husband Shaun Powell. The main product of the business that people in the area are raving about is their Baltic Amber necklaces; the necklaces are worn by both babies and adults to help with inflammation.

For babies, it helps soothe aches from teething and growing pains, while for adults it can help with joint pain and arthritis.

"The necklaces are made overseas in Europe," said April Powell.

"You can only get them from areas that are close to the Baltic Sea. I got started doing it by looking for something I could do from home, and I wanted something that no one else in the area was doing. One day I was talking with a friend about the necklaces and realized that no one in Cullman was selling them."

She went on to say that business was good at the expo, and she was pleased with the turnout.

"I have sold four necklaces already and we just hit the first hour," said Powell.

"I think this is very beneficial for vendors, but also for these moms. I remember having my twin boys and there wasn't anything like this around. It can be stressful when you have a baby and no one to talk to. So this gives the opportunity to talk to other moms and help other moms."

Classes were also given every hour at the expo by businesses like The Crunchy Bean who taught a class on cloth diapers and baby wearing. The Hope Christian Academy also taught a class at the event called "So You Think You Want to Homeschool" and also a class with N2 College: Scholarship Jump Start program that taught parents how to get money for kids' education as early as kindergarten.

According to co-founder Heather Self, the expo has been a huge success in its second year and with any luck next year will be even better. "We have been so blessed this year," Self said. "We have brought so many of our moms together and have nearly quadrupled our profits from last year. The profits will go to helping other moms and families in the community when the need arises."

For more on Moms Helping Moms visit Facebook.com/MHMCullman.

CIVIC CENTER HOSTS SPECIAL NEEDS VALENTINE'S DAY DANCE

Will Hogue
will@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – This Valentine's Day, Cullman Parks & Recreation's therapeutic program will hold its 3rd annual Special Needs Valentine's Dance.

"No need to sign up," says CP&R Marketing and Program Coordinator Waid Harbison.

The event is free to attend and will start up at the Cullman Civic Center at 6 p.m. and will continue until 8 p.m.

The product of a committee, the Margaret Jean Jones Center, several school programs in the county, and a few other bodies of people, CP&R's therapeutic program held its first event back in 2012 being the Valentine's Dance, and since then, the event has been a favorite of members in the program.

"Some of the [members of the program] have been calling about the Valentine's Dance since just after the Christmas party," Harbison said. Previous years' attendance ranged from 100-250 people.

Harbison explained how crucial it is for the families of special needs children and adults to have the opportunity to talk and relax with one another sometimes.

"It's hard, you know," he said, "And it's important for these people to have the opportunity to sit back and relax because so often they have to be on guard and worrying. Here they get to know that their loved ones are in good hands."

Along with having the support of other families, Johnny's Bar-B-Q has donated their catering services for the event.

The Valentine's Dance is really just a kick-off event for the year.

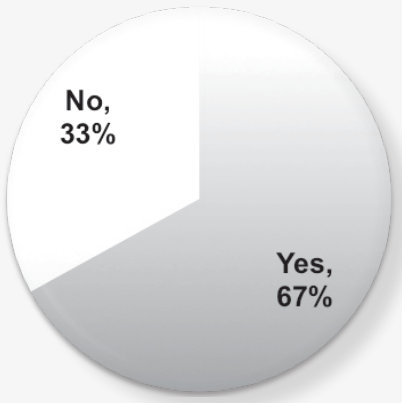
Harbison explained that there's a full line-up of events around the corner: including a track meet and a cookout.

There are no age specifics for any of the events, according to Harbison.

This is a great program for families looking for community activities conducive to their special needs loved ones.

Poll

Should E-Cigs be part of the smoking ban?



This Week's Poll
Do you think parents should vaccinate their children against the measels?
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WHAT'S ON DECK AT PARKS AND REC....

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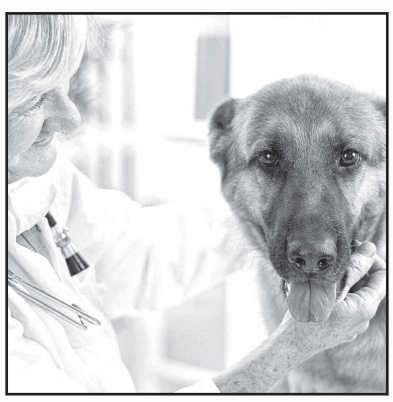
- **Baseball & Softball Registration** for boys and girls ages 4-14 will take place Jan. 15-Feb. 15 at the Cullman Civic Center. Cost is $90 which includes jersey, hat, and trophy. Games will be played through the week at Heritage Park and the Field of Miracles; practices start first of March. For more information, call 256-734-9157.
- **CP&R Photography Classes** will begin February 24, 2015 at the Cullman Civic Center. Classes will be held for a 6 week session on Tuesday and Thursday nights each week at 6pm. Cost is $45; must bring your own camera to the class. Class will focus on taking quality pictures, action and still shots, and other techniques. Limit of 25 for the class, register at the Civic Center now.
- **CP&R Adult Archery Classes** will begin in March 2015. Classes will be offered on Tuesday nights at 6:30pm; cost is $40 per month. Instructor is professional archer Robin Green. Register now at the Civic Center or call 256-734-9157 for info.
- **Community Garden Coming Soon.** CP&R's Community Garden will open in March at Nesmith Park. The garden will feature plots to rent and use throughout the year with community supplies, provided water, and other perks. Gardening Classes will also start in March with participants receiving a free gardening plot to use when they register for the class. Call 256-734-9157 for info.
- **Adult Flag Football Registration** is open Jan. 15-February 15 at Heritage Park. Cost per team is $500 which includes the season and single elimination tournament. For more information, call 256-739-9931
- **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.
- **CP&R Youth 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

PET EMERGENCIES AFTER HOURS – WHAT DO YOU DO?

Your dog just fell over and is having difficulty breathing or maybe your cat is lethargic and cannot get up on its own. It's late at night and your veterinarian is closed until 8 a.m. the next day. You feel your pet won't make it until that time. What do you do? Believe it or not, call Cullman...

qrne.ws/315



MULTIPLE FIRES THROUGHOUT COUNTY HAS SHERIFF GENTRY ASKING RESIDENTS TO REFRAIN FROM BURNING

With high winds, warm weather and a lack of rain, firefighters throughout Cullman County are currently fighting brush fires associated with residents burning trash or brush.

qrne.ws/316

CULLMAN HIGH SCHOOL CHEERLEADERS CURRENTLY AT NATIONALS AFTER TAKING THE STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

It was a great year for the Cullman High School Cheer team after taking both the regional and state level competitions by storm. Hours of practice and months of preparation have paid off for the team as they look forward to...

qrne.ws/317

CLASSICS NEVER DIE

YOU CAN'T GO WRONG WITH THESE VALENTINE'S DAY GIFTS

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – The day to celebrate all things love is upon us once more. Couples all over the county will be looking to buy for that special someone. You can try for a unique item for your valentine, but the old classics never go out of style.

For those in a newer relationship, perhaps fine jewelry isn't the way to go. Breaking out a little black box over dinner might send the wrong message to your girlfriend of two weeks. However, that does not mean you cannot go the extra mile to dazzle her. Michael's Flowers and Design offers some of the most beautiful arrangements in town, and can even surprise your honey at work.

"We have some beautiful and unique flowers this Valentine's Day," owner Michael Richards said. "We have some wonderful Proteas flowers that are really cool. I will be using those a lot. We also have unique roses that come in varying colors of red, striking yellow and Matilda, which is a coffee color. We have several different ways of arranging the flowers to choose from and all will come with beautiful ribbon and Valentine's Day decoration."

You can also order wine and beer gift baskets, but Richards asks that those who want their goods delivered to call early.

"We can make baskets with as many bottles of wine or beer that you like," Richards said. "They will be decorated and goodies will also be placed around the beverages. We are asking everyone who wants their flowers and things delivered to places of business or homes to order early so that we can make everyone gets their gifts on time."

If the gifts of flowers or alcohol are not the gifts you are looking for, then you might drop by Ed White Jewelers to check out their selection. While fine jewelry is their specialty, you might be surprised to see the perfect gift for your man.

"We have several items that men will love," said co-owner Silvia White. "We have money clips and beautiful watches for men. As well as the men's stainless steel jewelry like bracelets and crosses. Our Alabama and Auburn wallets are always big sellers."

Ed White Jewelers is there to help any husband or boyfriend in need pick out the perfect item for their sweetie. A diamond may be too intense for a newer couple, but the shop also has a beautiful selection of silver jewelry as well.

"We sell all kinds of things at this time of year," White said. "But diamond studs are always a favorite for women. We also see a lot of people who love the diamond hoops. Silver has stayed a huge seller over the years, and we have a lot to look at. We are happy to help anyone who wants to come in and look around."

This Valentine's Day, going back to the basics may be just the ticket to win your loved ones heart.

Michael's Flowers and Design is located at 302 1st Ave SE in Cullman and is open Monday and Tuesday 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Wednesday through Friday 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. while Saturdays they open at 9 a.m. and close at 9 p.m.

Ed White Jewelers is located at 1704 2nd Avenue Northwest, Cullman, AL 35055 and are open Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturdays 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

ENTRIES SOUGHT FOR ARTS EXHIBITION

Gail Crutchfield
WSCC Contributor

HANCEVILLE – This Spring, thoughts will turn to "Piet, Pixels & Polygons" at Wallace State Community College, as preparations begin for the 2015 Arts in April Celebration. The annual exhibition will be held Monday, March 30 through Saturday, April 11.

"We want to encourage all of the artists in and around Cullman County to send in entries for our annual Arts in April Showcase Exhibition," said Adrian Scott, head of the Visual Arts program at Wallace State. "This year, we are taking our inspiration from Dutch abstract artist Piet Mondrian. Mondrian pioneered a visual style which famously created abstract, non-objective compositions composed of basic visual elements such as squares, rectangles, lines and the primary colors red, yellow and blue."

Artists can also draw inspiration from popular cultural examples such as vintage 8 and 16 bit video game characters, the games Minecraft and Tetris, and the toy puzzle Rubik's Cube.

"Any imagery and subject matter which participants feel creatively relate to this theme is welcome for the exhibition," Scott said. "Artwork which does not relate to the theme of 'Piet, Pixels and Polygons' is also welcome for exhibition in this community showcase."

The media categories for the exhibition include: drawing, painting, photography, ceramics/sculpture, digital art and multimedia crafts. Age divisions are open for kindergarten through second grade, third through fifth grade, sixth through eighth grade, ninth through 12th grade and adults.

Current Wallace State students, employees, public and home school-aged children and adults in the Wallace State service area are eligible to submit entries. Each artist may individually submit a total of two artworks from any of the five media categories.

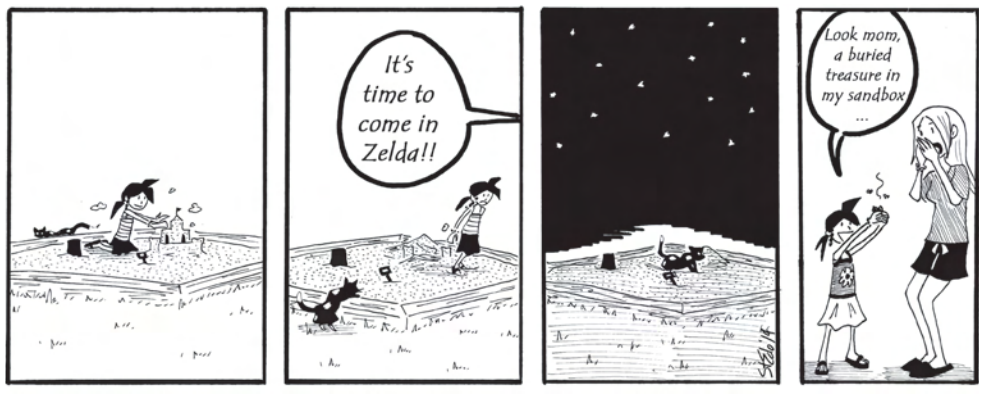
A visual arts entry must be an original drawing, painting, photograph, sculpture, collage or computer-generated image. Each entry must be the work of only one individual. Deadline for submission is Friday, March 20. Any schools or art entries needing to make other submission arrangements should contact Scott at 256-352-8145 or the Burrow Center for the Fine and Performing Arts at 256-352-8277.

For more information, or to obtain an exhibition entry form, call Scott at 256-352-8145 or e-mail adrian.scott@wallacestate.edu.

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COMICS

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PETS OF THE WEEK

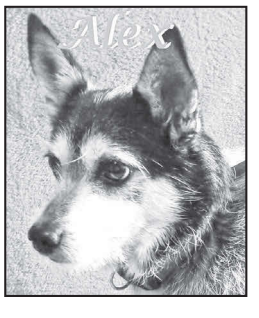
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ELF RUSTY BELZ



Hello my name is Elf Rusty Belz and I am about 2 years old. I am a Dachshund mix and I currently weigh 24 LBS. I was a stray but no one claimed me, so now I am up for adoption. I am running out of hope here because I have been here since 10/15/14 and no one seems to want me. I am full of life and I love to play.

ALEX



Hello my name is Alex and I am about 7 year old. I am a Terrier mix and currently weigh 15 lbs. I am full of life and I love to play. Please come by and visit with me. You may find out I'm an extremely lovable companion!

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

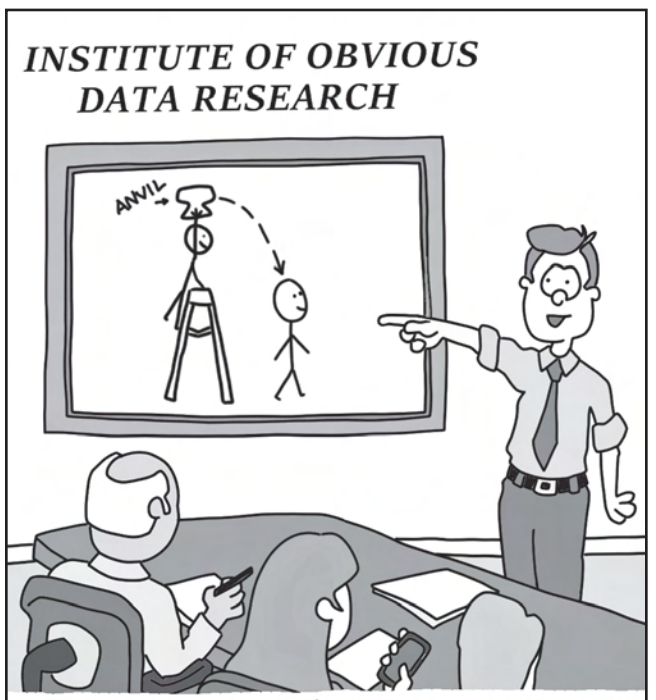
If you know the owner of either dog or if you are interested in adopting one of the dogs, please call 256-734-5448 or come by the Animal Shelter.

EDITORIAL CARTOONS





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OPINION

HYPER MASCULINITY AND WORLD-ENDING WEAPONS

Winslow Myers
PeaceVoice

Escalating tensions in Ukraine raise the concern that the "firebreak" between conventional and the tactical nuclear weapons potentially available to all parties in the conflict could be breached, with unforeseen consequences.

Loren Thompson spelled out in Forbes Magazine how the Ukraine crisis could go nuclear: through faulty intelligence, through the opposed parties sending mixed signals to each other, through looming defeat for either side, or through command breakdown on the battlefield.

In its simplest form, the complex Ukraine situation boils down to conflicting interpretations and value systems: for Putin, the NATO-izing of Ukraine was an affront to the Russian homeland that could not go unacknowledged, especially given the history of repeated invasion of Russia by foreign forces. From the West's perspective, Ukraine had the right as a sovereign nation to join NATO and enjoy its protection, though the crisis begs the question of why there is still a NATO at all given our remove from the long finished Cold War. Is NATO a bulwark against Putin's revived Russian imperialism, or was NATO's overreach right up to Russia's borders the initial cause of his paranoid response?

While sovereignty and democracy are significant political values, one has only to reverse the scenario in Ukraine to begin to understand, if not sympathize with, Putin's macho posturing. The most relevant reverse example already happened way back in 1962. It is of course the Cuban Missile Crisis, where the United States felt its "sphere of influence" unacceptably penetrated, the Monroe Doctrine writ nuclear. Fifty-three years later the international community appears to have learned little from coming within a hair's breadth of annihilation.

The crisis is an instructive example of why the blithe delay of the great powers to meet their obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty could end in a worst-case scenario. Our strategists have not begun to comprehend how much the presence of world-ending weapons reconfigures the role of military force in solving planetary conflicts.

It helps with this reconfiguration to acknowledge the evolutionary biology of male (female too, but mostly male) interaction in conflict—our fight or flight reflexes. Governmental officials and press commentators dignify this position or that by diplomatically phrased rationalizations, but beneath all the rhetoric we are still in a schoolyard space, or perhaps a zoo, beating our chests and roaring like gorillas.

It is a vast understatement to say that a new paradigm of masculinity is needed. In the old one, I am manly because I protect my position, my turf. In the new, I protect ongoing life on the planet as a whole. In the old, I am credible because I back up my threats with megatons of destructive (though ultimately self-destructive) power. In the new, I acknowledge that the rigidity of my convictions could end up ending the world. Given that the alternate is mass death, I look for reconciliation.

Is such a radical change possible in the present climate of masculine violence that so dominates world media, sports and video games, and hyper-competitive, often corrupt capitalism? But the looming reality of more Cuban Missile crises, assuming the world survives them, will pressure men to broaden out to the planetary level what it now means to be a winner, to be a protector not only of a family or a nation, but of a planet, home of all we share and value.

It is not as if there is no precedent for this emerging masculine paradigm. Think Gandhi, Cesar Chavez, and Dr. King. Were they wimpy or weak? Hardly. The capacity to expand identification to include care for the whole earth and all humanity lies within all of us, waiting for opportunities to take creative form.

One underpublicized example of the new paradigm emerging in creative tension with the old is Rotary. Rotary was begun by businessmen. Business by nature is competitive—and often politically conservative because markets require political stability—but the values of Rotary transcend the schoolyard aspects of competition, in favor of fairness, friendship, and high ethical standards that include asking one question implying planetary identification: will a given initiative be beneficial to all concerned? Rotary has more than 1.2 million members in over 32,000 clubs among 200 countries and geographical areas. They took on the extraordinarily large, seemingly impossible task of ending polio on the planet, and they have come very close to success. Perhaps organizations like Rotary will become the gymnasiums in which a new masculine paradigm will wrestle the old one into obsolescence. What might Rotary be able to do if it dared to take on ending war?

Winslow Myers, syndicated by Peacevoice, is author of "Living Beyond War: A Citizen's Guide." He serves on the Advisory Board of the War Preventive Initiative.

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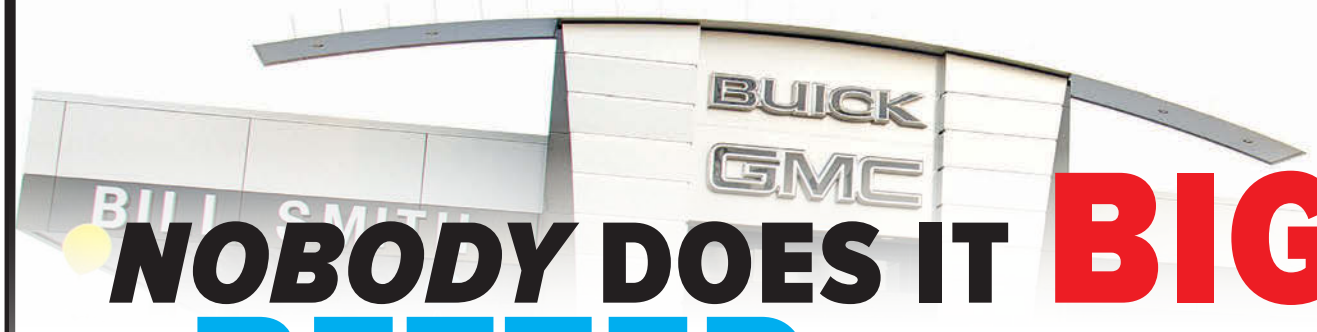
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