SERIES 5 • ISSUE 7 • FEBRUARY 16, 2015

CULLMANSENSE
COMMUNITY MATTERS

IMAGE: WSCC



ARTISTS SOUGHT FOR WSCC EXHIBITION P6



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

ALA. VACCINATION RATE RANKED 6TH HIGHEST IN NATION

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – There has been much fear and controversy over the past several years in relation to vaccines and growing outbreaks in different parts of the country. New laws have been passed in several different states in regards to vaccination requirements in schools, with some laws expanding exemptions and others restricting them.

Cullman City Schools System Nurse, Jessie Land, sheds some light on one of Alabama's current laws and exemptions. Currently, Alabama's laws require all children entering into a daycare or school system be immunized, however, some exemptions are allowed.

"We are mandated by the Alabama School Immunization Law," said Land. "Under the Alabama School Immunization Law, medical exemptions must have a physician signature and religious exemptions can be obtained by the local county health departments." P4

CELL PHONES FOR SOLDIERS

SHAMPOO PLUS CONTINUES NEAR DECADE LONG PROGRAM P6

SEN. SHELBY SPEAKS ON GLOBAL CHALLENGES, GATHERS FEEDBACK, AT CHAMBER LUNCHEON P2

WSCC HOSTS 2015 INDUSTRY APPRECIATION RECEPTION P3

PARANORMAL RESEARCH ALLIANCE SETS OUT TO EXPLAIN THE UNKNOWN P4

HUNDREDS FLOCK TO THE SHRINE OF THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT FOR HEALING SERVICE P7



IMAGES BY MELISSA BETTS

First United Methodist Church members fill enough bags of food to serve 120 children in two schools.

OUTSTANDING CITIZENS

BACKPACKS OF LOVE

MELISSA BETTS LEADS THE WAY IN FEEDING LOCAL CHILDREN



Betts

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - Cullman County is filled with wonderful people who go above and beyond the call of duty to help their fellow citizens. Melissa Betts, for example, is one such person. Her love for her neighbor and genuine concern for children makes her one of Cullman's hidden jewels.

Melissa is married P9

12TH ANNUAL EMPTY BOWLS OF CULLMAN FEEDS COMMUNITY

"It's a firsthand look at God in action."

Tanya Shearer, Empty Bowls Coordinator

Will Hogue
will@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Tonight, Monday, February 16, the 12th Annual Empty Bowls of Cullman County will be held in Hearin Hall at First United Methodist Church. The event, which starts at 4 p.m. and will continue until 6:30 p.m., is a fundraiser for the Cullman Food Bank. Tickets to the P6

THE DAM STORE

MAD DOG MIKE'S FAMOUS BBQ MAKES HOME AT DUCK RIVER DAM P4



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

"The Dam Store" serves Duck River Dam workers coffee, biscuits, snacks and hot BBQ lunches at the worksite.

AVE MARIA GROTTO UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - The Ave Maria Grotto is now under new management. Mr. Bill Ellis officially became the Grotto's General Manager on Tuesday, Feb. 10. Excited and ready to take on the new job, Ellis found his first few days very busy just trying to settle in and get organized.

"I am originally from Birmingham but I have lived in Blount County for the past 42 years," Ellis explains. "I have three children and six grandchildren – five girls and one boy," he beamed proudly.

Mr. Ellis retired from Bellsouth where he worked in telecommunication sales. He also taught theology at St. Bernard for a couple of years before retiring. After 10 years of retirement, Ellis realized he was bored and began searching for a job. He is very happy to have been selected and looks forward to another chapter in his life.

Ellis will be very busy as the duties of the Grotto's General Manager include overseeing the gift shop, keeping the grotto grounds neat and clean P7



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Bill Ellis, General Manager at the Ave Maria Grotto, looks forward to his new job duties.

FOR THE KIDS' SAKE VARIETY SHOW THIS SAT.

Will Hogue
will@cullmansense.com

HANCEVILLE – On Saturday, February 21 at 3 p.m., the months of hard work by many students from around the Cullman community will culminate on the stage at the Betty Leeth Haynes Memorial Theatre. The Cullman Regional Medical Center Foundation has been holding the Bownes Memorial For P2

PRINTED LOCALLY @ PRINTING Alabama Web Press

SEN. SHELBY SPEAKS ON GLOBAL CHALLENGES, GATHERS FEEDBACK, AT CHAMBER LUNCHEON

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – City leaders and Cullman County residents enjoyed a special Valentine's Day lunch on Saturday. Not only did they enjoy a delicious All Steak meal, but they also got to listen to Senator Richard Shelby speak about what is currently happening in Washington, D.C.

Senator Richard Shelby was first elected to the Senate in 1986. He is the Chairman of the Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee. He also serves on the Senate Appropriations Committee and the Committee on Rules and Administration.

Prior to his election in the United States Senate, Senator Shelby served four terms in the U.S. House of Representatives and eight years in the Alabama legislature.

He is a fifth generation Alabamian and a graduate of the University of Alabama's undergraduate and law programs.

The senator was complimentary about Cullman County. He repeatedly recognized all the hard working people of our community. He said that 80 percent of Cullman County voted for him, and he thanked the crowd for their votes. He plans to run for another term next election.

After his opening remarks, Shelby discussed several things that are currently going on in Washington.

"We have challenges all over the world," he said.

"We have economic challenges with China; we have trouble brewing with Putin and Russia in Eastern Europe. We have the perennial problem in the Middle East that won't ever go away, in my lifetime or yours. It just manifests itself in many ways; and has been going on since Biblical times."

> **"I don't think that we've got a president that has shown a lot of strength in leadership."**
>
> Alabama Senator Richard Shelby

"We have Iran looming as a nuclear power, which would set up an arms race like you've never seen in the Middle East. I don't think that we've got a president that has shown a lot of strength in leadership." He then proceeded to talk about his thoughts concerning the need for a fundamental tax reform.

When the floor was open to discussion, several people in the audience had questions for the senator and, at times, the talk got rather heated. The hottest topics were the ones about immigration and President Obama.

An hour or so later the meeting concluded and Richard Shelby was off to another part of the state.

The luncheon provided a chance for Shelby to meet and greet many of his supporters and take back to Washington, D.C. feedback from local citizens.

To find out more about Senator Richard Shelby, go to shelby.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/home or follow him on Facebook at Facebook.com/RichardShelby.



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Senator Richard Shelby addresses Cullman County citizens at All Steak.

CATOMA DERMATOLOGY OPENS ITS DOORS FOR BUSINESS

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – One of Cullman's newest local businesses, Catoma Dermatology, LLC, has officially opened its doors. They began treating patients on January 5, 2015. The friendly staff is pleased to offer medical, surgical and cosmetic dermatology services. Catoma Dermatology, LLC is staffed by two full-time providers, Dr. Clancy Johnson and Leia Hunt, CRNP.

Dr. Johnson is a board-certified dermatologist, a Fellow of the American Academy of Dermatology, and a Fellow of the American Society for Dermatologic Surgery.

She has been practicing and serving her hometown community for over eight years.

"I am so happy to be able to practice and serve the people of my hometown community," said Dr. Johnson with a big smile.

"My staff and I are at home in the new office and the patients seem to love the warm and welcoming environment and personal attention they receive from check in to check out. The office is a mixture of modern and rustic, mixed with state of the art medical equipment."

New patients are currently being accepted. Catoma Dermatology, LLC is located at 1300 Bridge Creek Drive NE, Cullman, AL 35055. Call them at 256-737-SKIN (7546) or visit them online at catomadermatology.com and make sure to like them on Facebook at facebook.com/catomadermatologyllc.



FACEBOOK.COM/CATOMADERMATOLOGYLLC

Catoma Dermatology officially opens its doors with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

Show (from Front)

the Kids' Sake Variety Show event since 1993, when Dr. Bownes himself started it.

In recent years the event has become a biannual show. Happening every two years, the For Kids' Sake Variety Show helps to secure the funds, through donations and ticket sales, for various and numerous patient-care items.

The performers in the show are made up of students from Cullman who auditioned late in 2014, and since then "the participants made donations at the time of their auditions, sold tickets and sold sponsorships for the show," according to CRMC Foundation Executive Director Maria Stanford.

As far as the performances go, the show "promises to deliver a wide range of talents: from solo and ensemble dance performances, to vocal and instrumental performances," Stanford said.

Tickets are $5 in advance and $10 the day of the event. They can be purchased in advance at the CRMC Foundation office.

In a press release, CRMC Foundation President Stephanie Jowers said, "We look forward to this event as our local youth perform, bringing much joy to all involved."

"It's exciting to see the enthusiasm of the performers getting involved with giving back to the community," Jowers continued.

Currently there are 61 students scheduled to perform.

LIBERTY TAX SERVICE®
WORRIED ABOUT OBAMACARE?
COME IN NOW, WE CAN HELP
GET $50 WHEN YOU SIGN UP WITH THIS AD
FREE INSURANCE QUOTE BASED ON INCOME
1626 2ND AVENUE SW • CULLMAN, AL 35055 • 256-775-4097 • LIBERTYTAX.COM

JOHNNY'S since 1949
We'll Serve No Swine Before Its Time
BAR-B-Q
OPEN TUESDAY - SATURDAY 10 A.M. - 9 P.M.
CALL-IN / FAMILY DINING / PICK-UP WINDOW
AWARDED "BEST OF THE BEST BBQ IN AMERICA" BY NATIONAL BARBECUE NEWS
• 1401 4th St. SW Cullman, AL 35055 • 256-734-8539 • johnnysbarbq.com

WSCC HOSTS 2015 INDUSTRY APPRECIATION RECEPTION

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – The 2015 Industry Appreciation Reception took place this past Tuesday at the Evelyn Burrow Museum on Wallace State's campus, with the intent of recognizing vital industries that choose to do business in Cullman. Presenting Sponsors for this event included Cullman City Industrial Development Board and the Cullman County Industrial Development Authority.

Almost every factory and industrial business was represented at the 2015 Industry Appreciation Reception.

"Over the past few years, we've all celebrated how truly blessed our Cullman area is to have such outstanding industries, which are the envy of other counties throughout Alabama, as well as other states in the southeast and across the nation. And we're here tonight to express our appreciation to those companies for their investment in our Cullman area," said Jason Grimmett of Drinkard Development and the 2015-16 Chamber Chairman.

Industry in Cullman has been positively booming over the past few years, and has gained even more momentum over the past year. In almost every area of the city and county new business and industry has expanded or is in development. It comes as no surprise then that Cullman was once again ranked 3rd Micropolitan in the country for economic development by Site Selection Magazine.

Premier Sponsors for the event included Cullman-Jefferson County Gas and Wallace State Community College who also provided the facilities. Cash Acme was the entertainment sponsor for the evening, and guests enjoyed the rich sounds of the Wallace State Jazz Band.

Speeches were made by Dr. James Thomas III with the County Industrial Development Authority and Dennis Richard with the City Industrial Development Board, as well as a special speech made by April Gray who is the senior project manager at the Alabama Department of Commerce.

Director Peggy Smith and Assistant Director Dale Greer of the Cullman Economic Development Agency, and Cherrie Haney, Director of the County Economic Development Office, and Leah Bolin, President of the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce, also shared their comments and upcoming news. Betty Cummings Dorris, Chair of Cullman Area Workforce Solutions also spoke on their continued work and improvement.

The evening was a tribute to the hard work and successes of both the city and county departments in conjunction with our local industries. Grimmett closed the evening with a statement on that partnership and the continuing progress of Cullman.

"As you can see from tonight's comments, our Cullman area is truly moving forward," said Grimmett.

"And that is because of the outstanding partnerships between the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development offices with everyone working for the common good and best interest for the entire community."

CULLMAN CITY COUNCIL HOLDS FEBRUARY 2015 MEETING

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – A regular Cullman City Council meeting was held last Monday night in the Lucille N. Galin Auditorium at City Hall at 7 p.m.

The meeting began with roll call and the minutes from the city council meeting on January 26, 2015 was approved.

There was one addition to the night's agenda. It was a request from Water & Sewer Superintendent Chris Freeman to purchase manholes & covers at a cost of $8,871.25.

Next were reports of standing committees by council members. The following reports were given:

1. General Government - Council Member Jenny Folsom
2. Public Works - Council Member Johnny Cook
3. Public Safety - Council Member Andy Page
4. Tourism - Council Member Clint Hollingsworth
5. Utilities - Council Member Garlan Gudger

Chief Culpepper and Asst. Chief Green presented a 10 year pin to Officer Matt Tucker.

Councilmember Page commended the Police Department on crowd control at the ballgame last weekend.

There was no report from the Mayor, no comments from anyone not on the agenda and no public hearings.

The following petitions, applications, complaints, appeals and communications were passed:

1. A request from Jim Phillips representing the Waldrop Chiropractic Clinic for the City of Cullman to vacate and surplus a 20 foot by 100 foot alley located behind 1015 4th Street SW, Cullman, Alabama 35055. It was referred to the Planning Commission.
2. A request from Don Warnke of the Warnke Agency for the City of Cullman to vacate and surplus a 20 foot by 78 foot alley located behind 1011 4th Street SW, Cullman, Alabama 35055. It was referred to the Planning Commission.
3. A request from Misty Howse of "Be the One" for a special event permit to hold the "Be the One" 5K Run and One Mile Fun Run on May 2nd, 2015 beginning at the Festhalle Market Platz. It was approved.
4. A request from Fire Chief Edward Reinhardt to purchase a turnout gear dryer in the budgeted amount of $4,000.00. It was approved, but the Mayor is to negotiate the price.
5. A request from Fire Chief Edward Reinhardt to purchase two Motorola public safety radios with Peltor hardware from Sharp Communications, Inc. of Cullman in the budgeted amount of $5,100.00. It was approved.
6. A request from Fire Chief Edward Reinhardt to purchase six tablets with mounts from Sharp Communications, Inc. of Cullman in the budgeted amount of $21,000.00. It was approved.
7. A request from Water & Sewer Superintendent Chris Freeman to reject all of the repair materials bids because all of the bids received by the City of Cullman were over the budgeted amount. It was approved.
8. A request from Water & Sewer Superintendent Chris Freeman to purchase manholes & covers at a cost of $8,871.25. It was approved.

The following resolutions, ordinances, orders and other businesses were discussed:

1. Resolution No. 2015 - 31 – To award bid R-01714 for tree removal services at the corner of 7th Street SE and 5th Avenue SE in the budgeted amount of $1,400.00 to the lowest responsible bidder, Keller's Tree Service of Cullman. It was approved.
2. Resolution No. 2015 - 32 – To award bid R-01717 for various types of concrete to the lowest responsible bidder, Kirkpatrick Concrete, Inc. of Cullman. It was approved.
3. Resolution No. 2015 - 33 – To award bid R-01718 for various types of rock to the lowest responsible bidder, Good Hope Contracting, Inc. of Cullman. It was approved.
4. Resolution No. 2015 - 34 – To approve the agreement with the State of Alabama to install a traffic signal, to extend a right turn lane, and to extend an acceleration lane at the intersection of US Highway 31 and Olive Street. The estimated total project cost by the State of Alabama is $500,000 with the City of Cullman's share being $50,000. The City of Cullman is also responsible for any cost overruns for this project. It was approved.
5. The first reading of Ordinance No. 2015 - 19 – To vacate and surplus an easement beside St. Joseph Drive NW at La Quinta Inn & Suites (This request received a favorable recommendation from the City of Cullman Planning Commission on February 2nd, 2015). It was approved.
6. There were two Board Appointments, both to the Industrial Development Board: reappointment of John Apel to a term expiring 12/27/20; reappointment of Finis St. John to a term expiring 12/27/20.
7. Ordinance 2015-20: To grant an electric franchise to the Utilities Board of the City of Cullman. It was approved.

The meeting was then adjourned. City Council meetings are held on the second and fourth Mondays of each month. For more information, call 256-775-7109.

IF THIS CAUGHT YOUR EYE, WHY AREN'T YOU ADVERTISING HERE?
NOAH@CULLMANSENSE.COM

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



PARANORMAL RESEARCH ALLIANCE SETS OUT TO EXPLAIN THE UNEXPLAINABLE

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – There are always things that we as humans cannot readily explain. A strange noise or a mysterious shadow is usually the result of a mundane occurrence we just do not know about. There are times, however, when the things that go bump in the night might seem like the only possible conclusion. Paranormal Research Alliance is a local, non-profit group whose main goal is to explain these odd situations, and if needed, rid the area of a haunting spirit.

"I opened the GhostHauntings.org website in 2006," said founder Blair Jett. "Shortly afterwards I began getting contacted by people seeking advice and help regarding paranormal activity. It didn`t take me long to realize that the number of people in this country, and around the world in need of help, was very large and this is a serious problem that needed attention. So I formed the Paranormal Research Alliance in 2010 and began investigating locally."

The group works on a small scale with the hope to make a big difference in their clients' lives and to give them piece of mind, according to Jett.

"We get approximately 10 to 15 client interviews per year where we are able to resolve the dilemma by performing a cleansing, exorcism or house blessing, and anywhere from 6-10 investigations per year. These numbers are only approximate as they are different every year."

He went on to state that more often than not the occurrences can be explained and are not paranormal incidents.

"Eighty percent of the time we can debunk many paranormal claims and associate a logical explanation," Jett said. "The other 20 percent of the time they are genuine. That 20 percent makes it all worthwhile and makes up for the other 80 percent."

Jett claims that he and his team have encountered paranormal ranging from simple to more complex cases.

"Often we see just classic cases of ghost(s) lingering at a location causing a nuisance and frightening our clients, but we have seen cases of demonic hauntings a couple times and one case of possession," he said. Of course, Jett and his team run into those who are skeptical of the paranormal, and according to him, it is not their business to convince anyone.

"Our purpose is not really about trying to convince skeptics that ghosts are real, it`s more about helping people in their time of need," said Jett. "Otherwise, who would they call? You can`t call 911 to report a haunting and many churches these days don`t have adequate knowledge and training for this sort of thing. But to the skeptics out there, I will say that ghosts and demons are very real. If they chose not to believe in it, well that`s their right I suppose."

The group does not work for money and offers their services to those in need. From blessings to cleansing to exorcisms, they help those with no one else to turn to.

"We are a nonprofit organization and volunteer our time to helping others," said Jett. "If you ever need advice or think you might be faced with paranormal activity, don`t be afraid to give us a call. We are professional, discreet and very caring of our clients' wellbeing."

For more information, visit GhostHauntings.org or call the Paranormal Research Alliance at 1-888-531-4666.

"Eighty percent of the time we can debunk many paranormal claims and associate a logical explanation. The other 20 percent of the time they are genuine. That 20 percent makes it all worthwhile and makes up for the other 80 percent."
Blair Jett, Founder of Paranormal Research Alliance

Vaccination (from Front)

Alabama as a whole has the 6th highest inoculation rate in the country. According to the Washington Post, 77 percent of children ages 19 to 35 months have been vaccinated, putting our state average 7 percent higher than the national average. Over 90 percent of kindergartners entering the school system in Alabama are vaccinated for measles, mumps and rubella, even with the option for medical and religious exemptions.

According to the Alabama Department of Public Health, Cullman County's rate of immunization is 89.89 percent, with only 0.642 percent filing for religious exemption. In other counties such as Shelby and Baldwin counties, those figures come out to some of the highest rates of religious exemption with 1.5 percent for Shelby and 1.3 percent in Baldwin.

"In my career, I have actually been able to see these diseases go away," Dr. Karen Landers, a pediatrician who works with the Alabama Department of Public Health, told AL.com in a recent interview.

"I haven't seen a case of measles in many, many years. While our vaccination rates are high, the refusal among patients with access to information is very troubling."

Nurse Land of Cullman City Schools says that she personally recommends vaccinating children, and that safety during outbreaks is always a priority.

As a nurse, I personally recommend vaccinations for preventable disease," Land said.

"We are always concerned about the health and safety of our students. Our lead nurse is informed by the Centers for Disease Control and the Alabama Department of Public Health when any outbreaks of illness occur. We have a nurse at each school that monitors our students for signs/symptoms of illness on a daily basis."

For more information visit adph.org/immunization.

BBQ (from Front)

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

BERLIN – If you haven't ever been to Mad Dog Mike's Famous BBQ, you are missing out on some of the best BBQ in town. Like most hidden treasures this BBQ restaurant is a little hard to find; inside the Berlin Plaza Quick Mart.

Now, the famous BBQ can also be found in another hidden location: in the middle of the construction at the new Duck River Dam.

"The Dam Store" serves Dam workers coffee, biscuits, chips, snacks and hot BBQ lunches at the worksite.

After trying his hand at several different jobs over the years, Mike finally found his niche – BBQ – and the rest is history. Through a lot of trial and error over the years, Mad Dog Mike's Famous BBQ has grown into a successful business.

"I cook BBQ all the time," Mike said with a smile. "Mr. Harold Perry knew the secret to good BBQ. I ate at Perry's on 278 West when I was a kid," he recollected.

"I'd ride around on my bike when I was a kid and he would let me come in and watch him cook the meat. He taught me how he did it and I continue to cook BBQ, just like he did."

Today Mike makes a living by creating handcrafted BBQ and sticking with the same cooking method he learned all those years ago.

"It was a great memory from my childhood," he chuckled as he thought about those days so long ago.

Mike doesn't stay in the shop as much as he used to though, he's out in the community catering weddings and reunions, holding fundraisers for local charities and feeding the workers at the dam.

He doesn't ever meet a stranger and has a great time just talking to people and making them feel like they are the only ones around.

Mike takes pride in offering citizens of the community something good to eat at an affordable prices. Always the jokester, he's quick with a funny story and enjoys helping out in any way possible.

He recently purchased a batch of T-shirts and plans to sell them in the shop for $10. Bright yellow in color, the T-shirts have a happy pig advertising his famous BBQ.

"Things have changed over the years and everyone has changed how they cook the meat," he explained.

"As for me I still like the old way better - nothing but hickory wood at a low temperature and cooking all night long."

For a great meal and experience, take the small trip out to Berlin and try one of Mad Dog Mike's Famous BBQ sandwiches.

You'll meet some great people while you are there and most likely, make plans to come back for more.

Mad Dog Mike's Famous BBQ is located at 3661 US Hwy 278 East, Cullman, Alabama 35055. Call them at 256-775-4333. Follow them on Facebook at facebook.com/pages/Mad-Dog-Mikes-Famous-Bar-B-Que/217791088258852. They are open daily from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

VAULT GAMES

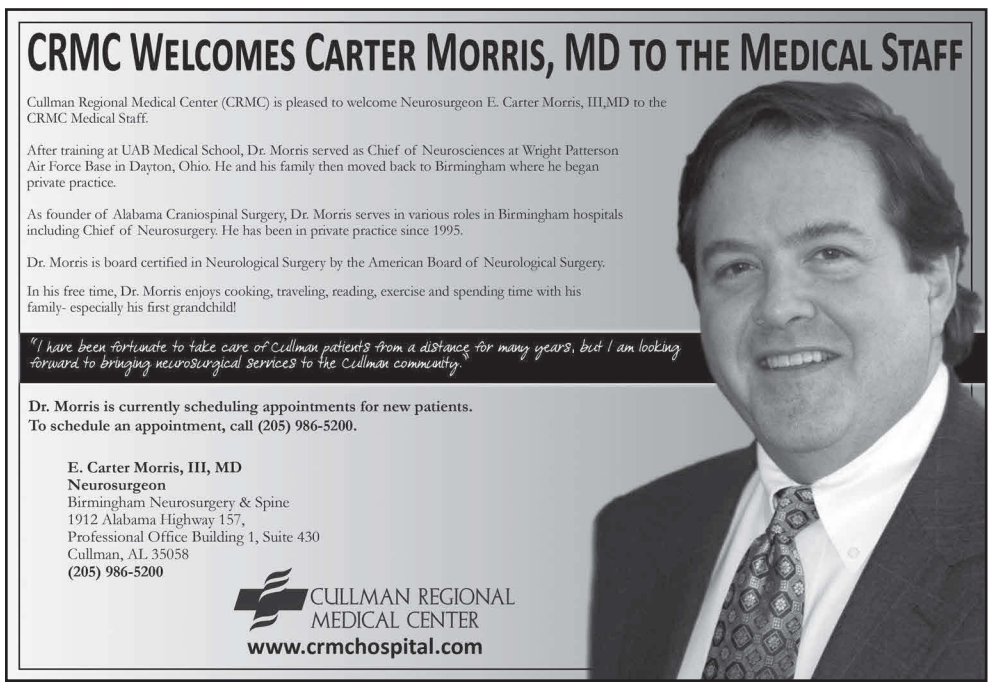
VAULT GAMES

WE BUY, SELL, AND TRADE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:
NES • Gamecube • Wii U • DS • Dreamcast • PSVita • SNES • Xbox 360 • PS1 • Genesis • PS2 • Wii • Xbox • PSP • Saturn • N64 • 3DS • PS3 • MTG

256-735-4054
1634 2nd Avenue SW
Cullman, AL 35055

shopvaultgames.com

facebook.com/vaultgames



BOCEPHUS FANS FROM ALL AROUND RECEIVED A LITTLE PIECE OF MUSIC HISTORY AT HANK'S MONTANA EXCHANGE

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – In 1982, Cullman was thrilled to become the home of Hank Williams Jr.'s new souvenir shop, Hank's Montana Exchange. The store was located on Highway 31 where Traditions Bank currently stands. It sold 'Bocephus' emblazoned t-shirts and women's panties, toothpick holders, hats, ashtrays and so much more. Dedicated fans from all over the United States came to see the store with high hopes of catching a glimpse of the rowdy country singer and to shop for Hank Williams Jr. paraphernalia.

Along with the top quality Hank merchandise, the store was decorated with framed gold records, pictures of Hank on stage or on hunting trips, a large stuffed likeness of Yosemite Sam (Hank's favorite cartoon character as a child), and Kaw-Liga, the large wooden Indian that stood by the door. If you looked really close, trophies and awards belonging to Hank could be seen on top of a filing cabinet or behind a desk.

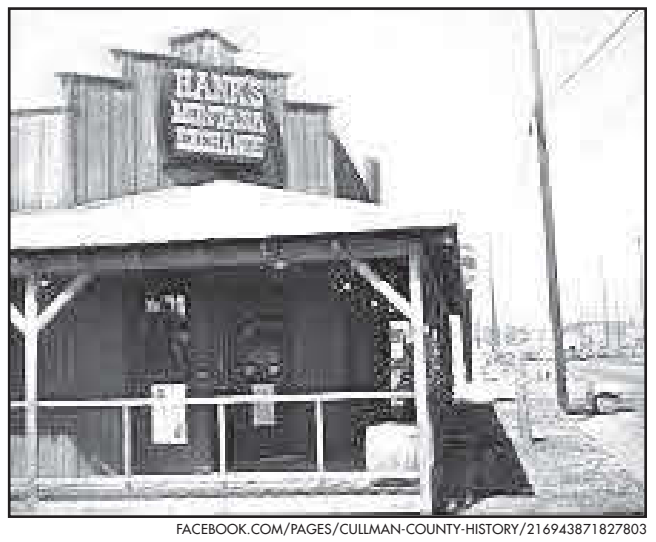
After a Hank concert in Alabama or surrounding states for that matter, Hank's Montana Exchange would be packed for days. Fans of all shapes and sizes would visit the store, still dazed and amazed by the rowdy country singer. Jimmy Gilley, former director of conventions and tourism for the Chamber of Commerce, said the shop had been a real boost to the community.

"If you told people you were from Cullman, Alabama, then they would say, 'Oh yeah, that's where Hank Williams is,'" Gilley said proudly.

Not only was the building a souvenir shop, but it also contained Hank's office, his manager's office and the fan club's office. But Hank wasn't in town as often as people liked to think he was. At the time, he spent most of his days in Montana or on tour. When he was in Cullman, his big tour bus would be secretly parked in a nearby garage. In the office, he was considered fun to be around and enjoyed his fans.

In 1986, Hank closed up his beloved shop in Cullman. Williams, who considered Cullman his home for many years, pulled up stakes and moved his residence, his business office and the Montana Exchange souvenir shop to Paris, Tennessee. Gold Rush Jewelers moved into the building and did business there for a good while. The move wasn't anything against Cullman, Hank made the move in order to be closer to the home of country music, Nashville.

Even though Hank's store is long gone, many people still remember the good times and snazzy merchandise that had been there. Their memories are sweet and bring smiles to their faces. Most everyone who thinks of those days have great stories to tell – stories of a time when Hank Williams Jr. played a major role in their lives.



FACEBOOK.COM/PAGES/CULLMAN-COUNTY-HISTORY/216943871827803

Hank's Montana Exchange, located where Traditions Bank is today, was in operation from 1982 to 1986.

JEB WILLIAMSON, CPA, LLC
Full Service Tax Preparation
Ask us about NetClient Tax Portals
www.jwilliamsoncpa.com
418 1st Avenue SE, Cullman • 256-734-7393

MIRRORING HISTORY: WALGREENS TURNS INTO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

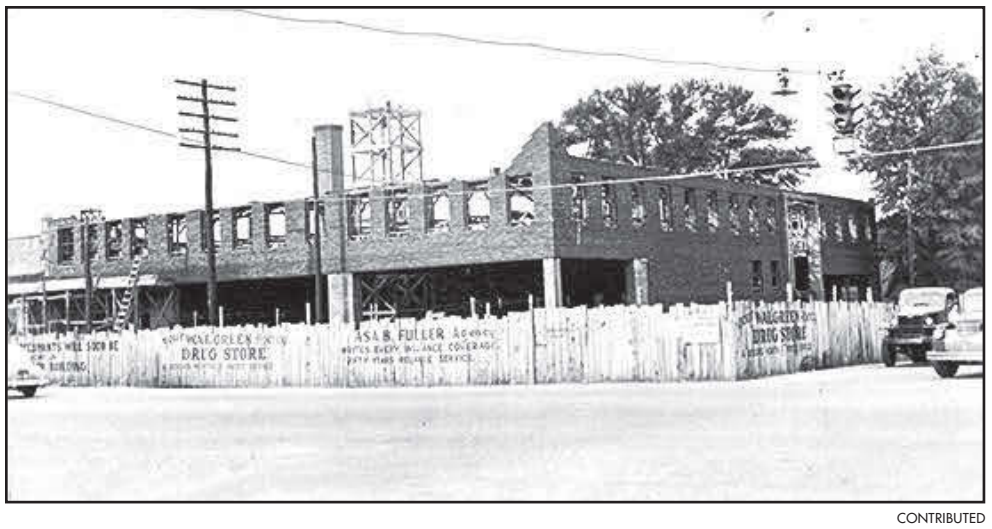
Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Pictured first is the building of Walgreens Drug Store, located on the corner of Highway 31 and US 278. The Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce stands there now and features condominiums above it.

Interestingly enough, this is also where young men would meet to catch the bus to Montgomery for their induction into the military or to obtain their physical.

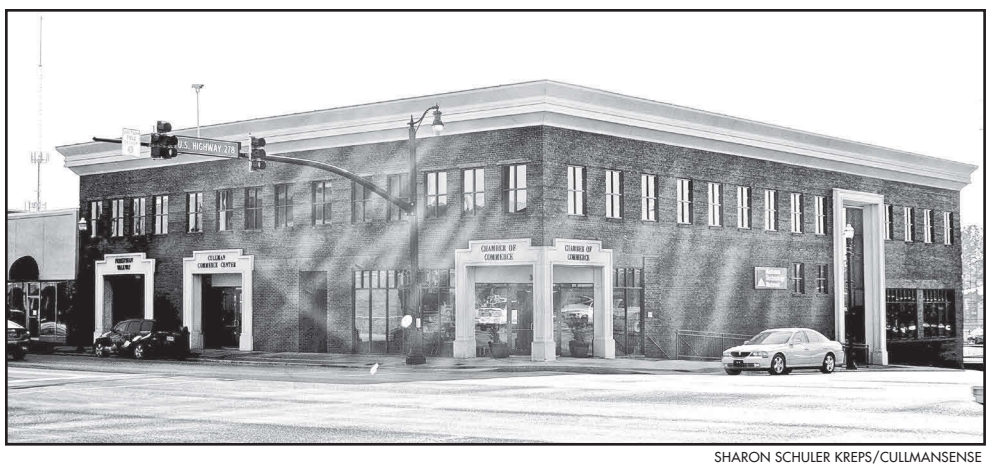
POSITION AVAILABLE

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



CONTRIBUTED

The Walgreens Drug Store was located on the corner of Highway 31 and US 278.



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Today the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce occupies the Walgreens location.

You are Invited
to the*link* of Cullman County's
Annual event
flourish
Thursday, March 5th
11:30am til 1:00pm
@Loft 212
Tickets $25
RSVP by Feb 18th
the*link*
Get your tickets at www.linkingcullman.org/events

"Your Agents. Your Neighbors. Your Friends."
KNIGHT-FREE INSURANCE
256.734.4060

Auto-Owners Insurance
Auto-Owners Insurance
Life Home Car Business

CELL PHONES FOR SOLDIERS

SHAMPOO PLUS CONTINUES NEAR DECADE LONG PROGRAM

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Many Cullmanites may not have much use for their old and broken cell phones, but to the men and women in our military, they can be quite beneficial. The women at Shampoo Plus are accepting outdated phones and will send them off as a way to bring the soldiers overseas a little closer to home.

"We collect cell phones, and have been doing it for nine or ten years now," said Charlotte Wood, owner and stylist. "My daughter got involved with it first because her son has served four tours overseas in the military."

Once the phones are collected, Charlotte's daughter, Janna Wilson, picks them up and mails them off. Charlotte said Janna received a letter about a year ago informing her that she had sent in over 5,000 phones at that point.

"When you turn a phone in, it's really just the insides of the phone they need. Every time we send them in, a soldier, it can be a soldier you pick, will get a $20 phone card to use to call home to his family," she explained.

All cell phones that are donated to Cell Phones for Soldiers are sold either to an electronic refurbisher or a recycler.

The donated cell phone is wiped clean of all personal information and then checked to see if it is repairable. If a cell phone is repairable it is sold to an electronic refurbisher who will repair the device and resell it.

If a cell phone is either too old or completely broken, they are sold to recyclers who strip the devices of any salvageable components and/or rare metals. Then the company responsibly recycles the remaining parts.

The proceeds from the phones are used to purchase the prepaid international calling cards for troops and provide emergency financial assistance to veterans.

"People don't bring them in as often as they used to," Charlotte noted.

"When Iraq and Iran were real hot we got a lot of them. I wish people would realize it's still going on and we still have soldiers out there. They can't be forgotten."



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

A collection box is ready to be filled with old cell phones. Proceeds from the phone donations are used to purchase international calling cards for troops and provide emergency financial assistance to veterans.

Old or broken cell phones can be donated to the Cell Phones for Soldiers Program by taking them to Shampoo Plus. They are located at 1206 4th Street SW, Cullman, AL 35055.

Call Charlotte Wood for more information at 256-737-0304. For more information about the program, go to CellPhonesforSoldiers.com.

WSCC ACCEPTING SUBMISSIONS FOR ANNUAL ARTS IN APRIL EXHIBITION

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

HANCEVILLE – Wallace State Community College is seeking artists to participate in an exhibition of local community artworks Monday, March 30 through Saturday, April 11 as part of the annual 2015 Arts in April Celebration. The theme for this year's exhibition is "Piet, Pixels and Polygons". Participants are invited to create artworks based on visual and/or digital geometric principles as they consider the techniques and thinking of the Dutch abstract artist Piet Mondrian.

"The hope of this theme choice is to have artworks created which highlight both visual literacy and digital literacy issues," said Visual Communications Program Director Adrian Scott.

"Piet Mondrian, a historical modern art figure, created and painted a simple geometric style, which easily could be compared to the pixelated images which are now such a prevalent part of our lives. So I guess the point of this theme choice is just to visually consider the simple geometric pixel, which has become the mostly invisible basis of digital communication. Any imagery related to vintage video game characters, Tetris, Minecraft, paper craft, origami, Rubik's Cubes, etc. are welcome."

The Arts in April is an annual event that began in 2006 as a way to engage the community in all forms of art, according to Scott.

"The overarching idea behind Wallace State's annual Arts in April celebration is to provide a variety of culturally enriching events that service both the Wallace State student body and community," Scott said.

A few of the events planned for this April include performances of the play 'Into the Woods' by the WSCC Theatre department, WSCC Jazz Band Dance and WSCC Concert Choir performances.

Drawing, painting, photography, ceramics and sculpture, digital art, and multimedia crafts are the five media categories artists may choose from.

While there is a theme for the exhibition, all submissions are welcome, even if they do not pertain to the theme. Any age group is invited to participate and may submit up to two works from any of the media categories.

The school also asks that all two dimensional artworks (drawings, paintings, photographs or graphic prints) must be mounted, matted or framed to be accepted and properly hung.

Clay or ceramic artworks must be kiln-fired. Sculptures should be mounted on bases for presentation.

Art is something we all have in us, according to Scott, and he looks forward to seeing another batch of artists express themselves.

Each entry must be the work of only one individual. Deadline for submission of all artworks is Friday, March 20, 2015.

Any schools or art entities needing to make other submission arrangements should contact Adrian Scott in the Art Department at 256-352-8145 or the Burrow Center for the Fine and Performing Arts Front Reception Desk at 256-352-8457.

Bowls (from Front)

event are $10 and will also pay for the attendee's food (chili and a grilled cheese sandwich), as well as a keepsake bowl made by one of the several volunteer potters who prepare for the event by handcrafting hundreds of bowls.

Along with the meal that will be shared with everyone in attendance, there will also be an auction.

The bidding for the auction will end at 5:45 p.m.

Empty Bowls began when an art teacher who wanted to teach his students that hunger was, and still is, a real and present problem in the United States, started Empty Bowls in Michigan back in 1990.

Since then, the program has spread across the country. Tanya Shearer, coordinator of the Empty Bowls event, said that while every state holds their own Empty Bowls event, each state goes about it a different way.

"You know, it's hard to believe that people in our community are hungry, but it's true," Shearer said.

She went on to explain how impactful the event is.

"We in Cullman have been doing this since 2003, and since then, we've raised over $103,000 for the Food Bank," she said.

"Also, $10 purchases 70 lbs of food," she continued.

That means that for the past 11 years, this Empty Bowls event has provided the funds for Javon Daniel at the Cullman Food Bank to purchase over 720,000 lbs of food.

"It's a firsthand look at God in action," Shearer said.

Tickets for the event are available beforehand at Cullman Caring for Kids at 256-739-1111 and at First United Methodist Church at 256-734-6690.





SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Crowds attend the first Healing Mass held in many years at the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

HUNDREDS FLOCK TO THE SHRINE FOR HEALING SERVICE

SHRINE OF THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT CONDUCTS HEALING MASS

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

HANCEVILLE – People came out in droves to attend a special healing Mass in Hanceville on Wednesday. The Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament hosted the service at their beautiful Lourdes Grotto. The weather was perfect and the Mass was beautiful.

"Today we had the Healing Mass at the Lourdes Grotto down by the river," said Jennifer Prybyla from the Pilgrimages Department at the Shrine. "This is the first one we've had in a really long time. We are very excited about it. We will have another one on August 5 as well. There will be a Mass and then we will have the Anointing of the Sick and say several healing prayers."

The Anointing of the Sick is a Catholic Sacrament, which holds special blessings for the sick and dying. Prybyla explains it further:

"The Anointing of the Sick has different rules in regards to somebody on their deathbed, somebody that is about to have a serious surgery, or for someone who has been critically ill for a long while," she said. "The priests will actually anoint them with blessed oils.

"It was a lovely day and the service was so meaningful."
Mary Rose Evans, Event Attendee

There are different prayers that they will say and will anoint the person on their hands and their foreheads as well."

"It was a lovely day and the service was so meaningful," said Mary Rose Evans, event attendee. "Thank you to the Lord and the priests and everyone attending."

The Mass was celebrated on the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, which is on February 11th. Our Lady of Lourdes is a venerated title of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

It was invoked by Roman Catholics in honor of the Marian apparitions said to have occurred on numerous occasions in 1858 in the vicinity of Lourdes, France. The first apparition happened on February 11, 1858, when 14-year-old peasant girl, Bernadette Soubirous, told her mother that a "Lady" spoke to her in the cave about a mile from the town as she gathered firewood with her sister and a friend. Similar apparitions of the "Lady" were reported on 17 occasions that year, until the climax revelation of the Blessed Mother took place.

Bernadette was later canonized as a saint, and Roman Catholics and some Protestants believe her apparitions have been validated by the overwhelming popularity and testament of healings claimed to have taken place at the Lourdes water spring.

Wednesday's Mass began a series of healing Masses, evening healing services and candlelight processions for the coming months. The healing services will all take place at the Shrine's Lourdes Grotto. It is a replica of the original miraculous Grotto in Lourdes, France and was dedicated at the Shrine in 2008.

The Grotto is handicap accessible and wheelchairs are available, if needed. The Shrine invites everyone to join them as they honor Our Blessed Mother and ask her intercession for the healing of our bodies and souls.

Grotto (from Front)

and the maintenance of a unique group of hand-crafted miniatures of churches, shrines, and other buildings from around the world.

He has to keep up with the gift shop's computer system and record sales, returns, etc. He must also do inventory record keeping and in-house, as well as governmental reporting.

Finally, he will manage a small, yet dedicated staff.

"I have a passion for this place," said Ellis.

"I'm an Oblate of St. Bernard and I'm just doing this job on a mission. The people that work here have done a great job. I am honored to help preserve the works Brother Joseph, and more recently Leo Schwaiger, have done. I want to do my part to help keep it going."

The Grotto is located at 1600 St Bernard Drive, SE, Cullman, Alabama 35055. Their phone number is 256-734-4110.

Learn more about the Ave Maria Grotto by visiting their webpage at AveMariaGrotto.com and follow them on Facebook at Facebook.com/AveMariaGrotto.

The Grotto is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.



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

PAYROLL SERVICES, LLC

IS TAKING APPLICATIONS FOR THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS

- Warehouse Workers – 1st & 2nd Shift
- CDL Class A Driver – Part Time
- Customer services position in the Addison-Double Springs Area. Must have clerical experience, general office skills, good phone etiquette, and sales experience.
- Retread Plant – 1st & 2nd Shift
- 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.

12th Annual Empty Bowls of Cullman County
This annual fundraiser's proceeds from the dinner will benefit the Cullman Caring for Kids Food Bank. Tickets are $10 and available for purchase at Cullman Caring for Kids Food Bank, First United Methodist Church and St. John's Evangelical Church. Happening from 4-6:30 p.m. at First United Methodist Church in Cullman in the Hearin Hall.

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.

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

2014-15 Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce's 72nd Annual Meeting & Gala
The Chamber's 72nd Annual Meeting & Gala "Magic of Success" presented by Peoples Bank of Alabama, scheduled for February 19 will celebrate the past year's accomplishments under Jason Grimmett's leadership and kick-off the new year of programs and activities for 2015-16. The program will be from 5:30-9 p.m. in the Brown Stone Centre at Stone Bridge Farms. $50 - General Admission tickets. Limited availability. Call 256-734-0454 for more information and to reserve your seat.

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.

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

2015 Bownes Memorial For Kids' Sake Variety Show
Students from the Cullman community are sharing their talents to benefit nursery and pediatric care for Cullman Regional Medical Center. The talent show begins at 3 p.m. in the Betty Leeth Haynes Theatre at Wallace State Community College. Tickets may be purchased at the CRMC Foundation office. They are $5 in advance and $10 the day of program.

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

Next Monday

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

Domestic Violence Survivor Support Group
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.

LOCAL ENTERTAINMENT
Sponsored by Busy Bee Café

MONDAY
- 79 cent wings at Rodney G's Hickory Grill from 6-9 p.m.
- 12th Annual Empty Bowls of Cullman County from 4-6:30 at Cullman First United Methodist Church

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.

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.
- Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce's 72nd Annual Meeting & Gala from 5:30-9 p.m. at the Brown Stone Centre at Stone Bridge Farms

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
- FFA Steer Show at the Agricultural Trade Center

SATURDAY
- Live Music at Brothers
- Live Music at Moe's
- Happy Hour at Moe's from 3-6 p.m.
- Live Music at Cadillac Ron's from 8 p.m. to close
- 2015 Bownes Memorial For Kids' Sake Variety Show at 3 p.m. in the Betty Leeth Haynes Theatre at Wallace State Community College
- FFA Steer Show at Agricultural Trade Center

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

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

GROW YOUR BUSINESS



» Shawn Murphree - Automotive/ Digital/ Social Media Specialist

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

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

Call Today For Your Free Quote



Tommy Warhurst FARMERS INSURANCE
2110 AL Hwy 157 • Cullman, AL 35058
Call 256-338-3701
www.thewarhurstagency.com
Auto • Home • Life • Business

UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

NEW PROCEDURE COULD REVERSE AGING

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

The process of aging has been a scientist's subject of interest for several years. What we have known is that as we age, our body's cells begin to break down and are unable to replicate effectively. Now, a University of Stanford study has figured out how to reverse this process by lengthening telomeres.

Telomeres are caps that are found at the end of chromosomes, which are associated with the process of aging and disease. As we age, our telomeres shorten, which causes cellular aging and our eventual march to death.

Other studies have proven that living a healthy and less stressful life can also have an impact on lengthening telomeres as well.

"Now we have found a way to lengthen human telomeres by as much as 1,000 nucleotides, turning back the internal clock in these cells by the equivalent of many years of human life," Helen Blau, a professor of microbiology and immunology at Stanford, and an author of the study, said in a press release.

"This greatly increases the number of cells available for studies such as drug testing or disease modeling."

The study was published in the Journal of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB).

In the paper, researchers described that cells treated with the procedure behaved as though they were much younger than cells that were untreated, and multiplied far more quickly and effectively in the laboratory instead of shrinking away and then dying.

Skin cells that had their telomeres lengthened by the procedure divided up to 40 times more than untreated skin cells.

According to a published study, the procedure involves the use of modified messenger RNA, which carries instructions from genes to the cell's protein-making machines.

The specific RNA the researchers used contained TERT, which is involved in telomerase, an enzyme that maintains telomeres, which ensures they're ready to reproduce and is found mainly in stem cells.

There is a difference between this study and previous research, ensuring this time around, the effect was extremely short-lived and the telomeres received a boost for a short time, but then began to shorten again as cells divided.

This is a good thing because it could boost lifespan in the long run without causing cells to divide indefinitely, which has been previously linked to cancer.

"Previous attempts to deliver mRNA-encoding TERT caused an immune response against telomerase, which could be deleterious," said John Ramunas, a postdoctoral scholar at Stanford, in the press release.

"In contrast, our technique is non-immunogenic. Existing transient methods of extending telomeres act slowly, whereas our method acts over just a few days to reverse telomere shortening that occurs over more than a decade of normal aging. This suggests that a treatment using our method could be brief and infrequent."

This newfound research not only could help expand lifespans, but also assist with a variety of diseases that affect thousands.

"This new approach paves the way toward preventing or treating diseases of aging," Blau said.

"There are also highly debilitating genetic diseases associated with telomere shortening that could benefit from such a potential treatment. One day it may be possible to target muscle stem cells in a patient with Duchenne muscular dystrophy, for example, to extend their telomeres. There are also implications for treating conditions of aging."

Backpacks (from Front)

to Jon "Jay" Betts and together they have two children: Jon, who goes to Cullman Middle School, and Carrie, who attends East Elementary. A Walker County native, Melissa and her family moved to Cullman five and a half years ago so she could work for the First United Methodist Church of Cullman.

"We bought a home this past year, and our neighbors affectionately call our neighborhood 'Methodist Hill' due to all the churchgoers who live there," she smiled warmly. "We couldn't have picked a better place to raise our children. Cullman has been a dream come true for us – the schools, our church and our neighbors are all top notch folks!"

"I have a degree from the University of Alabama in Interior Design, but found a calling in children's ministry 14 years ago. My ministry at Cullman First includes birth-6th grade, weekend and oversight for our two weekday programs, and our CAMP program that meets each Wednesday after school."

"At the end of 2010, Mitchell Williams, our Senior Pastor, issued a proclamation to our city school staff, 'See a child in need? Call us, we will say yes!' Slowly but surely, teachers asked for help and we said yes," Melissa explained.

"By the start of school in fall of 2011, we had a reputation of being willing to say yes. We had been able to make good on some teacher requests. But this school year brought bigger problems. Teachers were reporting an increase in food insecurity – children hoarding food from the lunch room, coming in hungry, even severe malnutrition."

Melissa and several fellow church members began to talk about different ways to help. By Thanksgiving of 2011, they put together food baskets to send to 40 homes that needed it most.

They did the same thing again at Christmas. But the problem was not something just a "food basket" could fix. So they began working with West Elementary school counselor, Elizabeth Shaddix, to identify the number of children in need. One-third of the school qualified and received free/reduced lunches, over 200 children.

The group applied for a small grant and again 'said yes' and to date they serve 120 children in two schools, West Elementary and Welti Elementary.

"We send a backpack full of food home with the children each week, and many larger bags over long weekends and holidays," Melissa said. "We have a wonderful volunteer staff that runs the weekly packing and delivery process. I guess my "title" would be promoter, marketing, fundraising, voice."

It takes $200 a school year or $5 a week to feed a child. The week of April 19th, First United Methodist Church will be hosting a 'Stuff the Bus' event at Save-A-Lot.

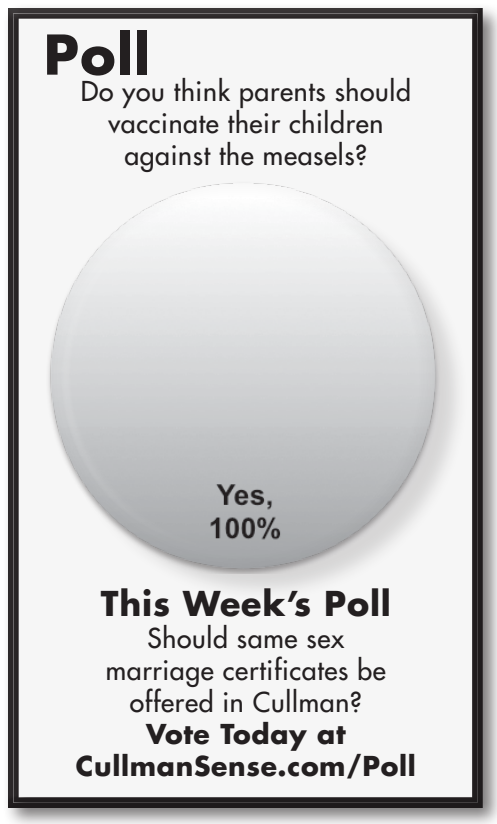
They are looking for community groups who would like to provide entertainment in the parking lot each night. The Save A Lot store will be stocked with items the church frequently uses.

"I encourage readers to just take a look around the places they 'come and go'," said Melissa.

"Look for the needs. Your child's classroom, your co-worker, single parents, the child caring for her aging parent, everyone needs to be loved. Even if you don't give food or wash laundry, there are ways you can show love to others. Pay for a stranger's meal, buy the food for the car behind you, leave a handwritten note for someone," she smiled.

"Maybe it's not a physical need," she continued. "Look for emotional needs. Many single or widowed people share that the 'human touch' is so important when you live alone. When I come home, I get a hug from my kids or husband. A hug is a big deal to those living alone. People need human touch daily, and starve for it when it is not available. It's as much of a need as food."

If you would like to help Melissa in any way, or if you would just like more information on the many other programs she is involved in, call her at the church at 256-734-6690 or email her at mbetts@cullmanfumc.com. For more information about the 'Stuff the Bus' program, check out StufftheBus.org.



cullman city parks & recreation

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

www.cullmanrecreation.org
256-734-9157

- **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 March 31 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

CCSO DEPUTY BRIAN SHADOWENS STRUCK WHILE CONDUCTING TRAFFIC STOP ON I-65 ONRAMP

CCSO Deputy Brian Shadowens has been released from CRMC after he was struck by a passing motorist on the southbound onramp of I-65 at Exit 299. "He has been released from the hospital. He did receive some...

qrne.ws/318



CELEBRATE THE "MAGIC OF SUCCESS"

The Chamber of Commerce's 72nd Annual Meeting & Gala is scheduled for Thurs, Feb. 19, 2015. The theme of this year's gala is the "Magic of Success" as the featured speaker for the night will be Atlanta magician, mentalist and speaker Joe Turner. The event will also celebrate the past year's accomplishments...

qrne.ws/319

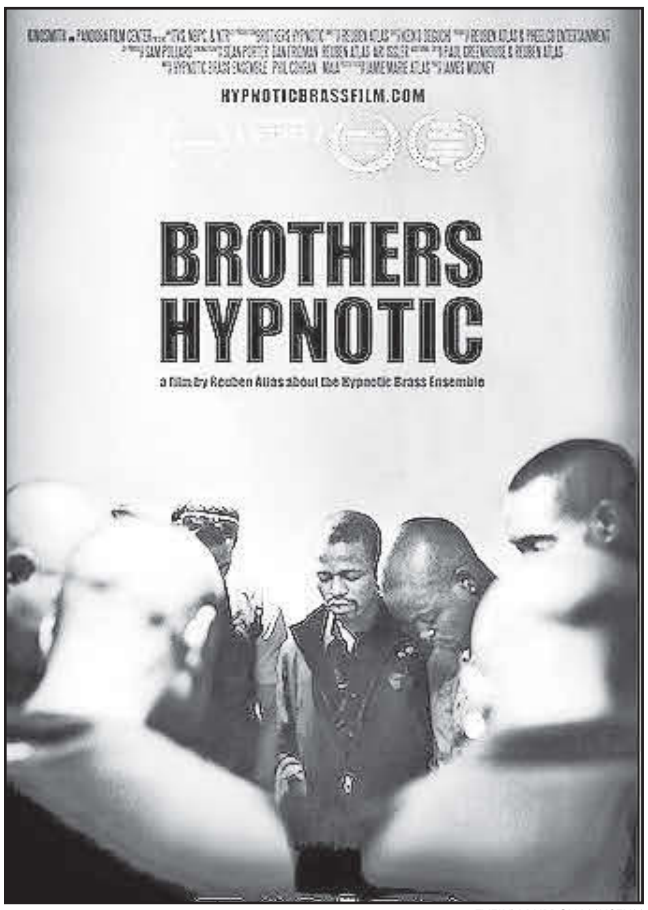
CULLMAN COUNTY LIBRARY IS SPREADING THE LOVE TO ITS PATRONS

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 other words, the library will forgive...

qrne.ws/320

INDIE FILM COMES TO WSCC

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com



EVELYN BURROW MUSEUM

"Brothers Hypnotic" is a documentary about the eight sons of jazz legend Phil Cohran that try to make it as a band on their own.

HANCEVILLE – As a part of the Southern Circuit Tour of Independent Filmmakers, Wallace State's Burrow Center for the Fine and Performing Arts Recital Hall hosted a free independent film screening of the movie "Brothers Hypnotic". The film is a documentary about the eight sons of jazz legend Phil Cohran who reluctantly performed with their father as youngsters, but are now trying to make it as the band Hypnotic Brass Ensemble.

Cohran's sons are now in their 20s and 30s, and when they play their instruments, they make beautiful music that ties together jazz and funk to soul and hip-hop. But although working together as their father had hoped they would, they have found the unwavering ideals bred into them by their father repeatedly tested. Over time, the brothers played in Times Square; negotiated with managers and record labels; and even jammed with Mos Def and Prince.

"We continue to enjoy sho wing these films," said Administrator Kristen Holmes of the Evelyn Burrow Museum. "We'll have a filmmaker here to talk about the next movie in March. We are hoping to grow our audience. Sometimes it is cold outside, like tonight, but the movies are free and it's something we like to offer to the community. We love for people to come out."

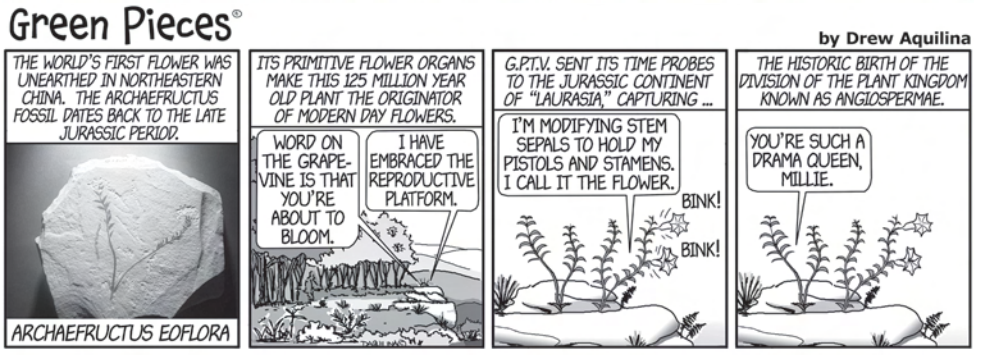
Next month's independent film, "The Starfish Throwers", will be held on March 19 at 6 p.m., and in April, "If You Build, It Will Be Shown" will be showcased on April 9, also at 6 p.m. For more information about the Southern Circuit Tour of Independent Filmmakers, contact the Burrow Center for the Fine and Performing Arts, located at 801 Main Street NW, Hanceville AL, 35077, which can be reached by phone at 256-352-8277.

For more information about Brothers Hypnotic, follow them on Facebook at Facebook.com/BrothersHypnotic or visit their webpage at HypnoticBrassFilm.com. To watch the film's trailer visit pgs.bor/indepdentlens/brothers-hypnotic/film.html.

COMICS











LIKE US ON FACEBOOK

FACEBOOK.COM/
CULLMANSENSE

WINTER FLAVORS
TIPSY BREAD PUDDING

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

This particular dessert is one for adults only. Perfect for any gathering with co-workers or friends, or if you just want to satisfy your sweet tooth. Bread pudding is made in a thousand different ways, but this intensified version made with bourbon is sure to kick things up a notch.

Ingredients:
Bread Pudding:
- 1 loaf - French bread, at least a day old, cut into 1-inch squares
- 1 quart - milk
- 3 eggs
- 2 cups - sugar
- 2 tbsp - vanilla extract
- 1 cup - raisins (soaked an hour or two in 1/4 cup bourbon)
- 1/4 tsp - allspice
- 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon - cinnamon
- 3 tbsp - unsalted butter, melted

Bourbon Sauce:
- 1/2 cup - butter, melted
- 1 cup - sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 cup - Kentucky bourbon whiskey

Instructions:
- Preheat oven to 350°F. Place milk in a large mixing bowl and add the cubed bread.
- Press the bread into the milk with your hands until all of the milk is absorbed.
- In a separate bowl, whisk the eggs, then whisk in the sugar, vanilla, allspice and cinnamon.
- Pour over the bread and milk mixture.
- Add the bourbon soaked raisins and gently stir to combine.
- Pour the melted butter into the bottom of a 9x13 inch-baking pan.
- Coat the bottom and the sides of the pan well with the butter.
- Pour the bread, milk and egg mixture into the baking pan.
- Bake at 350°F for 35-45 minutes, until the liquid has set. The pudding is done when the edges start getting a bit brown and pull away from the edge of the pan.
- While the bread pudding is cooking, make the bourbon sauce.
- Melt the butter in a medium saucepan on low heat. Add the sugar and egg and whisk to blend well.
- Slowly cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until the mixture thickens enough to coat the back of a spoon, and then remove from heat. Do not allow the mixture to simmer.
- Whisk in bourbon to taste. Whisk again before serving. The sauce should be soft, creamy and smooth.

WE WANT TO PUBLISH YOUR RECIPE! • SEND SUBMISSIONS TO RECIPES@CULLMANSENSE.COM

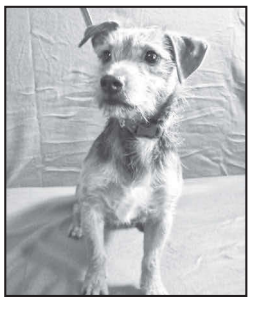
PETS OF THE WEEK

ROMPER



Hello my name is Romper and I am about 3 years old. I am believed to be a Pit mix and I currently weigh 71 lbs. I am full of life, love to play and ready to meet my forever family! Please come by and visit with me. You may find out I'm an extremely lovable companion!

TWIX



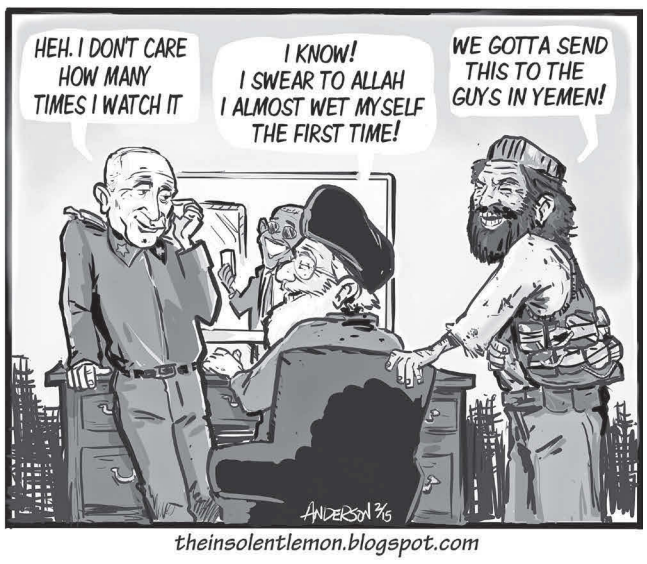
Hello my name is Twix and I am about 18 months old. I am a Terrier mix and I currently weigh 12 LBS. I am full of life and I love to play, so please come and visit with me! You may find out I'm a lovable companion!

ADOPT THESE PETS TODAY

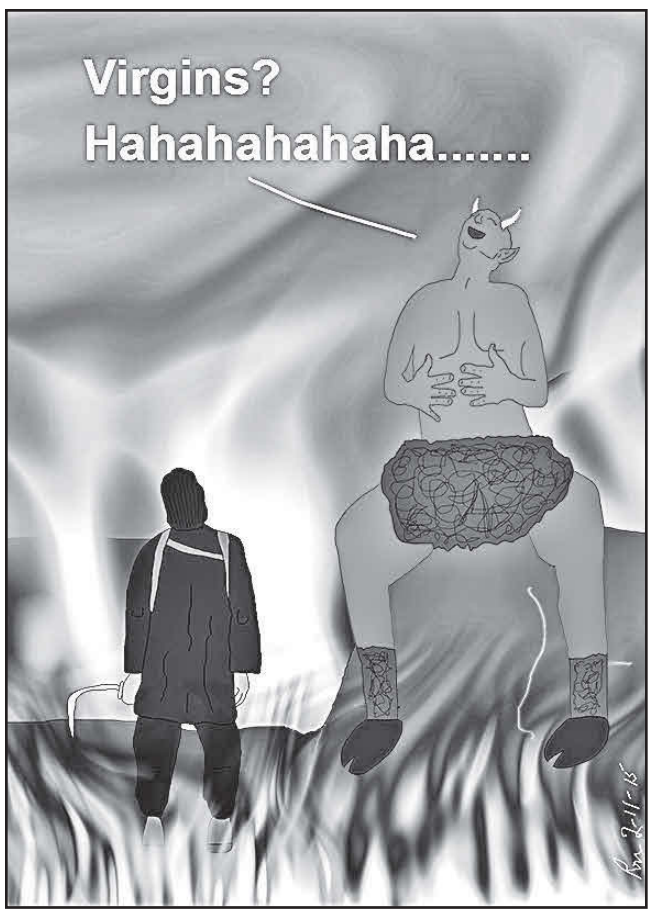
Both of these dogs have an adoption fee of $90 that will include their general exam at the Vet, vaccines, wormer, rabies shot, microchip, spay/neuter, and free 45 days of pet health insurance. Pet Depot will give you a bag of food (you pay taxes) as their way of supporting adoption.

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

EDITORIAL CARTOONS



theinsolentlemon.blogspot.com



HAVE AN OPINION ON ONE OF OUR STORIES?

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

E-mail your submission to opinion@cullmansense.com

CULLMANSENSE
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

Tips news@cullmansense.com or 256-297-1847

Visit cullmanstore.com for our full digital archives.

Contributors Will Hogue

Cartoonist Anthony Saint

OPINION

FEAR CANNOT GUIDE YOU

AN AUTISM MOM'S PERSPECTIVE ON VACCINES

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

There are many things you expect when you are waiting for your child to be born. You lovingly stroke your belly, daydreaming of all the things he or she will be and do. I remember lying on the couch with my husband and talking about all the possibilities. Will he have my quick wit or his father's peaceful nature? Would he be a sports star or an artist? What college would he attend? The last thing we expected was for our darling son to be non-verbal and autistic.

Hearing that something, anything, is wrong with your child is heart wrenching, it leaves you breathless and aching.

As our son grew, it became more and more obvious that he was different.

Certain sights and sounds were terrifying and painful to him, and while other parents were hearing "Hi", "Bye-bye" and "Love you", my husband and I had only the silence. It was excruciating to be met with only silence when I talked to him.

Like any mother would, I started to search for answers, for treatment and, of course, causes.

I wanted to know what caused this. I wanted to know why my beautiful son struggled to find words when his peers grasped it so easily. I came across a plethora of explanations and theories as to what caused his autism.

I was sure for a long time that it was something I had done or hadn't done during pregnancy. Then I saw an article about a doctor who had proven that there was a direct link between autism and vaccines.

Further searching led me to more moms who swore that this was the cause for their child's autism. It all seemed to fit at the time, he did start showing symptoms around the time his last vaccines were administered, and all of those dreadful names listed under the ingredients sounded terrifying. Yes, I had found my answer, the thing responsible for all of this pain – vaccines. Except there was one problem, the "science" behind this theory was completely baseless.

Three and a half years have passed since those days of searching, and I now know that my son's autism and subsequent lack of speech was not a result of vaccinating him.

I now know that the doctor who made this claim falsified his data, and no studies since have been able to find a correlation.

I know now that those vaccines have saved hundreds of millions of lives, and have even eradicated some deadly diseases.

I learned that Thiomersal, the mercury-containing ingredient that has been blamed most for causing autism, has been immensely reduced, if not completely done away with in vaccines.

Not only that, but that most people ingest more mercury from their diet and environment than what was put into the vaccines.

I also know now that my desperation for something to blame was not a good enough reason to spread fear and doubt about one of mankind's greatest tools.

Most importantly, I realized that by focusing on something that has been proven time and again to not be the cause of autism; I was hindering the progress of looking for the real answers.

Now, with more and more cases of preventable diseases popping up across the U.S., I am thankful that I realized that there are far worse consequences to not vaccinating. I'm glad that I did not let fear cloud my judgment causing me to put others at risk by not vaccinating my child.

My son has made tremendous progress, and while he is different, he is happy and healthy. I will no longer fight against science, but with it, so that one day we might find the answer.

SNOW ISN'T SO EXCITING IN THE CITY THAT NEVER SLEEPS

Will Hogue
will@cullmansense.com

NEW YORK, NY - Cullman, Alabama winters are days of warm sunshine, cold wind, and sometimes, if we're all lucky, a blanket of snow every other year or so. Recently, however, snow has been more likely to fall. Everyone gets excited about the prospect of snow in the south because it's such a rarity. I always heard stories about how northerners hate the snow, and I always scoffed at that.

"How ungrateful those people must be," I thought. "They get snow so often and don't even appreciate it."

Well, here's the thing about snow in a place like Manhattan: it isn't the nice, soft, clean, pure, heavenly white powder once it accumulates.

When people in NYC hear the word 'snow,' it immediately conjures a loathing feeling. Why? Because unless it is an absolute blizzard, the only difference about walking down the sidewalk when it snows and when it hasn't snowed is that the streets are filled with gross brown sludge; the sidewalks are soaking wet; and treacherous black ice lurks on every crosswalk after a snow shower.

The winter storm Juno, which hit the northeast last month, was supposed to produce up to 3 feet of snow in Manhattan. Schools were preemptively closed, the mayor warned citizens to prepare for the worst blizzard in the history of the city, and school was canceled for a day.

What actually happened was far less glamorous than a white-out, Big Apple-debilitating onslaught of snow. Instead of 3 feet of snow, 7.8 inches trickled down past my 14th floor apartment.

Of course my roommates and I enjoyed the snow.

Of course we went out past the city suggested hour of 11 p.m. Of course we went to Union Square and had a snowball fight. And, of course, we went sledding down hills in Central Park on the lids of tubs we gathered from a friend's apartment.

While I wouldn't trade those memories for not having to circumvent the mounds of ice piled on each corner, it is still a pain to have to be so deliberate with each step down Exchange Place so as to not wipe out and embarrass myself in front of a group of 40 Japanese tourists. Needless to say, the word 'snow' elicits a much different reaction to New Yorkers than to Cullmanites.

Follow us on Twitter @CullmanSense

CUPPS ACCOUNTING AND TAX SERVICE
INDIVIDUALS • FARMS • SMALL BUSINESS
PARTNERSHIPS • CORPORATIONS
CREDIT AND DEBIT CARDS ACCEPTED • FREE E-FILE
WE APPRECIATE YOUR BUSINESS
1405 2ND AVE SW, CULLMAN • PHONE: 256-739-1750 • FAX: 256-739-1179

BURCHELL INSURANCE AGENCY
Martha Burchell, Agent
Nationwide On Your Side
Auto • Home • Life • Commercial
No one will ever perform a better human service to secure the needs of others
200 2nd Ave. SE • Cullman, AL 35055 • Phone: 256-737-7450 • burchem@nationwide.com

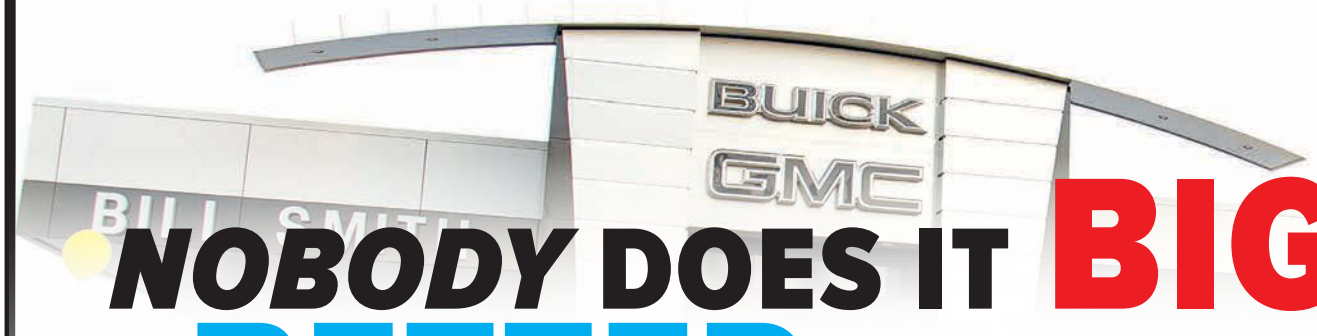


Bill Smith

BUICK GMC

WE ARE PROFESSIONAL GRADE





NOBODY DOES IT BIGGER OR BETTER THAN BILL SMITH!

2015 GMC SIERRA 1500
DOUBLE CAB STANDARD BOX 2-WHEEL DRIVE SLE



STK#175603

~~MSRP $42,650~~

SALE $35,400

2015 GMC SIERRA 1500
DOUBLE CAB STANDARD BOX 4-WHEEL DRIVE SLE



STK#171984

~~MSRP $46,730~~

SALE $39,480

2014 BUICK LACROSSE FWD

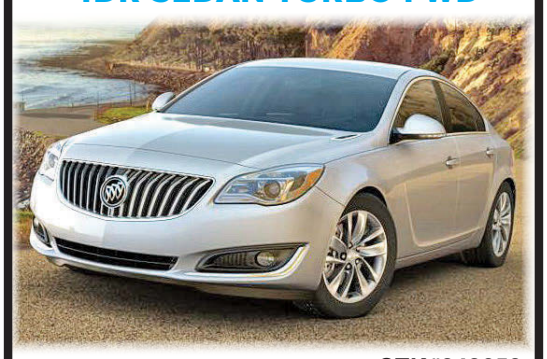


STK#199992

~~MSRP $34,940~~

SALE $29,940

2014 BUICK REGAL
4DR SEDAN TURBO FWD



STK#242650

~~MSRP $32,425~~

SALE $27,425

2014 BUICK VERANO
4DR SEDAN LEATHER GROUP



STK#166131

~~MSRP $27,825~~

SALE $22,825

Bill Smith BUICK GMC

DON'T MAKE A $3,000 MISTAKE

*All rebates applied, must have '99 or newer qualifying trade in. Prices are plus tax, title, & fee. Colors may vary.

BILLSMITHBUICKGMC.COM • 1940 SECOND AVE NW • CULLMAN, AL 35055 • 256-734-4472