SERIES 5 • ISSUE 9 • MARCH 2, 2015

CULLMANSENSE COMMUNITY MATTERS

CULLMAN AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & VISITOR CENTER

CULLMAN AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S EYES OF PROGRESS NEWSLETTER INSIDE P9

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FACEBOOK.COM/LILLYGRAECO

LILLY GRAE & CO.: A PLACE TO CREATE AND CELEBRATE HARD WORKING WIVES AND MOTHERS P7

INLAND BUILDING SYSTEMS HOSTS INDUSTRY TOUR P3

NEW DAVIDSON HOMES OFFER A PIECE OF LUXURY P4

PUTTING COME TOGETHER TO HOST JOB FAIR AT WSCC P6

WSCC EVENT AIMS TO EMPOWER WOMEN P19

OUTSTANDING CITIZENS

QUENTIN NIGG: TELLING AN ALTERNATE HISTORY

"MY FAMILY GOES BACK TO THE MISSISSIPPI TERRITORY AND THERE'S SO MANY STORIES FLOATING AROUND ABOUT THE COUNTY'S HISTORY THAT I KNOW DIFFERENT."



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Ninety-two year old Quentin Nigg of Hanceville teaches local history though the lens of his life.

P3

THE LINK GETS READY TO 'FLOURISH'

Will Hogue
will@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – This Thursday, March 5 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., The Link of Cullman County will be holding its annual event at Loft212. This year's event is titled "Flourish," and, according to The Link, will include a recap of all the goals that were achieved in 2014, along with the goals that the organization has for 2015.

The event will recognize the winners of the past year's Dream Big Award. According to The Link's website, its mission is "to foster community in Cullman County to maximize resources and transform lives through the love of Jesus Christ."

The Link "is a faith-based non-profit that is working toward helping the poor and vulnerable in our community overcome the barriers to poverty."

While the tickets for the event are all sold out, you can visit The Link's website, LinkingCullman.org, at any time to find out more about the organization and how you can help it, through donations or by volunteering. Contact The Link of Cullman County at 256-775-0028.

LIFTING SPIRITS

'RELENTLESS' POWER LIFTER JOSH SMITH DANCES THE NIGHT AWAY FOR HOPEKIDS P2



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

The event raised $864.00 for children with life-threatening medical conditions.

USDA SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATIONS BEING ACCEPTED FOR ALABAMA

Amy Belcher
ADAI

MONTGOMERY – The Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries (ADAI) is accepting grant applications for projects that enhance the competitiveness of U.S. specialty crops in foreign and domestic markets. The application deadline for these specialty crop block grants through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is May 22, 2015, 5 p.m. Central Standard Time (CST).

Specialty crops are defined by the USDA as fruits and vegetables, dried fruit, tree nuts, horticulture (including maple syrup and honey) and nursery crops (including floriculture).

Commodity groups, agricultural organizations, colleges and universities, municipalities, state agencies and agricultural nonprofits are all eligible for this grant program, provided their proposals meet all the specifications. The USDA-AMS has final approval for projects submitted.

The ADAI and a review committee of industry representatives will make the application evaluation review and award recommendations.

The specialty crops block grant is a competitive grant process. The maximum award to any applicant is $25,000; the minimum, $5,000.

Commissioner of Agriculture and Industries John McMillan stated, "The department looks forward to implementing the 2015 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program under supervision of USDA. We are fortunate to be a part of this successful program that provides an opportunity to expand the specialty crop industry in Alabama to eligible and deserving recipients."

Projects cannot begin until the USDA-AMS has made its official award announcement, expected by October 2015.

P3

FEB. DEADLINES EXTENDED FOR MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATION, RENEWAL, AND TRANSFER, AND VEHICLE PROPERTY TAX PAYMENT

Frank Miles
ADR

MONTGOMERY – State Revenue Commissioner Julie P. Magee has announced that the February motor vehicle registration, renewal, transfer and vehicle property tax payment deadlines have been extended through March 6 for all Alabama residents affected by county office closings due to severe weather conditions beginning Feb. 25.

Alabama vehicle owners whose registration month is February will not be subject to delinquent penalties and interest for late vehicle registration or for late payment of vehicle property tax, provided the registrations are completed during the extension period which runs through March 6.

The extension also applies to the payment of property taxes on vehicles registered under the International Registration Plan (IRP); however, it does not apply to IRP motor vehicle registrations and renewals for Alabama–based vehicles, as these registrations and renewals are processed by the ADOR.

The February registration renewal extension also

P3

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TURNING EXPERIENCE INTO PASSION

BRANDI HOFFMAN USES HER BUSINESS SKILLS TO FURTHER HER PHOTOGRAPHY

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Everyone these days seems to fancy themselves a photographer. Social media has made it easier than ever to share and lightly edit photos, but there is still no comparison to a real photographer's work. While it may seem like an easy job, learning how to take an amazing portrait is an art form in itself. Brandi Hoffman, of Brandi Hoffman Photography, says she is here to help should you need a professional touch to your portraits.

After beginning her photography journey as a simple hobby, Hoffman quickly became enthralled, and began to learn more about the technical aspects of the craft.

"At first I just took it up as a hobby," said Hoffman. "Then I set my mind to actually learning how to operate the systems and programs to manipulate and enhance the photos. I was determined to do it for a living at that point."

It wasn't long after realizing her passion that she decided to go for starting her own business.

She noted that her past years of experience have helped her tremendously.

"Before I started my own business I was always running other businesses," Hoffman said.

"I was in the Army National Guard for 12 years and I was always a general manager or regional training manager for other businesses. I thought if I can run million dollar plus stores for other companies and teach others how to be successful, then why am I not doing this for myself?"

Combining her people skills and business knowledge has definitely paid off as she has created a wide client base that continues to grow. According to Hoffman, she uses these skills in a variety of scenarios to meet customers' needs.

"I do mainly portraits," she said.

"Candids are my favorite. My general focus is children, families, seniors, weddings, boudoir, engagement, maternity, gender reveals, photogenic and newborns. Although I have done pictures for advertisements and I also do a lot of events."

For Hoffman, it is not the technical aspects of the job that she finds difficult; it's the thought of missing a precious moment.

"The hardest part of my job is probably the fear of missing something," Hoffman said. "Missing something at a certain time during a wedding, missing a smile from a little one that may only happen once during the session, or just missing something during my time with my clients that cannot be recreated or only happens once."

At the end of the day, it is all about being able to cultivate lifelong relationships with her clients that make the job rewarding for her.



IMAGES BY BRANDI HOFFMAN

Hoffman takes mainly portraits such as this one with her husband and four children.



« Hoffman uses outdoor scenes and natural lighting to create beautiful pictures such as in this senior portrait.



» Hoffman captures the classic beauty in this radiant bride.

"I love the relationships I have with my clients, the bond of having a family with me from when they are engaged all the way up to they have a baby and the baby grows up," said Hoffman.

"It is all about the relationship and the story the picture tells. I am always growing and learning but at the same time I do put a lot of heart and love into every client's session and encounter."

Pricing starts at $45 and varies depending on the session. Weddings start at $600. Senior sessions start at $100.

Brandi Hoffman can be contacted at 256-962-3833 or by e-mail at b.hoffman46@yahoo.com.

More information can also be obtained at http://brandihoffman.fotomerchant.com and Facebook.com/BrandiHoffmanPhotography.

Fundraiser (from Front)

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – This Saturday people from all over Cullman County came together for a good cause. The event, a fundraiser benefitting HopeKids, was held at the Cullman County Elks Lodge and was hosted by Relentless power lifter participant Josh Smith.

The local band, Round 2, played a variety of music as people ate, drank, and danced the night away.

In the end, $864.00 was raised, thanks to the generous crowd of Cullman area citizens.

Relentless is an elite power lifting competition that began in Minnesota in 2011 when Scott Nutter hosted the power lifting meet to raise money for a friend fighting stage IV liver cancer.

In 2012, they teamed up with HopeKids and together they have raised over $100,000 to support terminally ill children and their families.

HopeKids is an organization that provides ongoing events, activities and a powerful support community for families who have a child with cancer or another life-threatening medical condition.

They surround the children and their families with the message that hope can be a powerful medicine.

"I'm just looking to be a light, and entertaining the kids as much as possible," said Smith.

"I want to make sure their minds are off everything that may be bothering them or stressing them due to their illnesses."

Smith began training to become a power lifter two years ago after losing a dear friend.

"I had a best friend who passed away from a terminal illness," he explained.

"He was diagnosed at an early age with it and lived until he was in his thirties. I was looking on social media not long after and saw this event where these guys are helping out these kids with terminal illnesses and it just hit home with me."

Cullman is home to some of the most tender-hearted individuals around.

Josh Smith is just one example of these outstanding citizens.

He was able to turn the tragedy of losing his friend into something wonderful by helping to bring a smile and a lot of fun to sick children throughout the U.S.

For more information about HopeKids, go to HopeKids.org.

For more information about the Relentless competition, visit RelentlessPowerLifting.com.

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INLAND BUILDING SYSTEMS TO HOST INDUSTRY TOUR THURSDAY

Will Hogue
will@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – This Thursday, March 5 at 9:45 a.m. at Inland Building Systems, the first of four various industry tours this year will take place. The tours, according to Derek Lane, director of Small Business & Workforce Solutions at the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce, are to educate Cullman citizens on how businesses in resident industry contribute to the local economy.

The events, which will happen each quarter, are free of charge. However, participation in the tours is capped at 20 registrants.

"The industries themselves give the tours," Lane said. "So, they limit the number of people who can register to 20 for logistics."

While anyone can sign up for the tours, Lane said that vendors especially could benefit from learning more about the industry that is supporting them. The first quarter tour this year will be at Inland Building Systems, which is a business that has been in Cullman since 1996. The next three tours of the year will be on May 15, Sept. 17, and Nov. 12. The tours will be of the facilities of HH Technologies, AGCO and REHAU.

Lane said that these tours have been going on for a while, and that the goal behind them is to promote and market the tours so that people can understand their invaluable presence in our local community.

Those interested will have the opportunity to sign up for the tours through CullmanChamber.org.

However, registration for the tours will only be available a month before each event. Contact the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce at 256-734-0454 to sign up or find out more information.

Lane emphasized that he encourages people to attend these tours in order to learn more about the local economy. "Everyone knows about personal economics," Lane said, "But it is the macroeconomics that people must become more informed about. Once people are more informed, that can only benefit the community."

Nigg (from Front)

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

HANCEVILLE – One doesn't have to look very far to find extraordinary people in Cullman County. For example, Hanceville's Victorian Manor assisted living facility is chocked full of them. Gathered together at mealtimes or working diligently on a craft project, these ladies and gentlemen are full of good times and happy hearts. Mr. Quentin Nigg is just one of those special residents.

Charles Quentin Nigg was born on September 16, 1922 in Cullman County, Ala. He is the son of Charles M. Nigg and Ora Lee Shaver. He joined the Army Air Force on January 31, 1943 where he was trained to fly at Millikan University in Decatur, Ill. After his flight training, he was sent to Santa Anna, Calif. for pre-flight training and later to Hemet, Calif. to primary flight training. It was during this time Mr. Nigg crashed his plane while flying solo and practicing his landings.

"I crawled out of it," he said, smiling. "There was an irrigation pipe that grew up in the wrong place, and they didn't have a flag on it. See the wheel laying here?" he said, pointing to an old snapshot of the plane, "I hung this wheel on the irrigation pipe and it flipped it. I was learning," he chuckled.

Mr. Nigg was honorably discharged from the military service at Fort McPherson, Ga. on February 16, 1946 with the rank of Buck Sgt. He received the Army Service Medal and World War II Victory Medal. He returned to Cullman and farmed for a while and later worked for the L&N Railroad. While working for the railroad, he also worked for Hayes Air Craft, reworking C 119 Military Transport Aircraft.

In 1957, he married Miss Carolina Emily Klein, whose parents owned Cullman's Klein Ice Cream factory. He finished out his working career as a rural mail carrier for the Hanceville Post Office.

Carolina had an incredible love for history and it was infectious. Before long Quentin joined her in the quest to research and write down both of their family's histories. Once that was finished, Carolina went on to publish many other families' histories as well.

"My wife had the reputation of being the only kid in Cullman that wanted to read the old newspapers down at the Tribune shop," he explained.

"Mrs. Arnold would always laugh at her because every time she was around, she was in the file papers back there, going through them and reading them and everything. She couldn't imagine what it was like here, even after reading all the newspapers."

Mr. Nigg knew people from the area from his days as a mail carrier. He was able to put Carolina in touch with others in the area that could satisfy her curiosity of the past.

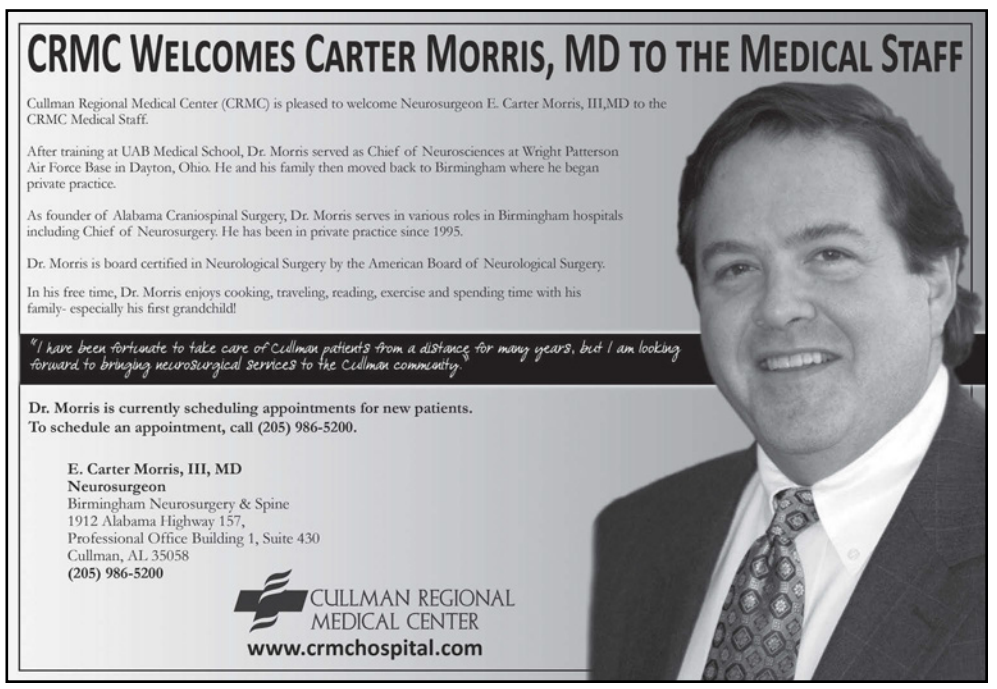
"She couldn't imagine how life was before she was born," he explained to me. "Just as people your age can't imagine how the country was like in the 1950s - I mean that was over 50 years ago," he shook his head. "You can't imagine what the houses were like or what living was like or anything."

Even though Carolina has passed away, Mr. Nigg continues to talk about the history of both the United States and Cullman County to everyone he sees. This month Mr. Nigg will begin a series of meetings for his friends and neighbors at Victorian Manor. The theme of the meetings will be Local History Chats – My Life Story and the residents of the Manor are excited.

"My family goes back to the Mississippi Territory and there's so many stories floating around about the county's history that I know different," he said happily.

Hanceville is lucky to have Mr. Quentin Nigg as one of its residents. The people that both live and work at Victorian Manor are just a part of what makes Cullman County extra special.

If you know of someone whom you think is one of the county's many outstanding citizens, we'd like to know. E-mail me at sharon@cullmansense.com and help me showcase these wonderful individuals.



Applications (from Front)

For more detailed information visit www.agi.alabama.gov/blockgrant or contact Hassey Brooks (334-240-3877).

All applicants must complete and submit documentation as related to the newly enacted Alabama Immigration Law.

Deadlines (from Front)

applies to individuals who have recently purchased or otherwise acquired a vehicle, but have not registered their newly-acquired vehicle within the 20-day registration period. This affects vehicles purchased or otherwise acquired, whereby the 20-day registration requirement falls during the period of Feb. 25 through Feb. 27.

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BIG CHANGE FOR LOCAL MEXICAN RESTAURANT

BUENAVISTA MEXICAN RESTAURANT TO SOON BECOME BUENAVISTA MEXICAN CANTINA, GET NEW HOME

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – For many years, Buenavista Mexican Restaurant has been a favorite for a lot of Cullman residents. Big changes are coming as the business plans to move into a much larger facility.

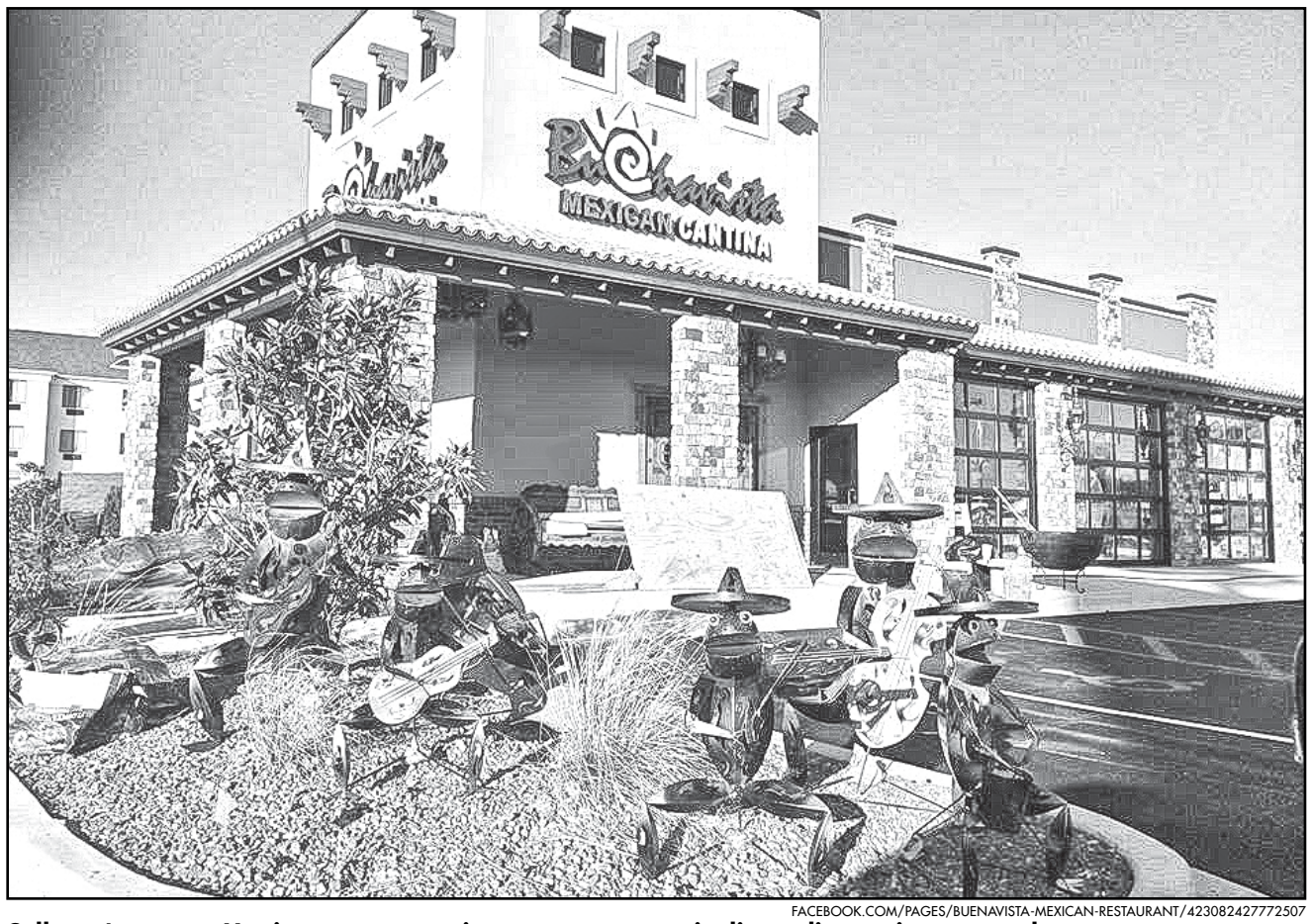
"Our new place will be a lot bigger than the one we have now," said waiter Jose. "We will move into the new building, I'm not sure what they will do with this one."

There is not a definite opening date for Buenavista Mexican Cantina as of yet.

According to Jose, it will be another two to three weeks because they are waiting for their liquor license to be approved

If you love Mexican food, keep your eyes open for the Buenavista Mexican Cantina to open its doors.

It's new home is located off Highway 157 next to Arby's.



FACEBOOK.COM/PAGES/BUENAVISTA-MEXICAN-RESTAURANT/423082427772507

Cullman's newest Mexican restaurant is set to open once its liquor license is approved.

NEW DAVIDSON HOMES OFFER A PIECE OF LUXURY

DUPLEXES AVAILABLE TO RENT ON 10TH STREET

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – With several expansions happening all around in industrial and retail businesses alike, the Cullman area is pulling in more newcomers to our community. With many professionals coming to the city, they need somewhere to live, and Davidson Homes plans to fulfill that need.

Davidson Homes has been working in the area for a short time, but is already making a big impact on the homing industry. Subdivisions have been popping up with Davidson signs all over the area, and according to owner Adam Davidson, more are on the way, including the new duplexes.

"We have a sister company called Clear Choice Properties, and we are building the properties on 10th Street," said Davidson. "We are trying to capture the folks moving to town. With the duplexes being brand new, we are charging a little more than other rental properties, but the clientele we are serving, typically make higher salaries. It is to serve those who are looking for a luxury rental."

Three buildings have already been completed, and Davidson says that several more are planned to follow. Tenants will get their money's worth with the new 1,250 square foot properties with the unique look and features of the homes, according to Davidson.

"The duplexes will feature a hardwood floor look all the way through the home," Davidson said. "They are full brick, with an open floor plan and architectural shingles. They also have fully sided lawns, and lawn maintenance will be included in their rent."

Davidson stated that it has been Cullman's ever growing economy that has caught the company's eye.

"For the size of town that Cullman is, it has extremely high job growth," said Davidson. "Of course, the school system, low crime rate, and the food and retail establishments have all come together to make us see the potential there. So we're putting a lot of chips on Cullman, if you will."



CHELSEA SPARKS/CULLMANSENSE

The new duplexes are targeted towards workers that are moving to the Cullman area.

In addition to the new duplexes, Davidson Homes has also started construction on a new subdivision on Convent Road, and will begin yet another subdivision project soon.

"We started in spring of 2013 with two spec homes and ever since then things have just taken off for us," Davidson said. "We have one other development that is just around the corner for us. We have signed a deal for 185 lots next door to REHAU. It should be going before the planning commission this month."

Davidson went on to say that he and his company are excited to do business in Cullman and help build homes for its residents.

"At the end of the day, things always look different," Davidson said. "I've had jobs before where your job was to make the department of the store look exactly the way it was when you go there. With home building, you get to drive by and look at the things you have built and see the impact we can have on a town, and the impact they can have on us."

Visit DavidsonHomesLLC.com or call 256-350-1322 for more information.

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WEISS COTTAGE
CULLMAN'S OLDEST HOME

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – In the heart of downtown Cullman, located at 401 1st Ave. SW, there sits a little white house. The house, although delicate and beautiful, is actually the town's oldest cottage. Simply lovely, the cottage is available for show by appointment through the Cullman County Museum.

The small wood framed cottage is typical of early Cullman homes. Weiss Cottage was originally located on Lot 440 on 6th St. SE. The property and the house were purchased from L&N Railroad on February 24, 1875 by Dr. Aldo Weiss.

Even though the home is very small, Dr. Weiss, his wife Magdalena, and their children Emma, Charles and Clara lived in there comfortably.

Not only was it their home, but it also served as Dr. Weiss' office.

The family's goats were housed in the cellar, and their home was often called 'The Goat House'.

On December 18, 1889, the house was sold to Judge S.L. Fuller and his wife Evelyn. Evelyn Fuller was one of Cullman's early postmistresses.

The cottage went through several various owners until 1917 when Charles Ruehl bought it. It stayed in the family until 1976, when the owner at the time, Mrs. Inez Ruehl, needed the land the cottage was on for other purposes.

Cullman's oldest home was then given to the City of Cullman with the stipulation that it be moved from 206 Sixth Ave. SE to 401 1st Ave. SW. The old home was moved and complete restoration began.

The place was furnished with typical 19th century items and became a Bicentennial project for the City of Cullman Federated Women's Clubs and the Historical Society.

To top off the historic project, the Cullman Garden Club Federation did the planting of the grounds, creating colorful and stunning flowers throughout the home's surroundings.

On the inside of the cottage, you can see that the windowsills had been actual railroad ties and nails.

A historic quilt is neatly draped over the old bed just inside the front door.

It was made by various Homemakers Clubs throughout the county. There are also a few items of Dr. Weiss' medical equipment on a bookshelf display on the wall opposite the bed near a small rustic table.

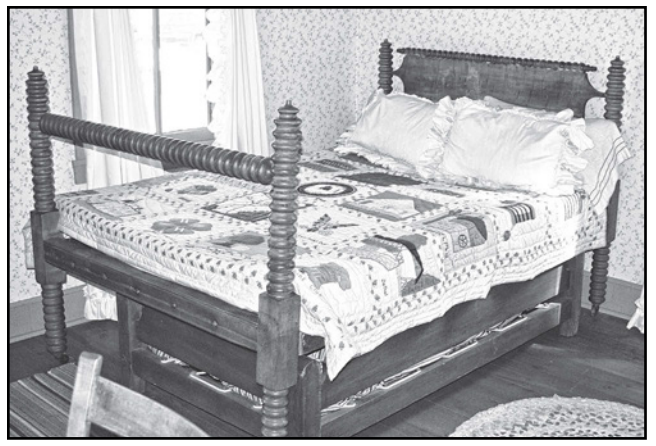
During the restoration, several layers of old wallpaper were carefully removed in order to find the original, which was matched and replaced as carefully as possible. The results of the restoration were breathtaking and the small landmark is considered to be one of the town's many treasures.

Weiss Cottage was added to the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage by the Alabama Historical Commission on January 25, 1977, and was also added to the National Register in April 1985.

Those interested in touring Weiss Cottage can call the Cullman County Museum at 256-739-1258 or 1-800-533-1258.



IMAGES BY SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE



Weiss Cottage is available for show by appointment through the Cullman County Museum.

MIRRORING HISTORY
FROM THE PALACE SALOON TO LUYBEN & BOIKE

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

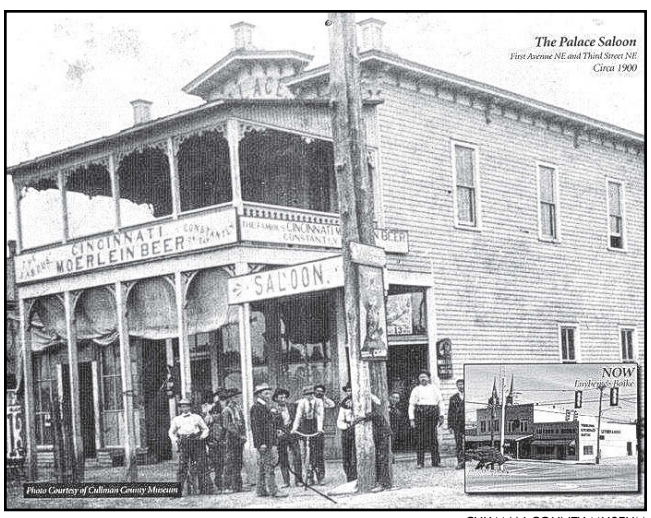
CULLMAN – In 1900, the Palace Saloon once stood on the corner of what is now Highway 278 and 1st Avenue.

Eventually the Palace was demolished and a one-story building was built in this location and became Hugh Brindley's Grocery Store.

Mr. Brindley later moved the grocery store to a new location with better parking, which is now home to the Cullman Power Board.

After serving as Hugh Brindley's grocery store, the corner was occupied by Skipper and Eidson, a fine men's clothing store.

Unfortunately, the building caught fire and destroyed the business sometimes in the mid to late '70s. Today it serves as an empty lot for Luyben & Boike.



CULLMAN COUNTY MUSEUM

The Palace Saloon once stood on the corner of what is now Highway 278 and 1st Avenue.

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PUTTING CULLMAN TO WORK

CITY AND COUNTY COME TOGETHER TO HOST JOB FAIR AT WSCC

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

HANCEVILLE – The first pleasant day of the past week was spent for many with the hope of landing a new job with three Cullman area industry leaders Topre, REHAU and Yutaka. Both city and county officials came together, with the help of Wallace State, to fill positions and put more Cullmanites to work.

"It's been a good day so far," Cullman Economic Development Agency Director Peggy Smith said.

"All of the companies have been pleased with the quality of applicants today. The facility here at the Wallace Nursing Building has been wonderful, it's been so easy and there are a lot of rooms for privacy. We have upstairs and downstairs rooms for interviews and the computer lab for those that didn't pre-register."

While the number of attendees was a little short, Smith said the turnout was still tremendous and well worth the effort.

"We had far more people to pre-register than we expected, and fewer than expected to walk in," said Smith.

"The weather hasn't exactly cooperated, but we still had a steady stream of people coming in and interviewing. The employers have been pleased with the amount of people that pre-registered, so I feel that we as a committee have done a good job of getting the word out."

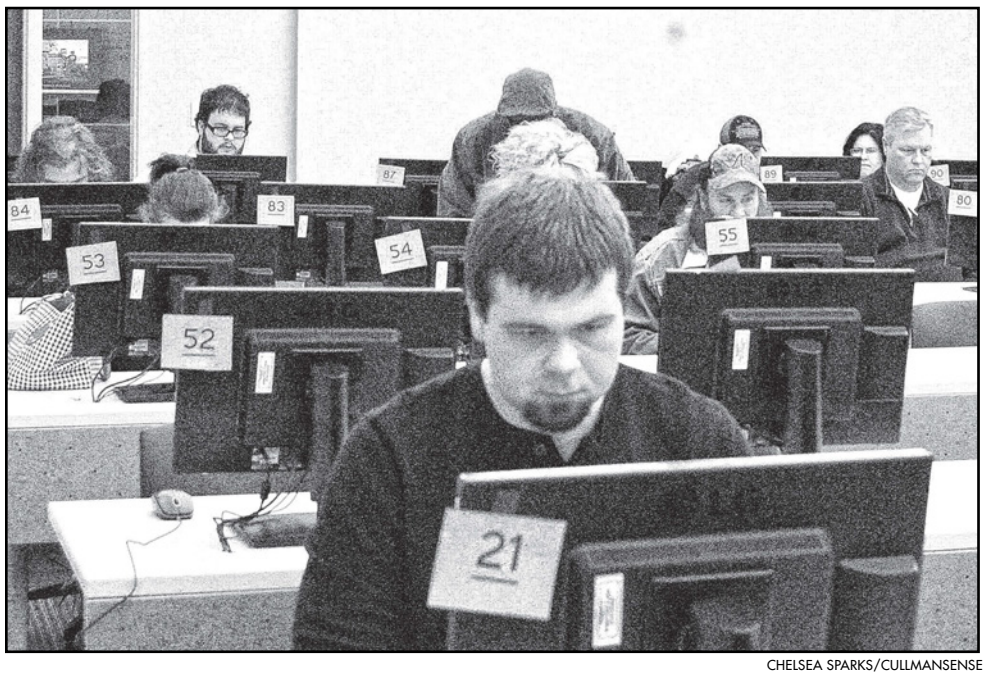
Director of Cullman County Economic Development, Cherrie Haney, concurred with Smith that the weather played a role in some applicants' attendance, but was also happy with the progress made.

"We have interviewed quite a few people today," Haney said.

"The city and county work very close together anyway, and our job together is to promote industry in any way we can. This would have been too big of a project for any one department, so it has been a benefit to combine resources. Also the industries have come in, and the staffing agencies have come in to help and provided food. It really just all came together."

The first job fair of this type for Cullman went well and with very few glitches, according to Peggy Smith. With over 800 applicants pre-registered and approximately 140 jobs to fill with more on the horizon, the job fair was a tremendous success.

"I really want to stress that while this fair was for these three companies for the first one, we suspect that we have several more in the future," Smith said.



CHELSEA SPARKS/CULLMANSENSE

Participants fill out job applications that may land them interviews.

"We want people to keep an eye and ear out for those future fairs where they may have another opportunity."

For more information, contact Cullman Economic Development Agency at 256-739-1891 or Cullman County Economic Development at 256-737-0793.

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR WORKFORCE: LENA` POWE OF WEST ALABAMA SPEAKS ON HELPING COMMUNITIES HELP THEIR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Industry and training were on the menu at the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce's February Community Luncheon this past Friday. With industry and business expansions at an all time high in the Cullman area, those at the luncheon learned of new ways to solidify the workforce in the area from the event's guest speaker LeNa` Powe.

Powe currently serves two roles as the Director of Workforce Development for the West Alabama Chamber of Commerce and as the Executive Director of West Alabama Works.

"In this combined role, Ms. Powe provides leadership in business, industry, education and training for West Alabama," said Chamber Chair Jason Grimmett.

West Alabama Works is a 501(c)3 program that was formed in the summer of 2014 and aims to provide both workforce development and educational opportunities, according to Powe. In that program, different areas of business such as industry, construction, etc. each have their own group that discusses issues and concerns, which then expresses those needs back to Powe and the program.

> **"You can only get that kind of corroboration and communication when people are allowed to do it with like-minded individuals, so being able to do that with the industry clusters has helped us."**
>
> LeNa` Powe, Director of Workforce Development for the West Alabama Chamber of Commerce and Executive Director of West Alabama Works

"An example of our work was the automotive hiring fair that took place in September of last year," Powe said. "We had 2,100 people attend, 700 people preregistered, conducted 1,600 interviews and extended roughly 600 opportunities for employment. That, in itself, was the result of the automotive cluster meeting and discussing hiring issues as several of them had turnover rates of up to 300 percent."

Powe went on to explain that by giving each area of their community's workforce a way to voice their needs and concerns, they have found that each area had their own specific needs and concerns.

"Our construction industry's concern was that they did not have enough carpenters," said Powe. "So there is now a new carpenter program in our technical high school program that is housed separately that combats that issue. You can only get that kind of corroboration and communication when people are allowed to do it with like-minded individuals, so being able to do that with the industry clusters has helped us."

This meeting came at a convenient time, since Cullman had its own job fair at Wallace State on February 28 for the following industry companies: REHAU, Topre and Yutaka, which has drawn a huge response. With 1,000 new jobs on the immediate horizon and business growing everyday in Cullman, new ways of solidifying and cultivating those opportunities are essential.

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LILLY GRAE & CO.: A PLACE TO CREATE AND CELEBRATE HARD WORKING WIVES AND MOTHERS

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com



FACEBOOK.COM/LILLYGRAECO

Craft parties are fun at Lilly Grae & Co. where attendees create their own unique art piece.

CULLMAN – If you are a fan of Pinterest and love to make unique crafts, then you are in for a real treat. Cullman's own Audra Vest and Tasha Monk have joined forces, bringing their talents and creative personalities together to create a place where women can get together, socialize and enjoy themselves as they create some of the most unique crafts around.

"We noticed our friends and family always referring to the 'Pinterest woman,' basically meaning the wives, mothers, home and career women who are always trying to keep up with the latest thing," said Vest. "We wanted to make a place for women to create, or with some help, create with no pressure. We really want to celebrate hard working wives and mothers!"

Even though Lilly Grae & Co. is in its infancy, the two friends have big plans for its future.

"We have a lot of goals and dreams we would like to accomplish," Vest smiled. "I have always had a love for creating things, as does Tasha. It is just second nature to us. We would rather get power tools for Christmas rather than purses," she giggled. "We really love what we do - It's a dream job for us!"

Because Lilly Grae & Co. is such a new endeavor, there isn't an actual store yet.

"We hope to open a shop soon - a place where we can work and have the paint parties at," she added. "We're in Cullman and only working online right now. Our Facebook page can be found at LillyGraeCo. We usually book the parties from a hostess, but we're having an open to the public party on March 13 just to jump start the parties."

The duo has had a lot of interest in their March 13 party. If you are interested in attending, all you need to do is go to Lilly Grae & Co. on Facebook.

"We have been advertising through Facebook. We ask people to add us on Facebook and send us a message for more information about our party," Vest explained. "Right now, we have two locations we can use for the party depending on how many want to come. We plan to touch base with each person a week before the party to follow up with them and let them know the time/place, etc."

If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about Lilly Grae & Co., go to Facebook and follow them at Facebook.com/LillyGraeCo. Message them and they will be happy to fill you in on the fun.

Vest and Monk clearly enjoy what they do. They hope to inspire others to create beautiful works of art. "The more you praise and celebrate your life, the more in life there is to celebrate," said Vest, smiling.

MORE THAN COOKIES: GIRL SCOUTS SERVE POSITIVE IMPACT TO COMMUNITY

Will Hogue
will@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – February and March have always been the season for selling cookies, according to Girl Scout Leadership Experience Manager Debbie Hicks.

However, Hicks, who has been with the Girl Scouts her entire life - as a scout, and now as an employee – contends that Girl Scouts is somewhat pigeonholed, saying, "We are so much more than cookies."

She concedes that the cookies are absolutely what Girl Scouts are famous for, and she gets excited when talking about the new flavors of cookies that are to be introduced this year.

But, she, as the liaison for Cullman Girl Scouts to the governing body of Girl Scouts for North Alabama, believes there are a lot of things people are missing about what Girl Scouts accomplishes.

"We use the cookie sales to encourage leadership with the girls, along with financial literacy," Hicks said. In fact, Girl Scouts earn "financial literacy" badges. "We explain to the girls that this is a 'girl-led' business. We want [the Scouts] to know that this is by girls, for girls."

Hicks went on to explain that the training for being a Girl Scout starts with the youngest group of girls called Daisies. She said that the kindergarteners are taught customer service skills.

"They learn at a very young age how to handle people and how to deal with rejection," Hicks said.

Girl Scouts promotes girls becoming complete and self-sufficient people, thus providing communities with higher quality individuals.

As far as Girl Scout cookies go, the organization is introducing a couple new flavors of cookies this year.

"We have Rah Rah Raisins and Toffee-tastic this year," Hicks said. And if you are trying to find out where to purchase your Girl Scout cookies, just download the app.

"It's called Girl Scout Cookie Finder," Hicks said, and it's available on the iTunes App Store.

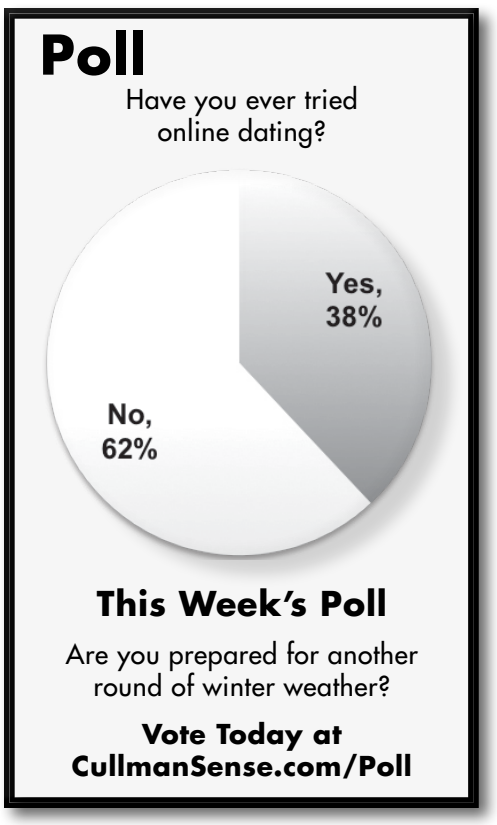
The funds that the Girl Scouts raise from their cookie sales go to pay the baker of the cookies themselves, to various charities that each troop selects to donate to, and, according to Hicks, most of the funds go into the Girl Scout Scholarship Fund.

"This fund helps girls who want to sign up for Girl Scouts but cannot afford the $15 registration fee or the $35 uniform," Hicks said.

Girl Scouts are a large part of American culture, and the cookies that the girls sell are a big reason for that. However, Girl Scouts are certainly more than just cookies.

POSITION AVAILABLE

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



cullman city parks & recreation

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

www.cullmanrecreation.org
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 start March 31 at the NEW Community Garden at Nesmith Park. Classes will be held on Tuesday nights from 6pm-7:15pm and are limited to the first 15 who register. A work session will also be offered on Saturdays from 9am-12pm for the duration of the 8 week class. Cost is $75 which includes all supplies, a plot in the Community Garden for the entire year, and all seeds for start up. Registration is now open at the Civic Center.
- **Men's Spring League Softball Registration** is now open through March 15 at Heritage Park. Cost is $425 per team with a 12 game season and a single elimination tournament . Games will be played at Heritage Park; call 256-739-9931.
- **Miracle League Baseball Registration** is open now through March 15 at the Cullman Civic Center. Cost is $50 which includes a jersey and trophy at the end of the season. Call 256-739-9931 for more information .
- **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.

What's Online

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN HANCEVILLE: THE HAMMOCK BUILDING

Downtown Hanceville is truly a sight to see, there are so many buildings lining the streets that are filled with old memories. Take for example, the current Marie's Flowers or the Hammock Building. Large, white and quite impressive, the old place has seen more than its fair share of...



qrne.ws/324

A STUDY OF HANDS

The Smithsonian Exhibition "The Way We Worked" is now open and taking crowds of people through a tour at Wallace State's Evelyn Burrow Museum. This large exhibit highlights the achievements of everyday workers and industry from the past to the present. Another part of this exhibit comes from a talented artist by the name of...

qrne.ws/325

YOUNG STARS BURN BRIGHT AT FOR KIDS' SAKE VARIETY SHOW

For more than 20 years, the For Kids' Sake Variety Show has brought a wonderful opportunity for youth in the Cullman area to showcase their talents. Children and teens from every corner of Cullman took the stage at the Betty Leeth Haynes Theatre on Saturday.

qrne.ws/326

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.

Tuesday

James Spann Visit
ABC 33/40 Meteorologist James Spann will be making a stop in Hanceville today. The public is invited to join him, along with meteorologists Charles Daniel, Meaghan Thomas and Brian Peters outside Hanceville City Hall beginning at 4:15 p.m. James Spann will do the weather live during ABC 33/40's Focus at 4:00, the News at 5:00, and the News at 6:00. In between newscasts, fans will have opportunities to have their pictures taken with the different meteorologists, so be sure to bring your cameras and smart phones with you. At 5:30 p.m., James Spann will deliver a short message on severe weather safety.

Social Media Seminar
The Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce will offer a free social media seminar from 5:30-7 p.m. at the Chamber with Mike Coleman. Call 256-734-0454 for more information.

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

1st Quarter Industry Tour
The Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce will have their 1st Quarter Industry Tour at Inland Building Systems from 9:45-10:30 a.m. Cap is at 20 participants. Call 256-734-0454 for more information.

The Link of Cullman County "Flourish Event"
Join The Link in their celebration from 11:30 a.m. until 1 p.m. at Loft 212 for all that God has done this past year through the ministry of The Link of Cullman County. This year's annual event will include a review of 2014, casting vision for 2015, recognizing The Link's 2014 Dream Big award winners, and raising funds to see our dreams become realities.

Agriplex Harvest to Home Fundraiser & Silent Auction
Attend this fundraiser event for a fun night of food, fellowship and fundraising. Proceeds go to promoting agricultural heritage. The event is from 6-8 p.m. at the Agriplex, with the silent auction at 6:30 p.m. and the dinner at 8 p.m. Call 256-297-1044 for more information.

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.

Saturday

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

Next Monday

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.

TUESDAY
- Social Media Seminar at Cullman Chamber from 5:30-7 p.m.
- 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.
- 1st Quarter Industry Tour of Inland Building Systems from 9:45-10:30 a.m.
- The Link of Cullman County "Flourish Event" at Loft 212 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Agriplex Harvest to Home Fundraiser & Silent Auction from 6-8 p.m. at the 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
- 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

SUNDAY
- Daylight Savings Time – Set your clocks ahead 1 hour!

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Official Newsletter
Volume 46 | March 2015 | Issue 3
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SPEED NETWORKING

We will be having a Speed Networking Event as a part of our Business After Hours quarterly program. Please join us for a night of fun, food and contacts in a new setting. This is a chance for you to network with other businesses in the area.

Light hors d'oeuvres and drinks will be served. Contacts, business partnerships, and colleagues can be made at this event.

Business attire is suggested to be worn. A personalized, yet professional speech should be prepared.

This short rhetoric will allow people to understand what your business is about. The speech should be no longer than 30-60 seconds.

The following needs to be brought with you: personal business cards, a short "elevator speech", appropriate questions, and a smile.

Amanda Martin of Payroll Services, LLC attended the BAH event last year and had this to say about this year's event: "Speed Networking has proven to be very beneficial to myself and my company. I was able to make new contacts along with new friends that I still keep in touch with today. I look forward to attending again this year!"

The Speed Networking Event will be held at The Byre at St. Bernard Abbey.

The entertainment for this event is sponsored by Apel Steel Corp, food will be provided and sponsored by The Byre, with ERA Waldrop Real Estate as the presenting sponsor.



The event will be happening on March 10, 2015 from 5:30-7 p.m. Prices are $15 for members and $20 for future members.

Once again, please join us for delicious snacks, great networking prospects, and a fun night.

Call 256-734-0454 to reserve your tickets or email info@cullmanchamber.org.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT: THE BOOK



Leah Bolin

President & CEO,
Cullman Area Chamber
of Commerce

Memories. We all have them. Some of us remember more than others. Some are pleasant. Some are not. Some are random. For instance, I remember a huge black book in our house on Larry Street that was always there. I don't remember a time when it wasn't. It rested on a shelf in my parent's bedroom and it was the biggest book I had ever seen.

My mom used it a lot when she went back to school. I mostly used it to sit on so I could watch TV from the kitchen. It was only when I started school that I learned what that book was.They called it The Webster's Dictionary. No wonder it was so big; it had every word in the English language!

From that moment on, Mr. Webster and I had a love/hate relationship. The words were big and they were hard to understand. I grew to love his words over time, though. Eventually I even started reading another of his books, Thesaurus.

As I transitioned into adulthood, however, the book and I drifted apart. I began to use a different, faster method for finding new words in a new book called Mac. It was love at first sight. Mac introduced me to a world full of endless words, definitions and synonyms. I didn't need a dictionary anymore… until the new millennium. New words started emerging that weren't in Mr. Webster or Mac's dictionary. I didn't understand all of the words anymore and I needed help fast. Then I discovered the new book with all the answers: The Urban Dictionary. It was like starting all over again, but this time, I had a different attitude. It was fun and meaningful. I could use it socially and for my business.

Today, The Urban Dictionary averages 72 million impressions and 18 million unique readers per month with over 2 million words or phrases. I would challenge you to use this new "book". It holds a plethora of information that is valuable to your business. Let me introduce you to a few new entries for 2015:

- **Remarketing**: "This is a form of display advertising [that delivers an image or text ad for your company to a user] after [that user] drops off your website without converting.

- **Momtrepreneur**: "A woman who has children and [a] family [and runs] a business at the same time."

- **Conversation Marketing**: "Marketing with the goal of having a direct one to one conversation with your customers through social media and other channels."

- **Smarketing**: "Smarketing is the process of integrating sales and marketing process of a business to unify the company goals and provide consistent messaging for your brand."

- **mCommerce**: "[mCommerce is] commerce carried out over a mobile device. Shoppers P 15

Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 1104, Cullman, AL 35056-1104 | 256-734-0454 | F: 256-737-7443 | info@cullmanchamber.org
www.cullmanchamber.org | www.visitcullman.org

Community Improvement Awards

community improvement awards

Nominations are being sought for the best examples of community improvement efforts made by business/company owners of properties in the Cullman area.

We hope to inspire others to take action to preserve, promote and protect community improvement in the Cullman area.

These awards will be given on a quarterly basis, with one overall annual award presented at the Cullman Area Tourism Awards. Businesses/organizations are eligible for one award per category each year and must be a chamber member in order to be nominated.

There is no fee to nominate. You must submit a nomination form per each award once a year.

We will keep nominations on file and consider all nominations on a quarterly basis. A sign will be placed in the winner's location each quarter (July, October, January and April). Nomination deadline is March 15th.

CATEGORIES: (PLEASE CHECK ONE)

____ Business/Organization with Best Landscaping - Small (25 employees or less)
Awarded for best design, maintenance, litter control and plant materials.

____Business/Organization with Best Landscaping - Large (more than 25 employees)
Awarded for best design, maintenance, litter control and plant materials.

____Business/Organization with Best Curb Appeal
Awarded for substantial improvements to the outside of the property with the most attractive presentation from the street.

____Business/Organization with Best Restoration
Awarded for superlative work in the restoration, rehabilitation, reuse of property or sensitive design. Or also considered are those businesses who have undergone careful construction of a new structure completed within the past three years. Brief description of the project. Date project completed. Must include 2-5 photographs of both before and after pictures.

____Business/Organization with New Construction
Awarded for superlative work in the restoration, rehabilitation, reuse of property or sensitive design. Or also considered are those businesses who have undergone careful construction of a new structure completed within the past three years. Brief description of the project. Date project completed. Must include 2-5 photographs of both before and after pictures.

____Business/Organization "Building a Sense of Community"
Awarded to a business that strives to improve the community through additions of a park, play area, park benches or playground, etc.

The 2015 Cullman Area Tourism & Community Improvement Awards

Where is your favorite place to shop, dine, visit, stay and play at in the Cullman area? The Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center presents their 2015 Cullman Area Tourism & Community Improvement Awards, where your vote determines the best of the best in local entertainment, establishments, attractions and favorites.

To nominate your local favorites, go to www.cullmanchamber.org for a nomination form or stop by the Cullman Chamber to pick up a nomination form in person starting Monday, March 16th. The deadline for nominations is Wednesday, April 17th. The 2015 Cullman Area Tourism Awards include 16 awards in two categories: The Business Awards and The Individual Service Awards. The 2015 Community Improvement Awards include awards in 6 categories.

The awards ceremony celebrating excellence in tourism and community improvement for the Cullman area will be held on Thursday, May 14 at 8 a.m. Doors will open at 7:30 a.m. and breakfast will be served. Awards will be presented from 8:30-10 a.m. The event will take place at the Brown Stone Centre at Stone Bridge Farms located at 281 Co. Rd. 717 in Cullman.

The guest speaker will be Tami Reist, President/CEO of Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association (AMLA). Single tickets are priced at $20 for chamber members and $25 for future members. Table sponsorships are $250 and include reserved seating for eight in a prime location with table signage. The presenting sponsor for the event is The Community Shopper's Guide. Corporate sponsors include CullmanSense, Smith Lake Book and The Cullman Times. There are gold, silver and bronze table sponsorships available for this event.

If you would like to reserve your tickets to the 2015 Cullman Area Tourism & Community Improvement Awards, email info@cullmanchamber.org or call 256-734-0454. There are a limited number of seats available and tickets are on a first-come, first-serve basis.

New Map Ads Being Sold

A new marketing opportunity awaits Chamber Members as a new full color printed and online map of the Cullman area is now in production. We are partnering with chamber member NovoPrint USA, Inc. to produce the map, which will be updated to reflect our growth and showcase our beautiful, progressive community. This map is a great tool to communicate information about your business to residents, other businesses and visitors.

As an advertiser, your business will reach more than 10,000 individuals through a low-cost-per-view advertising and will be positioned as a community leader and a community supporter. The Chamber distributes these maps daily in response to inquiries and to give directions to specific business or residential locations – in fact, it's one of the main printed publications that are included in EACH informational packet that we send out.

To find out more about this project, or to schedule a personal appointment to discuss this project, please contact our NovoPrint representative, Ginger Nunley, at 850-866-3385, or email her at ginger.nunley@novoprint.com. You can also contact the Chamber directly at 256-734-0454 or stop by the office at 301 2nd Ave SW in Cullman.

MEMBERSHIP

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NovoPrint USA, Inc.	414-276-6622

2015 AMBASSADORS



The Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce would like to announce the 2015 Ambassadors.

Lisa Barnett, BBVA Compass; Tricia Culpepper, Cullman City Primary School; Cindy Dyer, Highland Technical Services; Meredith Easterwood, Cullman Regional Medical Center; Sonja Freeman, Mickey Parrish State Farm; Rita Fromhold, Coldwell Banker Hill Real Estate; Israel Gomez, R.J. Young Company; Ashley Graves, Cullman County Economic Development; Bethany Hogan, V&W Food Mart; Chrystal Johnson, Liberty National; Ashley Lackey, Alabama Technology Network; Amanda Martin, Payroll Services, LLC; Stephen McRea, EvaBank; Jaime Medlock, Hanceville Nursing & Rehab Center; Katherine Morgan, Mickey Parrish State Farm; Stefany Pate, Wallace State Community College; Ethan Ponder, Alfa Insurance; Candice (Candy) Rushing, Peoples Bank of Alabama; Jacqueline Schendel, North Alabama Better Business Bureau; Heather Shumaker, The Cullman Times; Kathy Taylor, Wallace State Community College; Caleb Tubbs, Elk River Inc.; Wendy Tysinger, Alabama Farm Credit; Ashton Warnke, Quality Staffing Solution; Jessica Weaver, Peoples Bank of Alabama; Darla West, Cullman County Revenue Commission; Beverly Wilkerson , Pilot Club of Cullman; Stephanie Wood, United Way of Cullman County.

Our Ambassadors will be aiding in events as well as updating membership accounts.

We are continuing to take applications, if you would like to be an Ambassador please fill out the application online or contact Magan at mbartlett@cullmanchamber.org

Don't Miss Your Last Chance to Visit the Smithsonian Exhibition

The Smithsonian Institution's traveling exhibition "The Way We Worked" is well underway at The Evelyn Burrow Museum on the campus of Wallace State Community College in Hanceville. The tour date of the exhibit, from Feb. 9 to March 20, is about to wrap up, so if you haven't visited the unique and engaging exhibit – stop by soon! Hours of operation for the exhibit are Tuesday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Expressly chosen by the Alabama Humanities Foundation to host "The Way We Worked", as part of the Museum on Main Street project, is a national, state and local partnership, which brings exhibitions and programs to rural cultural organizations as a way to explore the professions and the people that sustain the American society.

"The Way We Worked," adapted from an original exhibition developed by the National Archives and Records Administration, explores how work has become a central element in American culture. It traces the many changes that have affected the workforce and work environments over the past 150 years, including the growth of manufacturing and increasing use of technology.

The exhibition draws from the Archives' rich collections, including historical photographs, archival accounts of workers, film, audio and interactives, to tell the compelling story of how work impacts our individual lives and the historical and cultural fabric of our communities.

Since 1997, the foundation has partnered with the Smithsonian to bring the Museum on Main Street program to small cities and rural communities across Alabama.

"Allowing all of our state's residents to have access to the cultural resources of our nation's premiere museum is a priority of the Alabama Humanities Foundation," said Executive Director Armand DeKeyser.

"The Way We Worked" is part of Museum on Main Street, a unique collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES), state humanities councils across the nation and local host institutions.

To learn more about "The Way We Worked" and other Museum on Main Street exhibitions, visit www.museumonmainstreet.org. Support for Museum on Main Street is provided by the United States Congress, Alabama Power Foundation and Norfolk Southern Foundation.

Cullman's exhibition is a joint project of the City of Cullman, Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce, Cullman County Museum, Cullman Economic Development Agency and Wallace State Community College. For more info, please call the Evelyn Burrow Museum at 256-352-8457.

SITES connects millions of Americans with their shared cultural heritage through a wide range of art, science and history exhibitions.

State humanities councils, located in each state and U.S. territory, support community-based humanities programs that highlight such topics as local history, literature and cultural traditions.

To learn more, visit sites.si.edu or alabamahumanities.org.

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We recently presented our February Small Business of the Month award to Bill Smith Buick - GMC. This award is given monthly to a local small business that meets nomination requirements. Eligible candidates have under 100 employees, are members of the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce and make contributions to our community, offer outstanding customer service and serve as inspiring success stories.

Nomination forms can be downloaded at www.cullmanchamber.org. Bill Smith Buick - GMC is honored to receive this award and happy to offer their services to the Cullman area.



Mr. Derek Lane, Director Small Business & Workforce Solutions-Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce, Matt Heim, Owner, All Steak, Sponsor, and Jeff Crider, Bill Smith Buick-GMC

COMMUNITY LUNCHEON

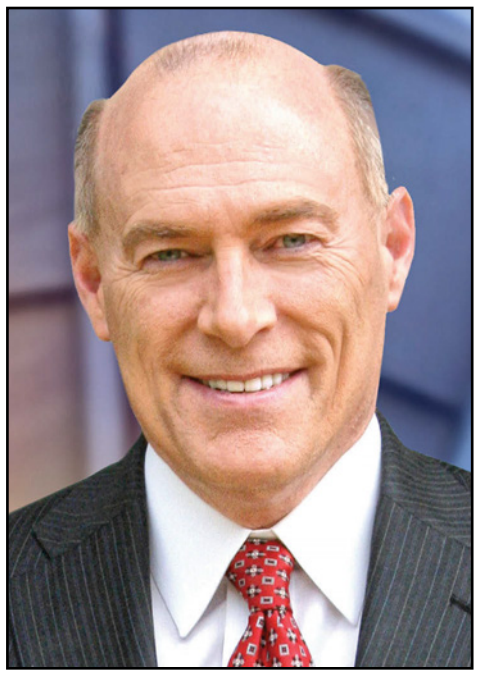
The Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce's March Community Luncheon, formerly called Fourth Friday, will be held on Friday, March 27 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Banquet Room at the All Steak restaurant.

The speaker will be our locally renowned and well respected weatherman, Meteorologist James Spann of ABC 33/40.

Spann is a well-known meteorologist in Alabama who hails from Tuscaloosa, where he began his career in 1973.

His alma mater is Mississippi State University, and his first employer was WTBC-AM radio. He became one of the youngest chief weathermen in the United States.

At age 23, he set the precedence for a meteorologist. James Spann is the founder of The Weather Factory. His company provides weather forecasts for various radio stations. He will be speaking about weather preparedness.



James Spann
ABC 33/40 Meteorologist

Please come and join us for our community luncheon!

To reserve tickets, please email info@cullmanchamber.org or call 256-734-0454. Tickets are $15 for chamber members and $20 for future members.

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SMALL BUSINESS & WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS

2015 Industry Appreciation Reception

Approximately 170 guests were in attendance at this year's Industry Appreciation Reception. The event was held at the Evelyn Burrow Museum on the campus of Wallace State Community College to coincide with the opening of the 6-week Smithsonian Tour "The Way We Worked" Exhibit. Participants came early to tour the exhibit, which featured pictures and display items from local businesses and industries.

This private reception is held each year to show appreciation for our area industries and acknowledge the impact they have on our local economy and quality of life.

Presenters included: April Gray, Senior Project Manager from the Alabama Department of Commerce; Peggy Smith, Dir. of the Cullman Economic Development Agency; Dale Greer, Asst. Dir. of the Cullman Economic Development Agency; Cherrie Haney, Dir. of the Cullman County Economic Development; Leah Bolin, Pres. of the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce; and Betty Dorris, representative for Cullman Area Workforce Solutions. Mr. Jason Grimmett, Board Chamber Chair, served as the master of ceremonies for the event.



The Industry Appreciation Reception received rave reviews and appreciation is extended to area presenting sponsors, Cullman County Industrial Development Authority and the City of Cullman. Support for this year's event was also provided by Wallace State Community College and Cullman-Jefferson Gas who served as premier sponsors, as well as to Cash Acme – Reliance Worldwide Corporation for their support as the entertainment sponsor.

Many corporate sponsors also contributed to this event, and a special note of appreciation is extended to this year's partners including the Evelyn Burrow Museum and the Cullman County Museum.

1st Quarter Industry Tour - Inland Building Systems

On March 5 from 9:45-10:30 a.m., the Agriculture and Existing Business and Industry Committee of the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce will host its first quarter Industry Tour at Inland Building Systems.

Participation is limited and based upon a first-come, first-serve basis. Derek Lane, Director of Small Business & Workforce Solutions for the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce, describes the quarterly tours as "a wonderful way to become acquainted with the companies that support and drive our local economy. It's also a great way to become personally acquainted with the people who make it happen."

The Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce, through the Agriculture, Existing Business and Industry Committee, will host an industry tour each quarter in 2015.

Upcoming tours this year include:

- 2nd Quarter: Friday, May 15th – HH Technologies
- 3rd Quarter: Thursday, September 17th – AGCO
- 4th Quarter: Thursday, November 12th – REHAU

We appreciate Inland Building Systems, as well as all of our area industries, for their commitment to our workforce and the contributions they've made to the local economy. For more information regarding the Industry Tour at Inland Building Systems, visit www.cullmanchamber.org or call 256-734-0454.



CULLMAN COUNTY YOUTH LEADERSHIP

My name is Thomas Bolin, and I am part of the Youth Leadership Program representing Saint Bernard Preparatory School.

In the February Youth Leadership session, we had the privilege of visiting many areas of business in Cullman County. We started the day with Cullman Economic Development Agency.

Dale Greer told the class about many projects in Cullman including Duck River and the potential Bass Hall of Fame.

In addition to learning how Economic Development brings industry to Cullman, we discovered that there is a shortage in our workforce.

I was surprised to learn that these industries are in need of college graduates. That being said, our next visit revealed just that.

Webb Wheel, one of Cullman's oldest manufacturers, was remarkable. The huge building contained the latest in robotics and the most modern machinery.

The robotic arms they used to easily move their products along their assembly line was nothing like I had imagined.

Next, we were given a tour of Peoples Bank. The size of the bank amazed me. In addition to the modern work areas, the meeting rooms were state of the art with the latest in technology to allow other branches to easily communicate through SKYPE and other types of video conferencing.

After visiting People's Bank, I'm sure that their members' money is in good hands.

Finally, we visited the Cullman Airport. It is a very nice facility and we were given a history lesson in aircraft technology.

I learned about job opportunities in both private and commercial airlines.

The airplanes were amazing, and Ben Harrison's demonstration made becoming a pilot sound like a pretty cool job.

All in all, it was a very informative session. I am very glad I am a part of Cullman Area Youth Leadership. It has opened my eyes to new possibilities in the Cullman Area.

Thanks to McGriff Industries for providing breakfast & to Richard Electric for sponsoring lunch!

LEADERSHIP CULLMAN COUNTY ENJOYS QUALITY OF LIFE DAY

The 2014-15 Leadership Cullman County class met on Feb. 4. to learn about organizations in Cullman County that impact quality of life. This year's tour included visits with United Way of Cullman County and The Link of Cullman County, as well as trips to the Cullman County Water Treatment Plant, the Cullman County Commission on Aging and the Cullman Wellness and Aquatics Center.

The session sponsor was Richard Electric Company, the lunch sponsor was Cullman Electric Cooperative and breakfast sponsor was Cullman Heritage Funeral Home.

"I always enjoy visiting the new locations and hearing from the different organizations we have located here in Cullman," said Bobby Morris, director of plant operations at Cullman Regional Medical Center. "There is so much that goes on that I'm sure many people do not even realize what Cullman has to offer."

The class visited the Cullman County Water Department Treatment Plant on Highway 278 to learn how the county's water supply is managed.

"My most enjoyable experience was the water treatment plant," said Ben Harrison, general manager of the Cullman Regional Airport. "I have always wanted to go in the tower. It was amazing how much work and science goes into cleaning our drinking water."

Class members were given a step-by-step tour of the water treatment process, and got to visit the observation tower.

"The Cullman County Water Treatment Plant was a very interesting operation," said REHAU employee Derek Gossett.

"I know now when the water smells of strong chlorine it actually means that is less chlorine in the water than normal."

The next stop was a trip to the Cullman County Commission on Aging to meet new director Dusty Baker, learn about services available to senior citizens and join a group of seniors for some intense games of Bingo.

"Senior citizens take their Bingo seriously," Gossett said.

Morris said he enjoyed the trip to the Commission on Aging's facility next to Sportsman Lake Park.

"I was not aware we had places to go and socialize during the day," Morris said. "It was nice to see everyone enjoying themselves."

The last stop of the day was the Cullman Wellness and Aquatics Center where the CWAC staff gave a tour of the building and gave leadership class members an update on plans for a new recreation room, a new children's play center and additions to the outdoor pool facility they hope to have in place for this summer.

The day started with a visit from two agencies that play important roles in serving people in need throughout Cullman County.

Dawn Owens from The Link of Cullman County shared with the leadership class how the faith-based, non-profit organization she founded in 2010 helps the poor and vulnerable in our community overcome the barriers to poverty.

Sammie Danford and Stephanie Wood from the United Way of Cullman County shared a video and talked with class members about how individuals and businesses can get involved helping others.

United Way provides financial support to more than a dozen agencies in Cullman County that have a direct impact on thousands of lives.

February's meeting marked the fifth out of eight classes in this year's program. Class members have studied Education (October), Criminal Justice (November), Local Government (December), Health Care (January) and Quality of Life (February). Remaining sessions for the class are State Government (March), Economic Development (April) and Agriculture (May).

Presented By:

TRADITIONS BANK | REACH HIGH

Brian Lacy, Leadership Co- Chair

2ND FRIDAYS

It's the shop late, eat local event you have all come to love. 2nd Fridays feature extended hours of shopping with great drawings and discounts, restaurants with specials and entertainment, as well as a chance to experience downtown nightlife like never before.

Starting every second Friday in March through October, from 4-8 p.m., come see what the Cullman area has to offer after dark.

Experience a fun night of shopping, entertainment, and dining in the Cullman Central Business District.

The Chamber has partnered with Coca – Cola & Rock the South to bring Battle of the Bands to downtown Cullman.

Join us for a downtown concert experience listening to bands battle it out for a chance to play on the Rock the South stage!



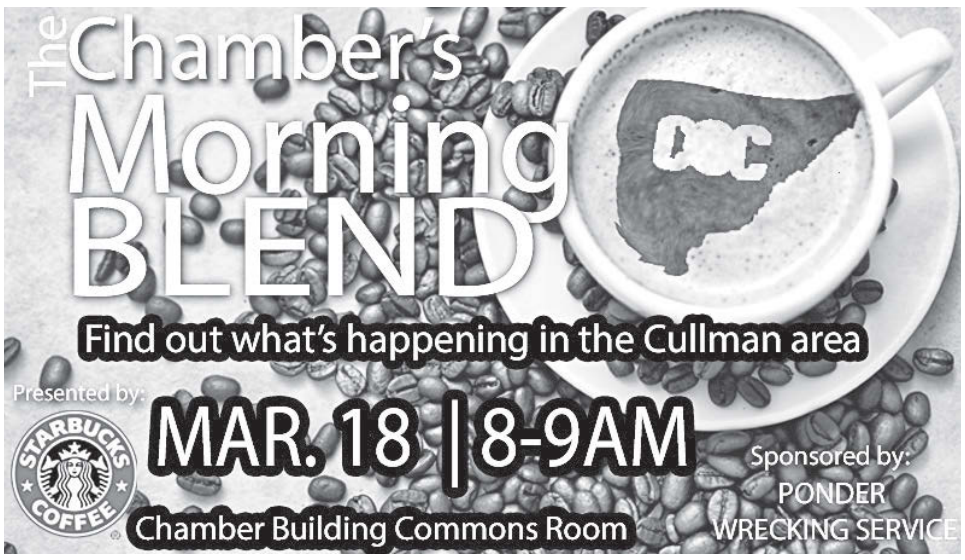
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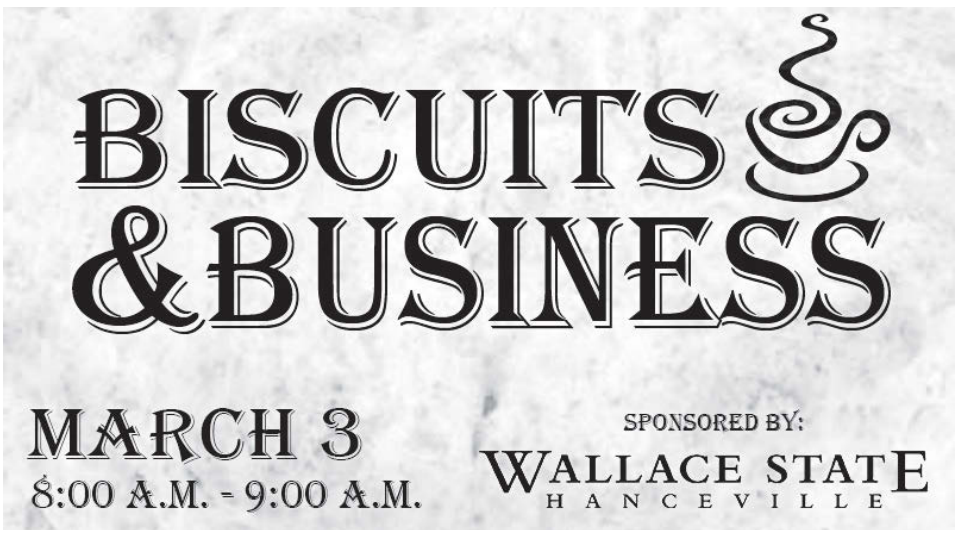
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MORNING BLEND

Morning Blend is a Chamber event held each third Wednesday of the month. It is located in the commons room at the Chamber of Commerce. You set the topic, Starbucks provides the coffee. There is a tremendous opportunity to network with local people within the Cullman community. Thank you to presenting sponsor Starbucks for the delicious, complimentary coffee and to monthly sponsor A-1 Bail Bonds. Please stop in and join us for some conversation, a cup of coffee, and some new business contacts. The next Morning Blend will be Wednesday, Feb. 18, 2015 from 8-9 a.m. Please call 256-734-0454 for more information.



BISCUITS & BUSINESS

Our quarterly held morning seminar starts back up this Spring with our first session of Biscuits & Business happening on March 3 from 8-9 a.m. on the 12th floor of the Bailey Building at Wallace State Community College. Dale Greer of Cullman Economic Development Agency will be speaking about how the Alabama Workforce Council benefits Alabama. Join us for a wonderful morning of biscuits and business and networking. This event is sponsored by Wallace State.

INTERN APPLICATIONS

The Chamber is now accepting applications for the 2015 Internship Program. This quarterly internship is designed to develop the necessary skills required to efficiently perform in the fast-paced, multi-faceted environment in which we live.

The internships occur on the following quarterly basis: April-June, July-Sept., Oct.-Dec.

If you would like to apply for this paid internship, please complete the application online, it can be found under forms at cullmanchamber.org, or contact Debbie Matthews at dmatthews@cullmanchamber.org.

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events

March 3 - Biscuits & Business
March 3 - Social Media Marketing Seminar
March 4 - Montgomery Drive-in
March 5 - Industry Tour
March 10 - Business After Hours - Speed Networking
March 13 – 2nd Fridays
March 18 – Morning Blend
March 19 – Career Awareness Fair
March 27 – Community Luncheon – James Spann

ANTI SHOPLIFTING

Matt Dean, City Police Investigator, and guests presented an Anti-Theft seminar for small business owners recently. The event was specifically designed for small business owners. They discussed safety, security and theft.

The event was held at the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce on Feb. 3, with many local retailers in attendance.

Shrink and loss prevention is an ongoing epidemic.

The definition of shrink to a retailer is anything that is stolen where the shrink is classified as loss profit to a company.

To address this issue, small businesses have to usually invest in security equipment.

The security equipment consists of video cameras, alarms and money safes.

Derek Lane, Director of Small Business and Workforce Solutions at the Chamber, helped address this issue that affects retailers, both large and small.

Lane said, "This event was especially designed for retailers interested in providing greater safety and security for their establishment. Presenters shared helpful suggestions and asset-protection advice on what to do when suspicions arise. The event was well-represented and received".

Everyone can benefit from the new knowledge about loss prevention with the modern era in which we live.

As always, the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce looks to provide our membership and community with useful seminars armed with helpful knowledge and ideas to help your business succeed in today's world.

UPCOMING SEMINAR

Using Facebook & Social Media to Build and Grow your Business



This free seminar to be held on March 3 from 5:30-7 p.m. will give you practical tips and insights on how to use social media to build and grow your business. If you have been thinking about using social media (or if you are already using it in your business), then you will benefit from this seminar.

This seminar will show you:

- The value of using social media to reach your customers;
- How it can lead to new customers;
- How it drives repeat business from your current customers;
- Facebook best practices and strategies;
- How to get started the "right" way with Facebook;
- The difference between a Personal Page and a Business Page;
- What you should post and when you should post it;
- Why Facebook is no longer "free";
- And MORE …

If you are currently using social media or if you want to get started, then you do not want to miss this event. It is filled with valuable content, strategies, and insights on how to get the most out of the time you spend on social media. Beginners and seasoned users will walk away with something they can use to build their business using this popular social media platform.

This seminar is presented by Mike Coleman. He is s a web consultant, speaker, and author who works with organizations, business owners, and professionals who want to create a stronger web presence, communicate their message to their target market more effectively, and make better use of their time and resources to grow their business.

He is a Constant Contact Authorized Local Expert (ALE) and provides email marketing and social media seminars across the state of Tennessee and surrounding region teaching best practices.

His business services include content development, SEO, Email marketing, social media, and web design.

Register by emailing info@cullmanchamber.org or by calling 256-734-0454.

Book (from P9)

are browsing and buying more and more on mobile [devices]. Business owners should focus on making their online store fronts mobile friendly to create a truly omni-channel experience."

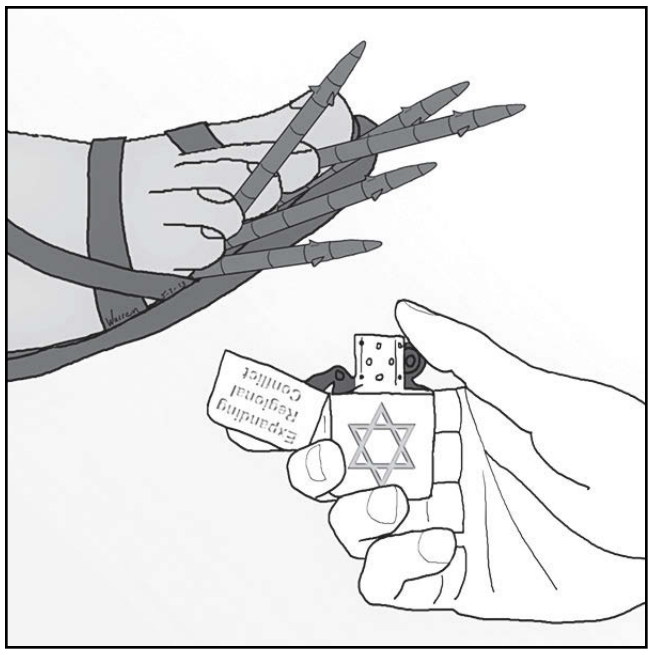
- **Mydeation**: "It is using a group to help an individual solve a challenge specific to them (in an ideation or brainstorming session), most often to generate ideas for their own new product or new business venture."

- **Goal Digger**: "A goal digger is defined as an employee who pursues and successfully achieves company goals creatively, opportunistically, tirelessly, and, most important, legally."

There's lots of new information out there. Although it can seem a daunting challenge to stay on top of this ever changing landscape, your Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce is here to assist you with the latest technology and up-to-date information to help you grow your business or organization. Whether you are a Momtrepreneur or the CEO of a Fortune 500 company (or both), don't let your love/hate relationship with new terminology keep you from reaching the pinnacle of success for your business. Times change, but who you are and what you want for your business does not.

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Cartoonist Anthony Saint

Contributors Will Hogue

OPINION

WHY YOU SHOULD CARE ABOUT NET NEUTRALITY

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

You have probably heard the term before, and chances are the term slipped by you. It's easy enough to understand, but it is has been buried beneath a swarm of technical terms and lingo, mostly to keep you bored and ignorant. The term is net neutrality, and it is an issue that will affect everyone today.

Recently, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) passed a policy known as net neutrality by a 3-2 vote. Net neutrality is defined as the principle that Internet service providers should enable access to all content and applications regardless of the source, without favoring or blocking particular products or websites.

Communications companies have been attempting to put a stranglehold on the free and open Internet. The idea that started the backlash was that companies like Verizon, Comcast and AT&T would be allowed to cut the Internet into fast and slow lanes.

An Internet provider could slow down its competitors' content or block political opinions from those with whom they didn't agree.

ISPs could charge extra fees to the few content companies that could afford to pay for preferential treatment relegating everyone else to a slower tier of service, thus dismantling the equal playing field for all and dictating what content you were allowed to view.

Luckily for everyone, the FCC has taken a great step in preserving the open Internet and making it possible for small online businesses to stay open, and protects our right to view whatever content we choose.

I don't know about you, but I would never allow my phone company to dictate who I can call and charge me separate prices for different people, and so it is with your Internet providers.

Some politicians, however, feel that this is yet another over step of the government; conveniently not telling the whole story as to why it is absolutely necessary to have regulations in place, so that corporations do not strangle our free speech.

What some fail to realize is that big government may not be a favorable idea in all areas, but they serve a vital purpose in cases like these. If you think that giant corporations care about the everyday man's wellbeing, then you are sadly mistaken.

They care about profit and their bottom line. I, for one, am glad that the big bad government came with their regulations in the form of the FCC to protect the Internet as we know it today, and my wallet thanks them as well.

TPP, PEACE AND CONFLICT – IT'S NOT ABOUT TRADE, IT'S ABOUT HOW WE TRADE

Patrick T. Hiller
PeaceVoice

Let's get one thing straight to begin with. Trade is good. We do it all the time. Trade has been pretty much part of recorded human history and evidence reveals prehistorical trade routes in many parts of the world. It becomes a little bit trickier when we look at large-scale international trade agreements. The question as to whether foreign trade promotes peace and development or destructive conflict has been debated for a long time. One of the most current controversies on free trade agreements evolves around the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP). The history of free trade agreements, the secrecy around TPP, and the leaked information of the actual agreement suggest tremendous potential for social conflict if implemented.

Described by its promoters as a "next-generation model for addressing both new and traditional trade and investment issues, supporting the creation and retention of jobs and promoting economic development in our countries," TPP is already facing broad resistance. There is sizeable opposition informing and educating about the negative consequences of what former Secretary of Labor Robert Reich calls "global corporate agreements." The opposition to TPP transcends political party lines and goes beyond the traditional left. There is a social movement against TPP. Labor groups, public health groups, digital rights groups, the environmental movement, immigrant groups, and peace and justice groups, are only a few vocal opponents. Stated concerns are: offshoring of American jobs, income inequality, higher costs of medicine, free range of corporations but not people, unsafe food, and less local control to name a few. As a peace and conflict scientist, I can add another concern: destructive conflict.

When we look at conflicts, we look at why they happen to begin with – the root causes. A simple way is to look what our basic human needs are. We know air, water, food, clothing and shelter are needed for survival. Beyond those we can look at security, identity, well-being and self-determination. If those are not met, it is argued, then people engage in conflict. As currently practiced and implemented, free trade agreements contribute to structural violence – the violence where social structures and institutions prevent people from meeting their basic needs. The agreements protect the interests of elites over the vast majority of people and the planet; consequently, the potential for conflict is increased. Now it becomes a little clearer that the debated provisions of TPP can be linked directly to social conflict, unrest and instability: resource exploitation, labor rights and income inequality, agriculture, environmental issues and national, regional and local community democratic decision-making powers.

Trade and economies have the potential to lead to peace as well as violence and war. Peace through trade can become a realistic idea when connected to basic principles of a peacekeeping economy as outlined by political economist Lloyd Dumas. The principles are: (1) Establish balanced relationships – everyone gains benefit at least equal to their contribution and there is little incentive to disrupt the relationship; (2) Emphasize development – Most of the wars since WWII have been fought in developing countries. Poverty and missing opportunities are breeding grounds for violence. Development is an effective counter-terrorism strategy, as it weakens the support network for terrorist groups; (3) Minimize ecological stress – The competition for depleteable resources - most notably oil and increasingly water - generates dangerous conflicts between nations and groups within nations. It is proven that war is more likely to happen when there is oil. Using natural resources more efficiently, developing and using non-polluting technologies and procedures, and better not bigger economic growth can reduce ecological stress. We have to ask ourselves if our current economic systems and trade policies achieve those principles or if it is in our interest to maintain and create new trade frameworks which consist of grabbing natural resources of others and using the military to protect what we took.

The current debate on the Trans Pacific Partnership suggests that the agreement will lead to immense social conflict, unrest and instability. Trade is not the issue. People and societies have always traded and will continue to do so. The trade relationships and mechanisms are at the core of whether trade drives violent conflict and war or contributes to peace. We've seen our share of wars and violence, it is time to use the potential of trade for peace.

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SINGING THROUGH TIME

WSCC SINGERS PRESENTS "DISNEY THROUGH THE DECADES"

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

The Wallace State Singers dazzle the crowd with songs from Disney movies over the years.

HANCEVILLE – On Friday, Feb. 27, the Wallace State Singers presented "Disney Through the Decades" for a crowd that consisted of lots of happy and excited children. The night's showing was special in that it was Daddy-Daughter Date Night. Fathers, grandfathers, brothers and uncles were encouraged to bring their daughters, granddaughters, sisters or nieces to the show. The admission fee gifted each girl a photo with her favorite Disney princess from the show.

The show featured songs from Disney's first feature-length animated film, "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" all the way through the ever-popular "Frozen". The excited audience heard a medley of songs from "Cinderella," "Beauty and the Beast," "Mary Poppins," "The Lion King," "The Little Mermaid" and many more.

"Most people in our culture have a long-standing relationship with Mickey Mouse," said Tiffany Richter, director of the Wallace State Singers.

"I can look back over my childhood and connect memories with the Disney movies and cartoons I watched. It never fails to bring a sense of comfort and fondness."

"We have a three-fold mission this year with this show," Richter said.

"To bring families together, reaching each generation with hits from Disney films; to highlight an evening of fun, family entertainment at a minimal cost; and to bring a sense of childhood magic to those who might have forgotten that all you need to fly is a little pixie dust, and when you wish upon a star, your dreams come true."

> **"I can look back over my childhood and connect memories with the Disney movies and cartoons I watched."**
>
> Tiffany Richter, Director of the Wallace State Singers

Disney Dress-Up was the theme of the Saturday, Feb. 28 showing.

Audience members, young and old, were encouraged to dress up as their favorite Disney character.

"And Saturday night, we just want to put everyone in the Disney spirit and encourage people to dress up," she added.

"Of course, everyone is welcome to every performance, but Disney is all about fun, so we're having a little fun with the show."

For more information about the Wallace State Singers, call 256-352-8277. Learn more about Wallace State's Fine and Performing Arts program at www.wallacestate.edu.

COMICS

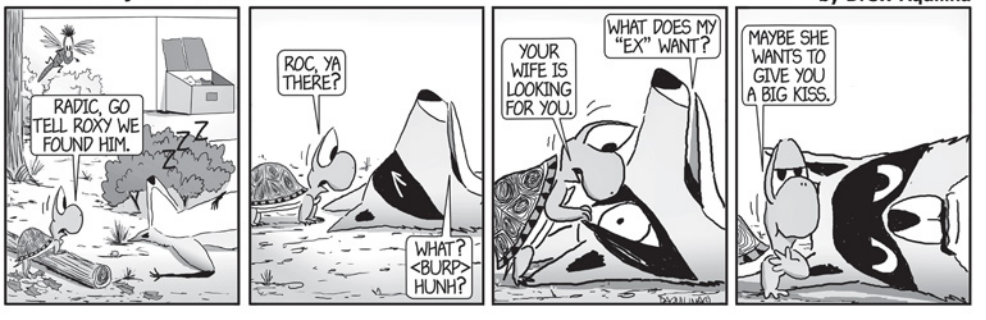
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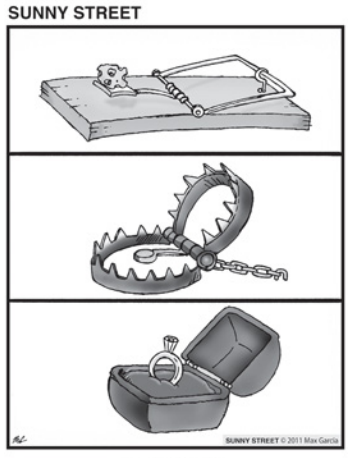


SUNNY STREET



JAWS V
Just when you thought it was safe to wash dishes.

SUNNY STREET



Various traps

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RESIDENTIAL RECIPES

ZUCCHINI CHIPS

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

Zucchini Chips are the perfect springtime snack. Light, flavorful and scrumptious will all pop in your head as you enjoy a beautiful spring day with this snack. Double this recipe for a wonderful party food!

Ingredients:

- 1 lb (about 4 cups) - thin sliced zucchini
- 1/8 teaspoon - salt
- 1 ounce - finely grated parmesan cheese
- 1 garlic clove finely grated or 1/8 tsp garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon - apple cider vinegar

Instructions:

- Thinly slice your zucchini.
- Put zucchini in a mixing bowl and add salt, parmesan cheese, garlic and vinegar
- Toss to coat.
- Arrange slices on dehydrator trays or cookie sheet if you do not own a dehydrator.
- Dehydrate at 135 degrees for 5-10 hours or until crispy.

THE ICY GRASSHOPPER

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

We all know that spring and summer in Alabama aren't that different. When things warm up in Alabama, they warm up quick. So it is with warmer days in mind that I bring to you, the Icy Grasshopper, a cool twist on a classic cocktail.

Ingredients:

- 1 shot green creme de menthe
- 1 shot white creme de cacao
- 2 scoops vanilla ice cream
- Fresh mint sprig for garnish

Instructions:

- Place creme de menthe, creme de cacao, and ice cream into a blender. Blend until thick and creamy.
- Pour into a 12-ounce glass. Garnish with a sprig of mint.

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

PETS OF THE WEEK

LUNA



Hello my name is Luna and I am about 4 years old. I am a Chesapeake Bay Retriever and I currently weigh 63 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!

GLACIER



Hello my name is Glacier and I am about 2+ years old. I am a Labrador Retriever and I currently weigh 71 lbs. I am a stray but if no one claims me, I will go up for adoption on 02/21/15 at 2 p.m. 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.

A LITTLE BLACK DRESS & LOTS OF FUN

WALLACE STATE FUNDRAISER AIMS TO EMPOWER WOMEN

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Once a year the ladies of Cullman County come together for a night of fun and great food. The Little Black Dress Event came around once again this past Saturday to benefit the Wallace State women's scholarship funds.

"We have a tremendous group of planners for this, those from our advancement office, and it is led by our alumni association with Leah Bolin as president. They work very hard to make it a success," said Wallace State Community College President Dr. Vicki Hawsey Karolewics.

According to Karolewics, this night is about two things: fundraising and women empowerment.

"The event focuses on women," she said. "Just everyone coming together for a girl's night out and having a good time. It is also especially meaningful with proceeds going to women's scholarships since many of the women here tonight are professionals and business women who know what it means to have opportunity, and this gives a way for us to build endowments for scholarships to help other women."

Director of Advancement at Wallace State, Suzanne Harbin, touched on just how much money this event can pull in to help women at Wallace.

"Last year we raised around $20,000 gross profits," Harbin stated. "Net profits of that going back to the Outstanding Women scholarship fund was around $12,000. We try to change things every year so you never have the same thing twice, and it has went well. It's always a sold out crowd."

"The event focuses on women. Just everyone coming together for a girl's night out and having a good time."

Dr. Vicki Hawsey Karolewics, President of WSCC

The atmosphere created is one of kind, keeping a refined elegance with a fun party atmosphere. The venue of choice for the past few years has been Top of the Town, which offers a luxurious atmosphere and plenty of space. Judy Pitts of Designs by Grace catered the food, with a scrumptious meal of stuffed Italian chicken, white asparagus and pasta that all in attendance raved about.

After the meal, women were able to hit the dance floor with live music from the Bootyshakers.

Another unique aspect of the night is the wait staff that is comprised of men in the community that want to help make a difference, such as East Elementary Principal Mike Wiggins.

"I have been with this event since the beginning," Wiggins said. "Simple reason why I volunteer is to support Wallace State and their women's scholarships, you know, girl power! I also love to be a waiter at these events because I get to meet so many wonderful people and businesses give and give for education."



CHELSEA SPARKS, NATALIE BONNER/CULLMANSENSE

Participants let down their hair and have fun on the dance floor.

Between sold out ticket sales, proceeds from the silent auction with donated items from local businesses, and tips to the waiters, the event is sure to have raised a lot of money for the cause. For more information on this event, or the Outstanding Women's Scholarship Fund, call Wallace State at 256-352-8000.

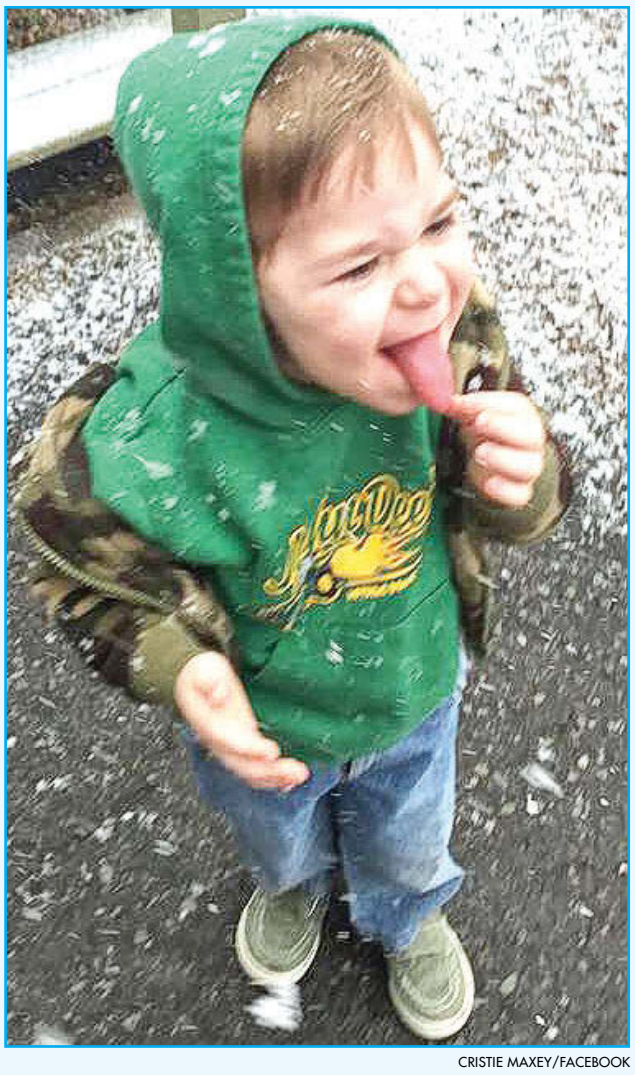
CULLMANSENSE READERS SHARE THEIR SNOWY MEMORIES



AMANDA TUCKER RICE/FACEBOOK

Cullman County did not miss out on the record breaking snowfall across the state. Accumulations ranging from 4 - 9 inches gave residents plenty of photo opportunities. Below are just a few of the submitted photos from social media.

FOR MORE VISIT CULLMANSENSE.COM OR FACEBOOK.COM/CULLMANSENSE



CRISTIE MAXEY/FACEBOOK



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2004 CHEVY TRAILBLAZER LS
MUST SEE



~~WAS $8,995~~

NOW $6,785

2004 GMC 1500 SLT
LEATHER, LOOKS SHARP!



~~WAS $15,900~~

NOW $13,878

2007 CHEVROLET SILVERADO 3500 FLATBED DIESEL
MUST SEE



~~WAS $25,900~~

NOW $22,972

2005 DODGE DAKOTA
GREAT CONDITION!



~~WAS $10,900~~

NOW $9,474

2013 CHEVROLET CAMERO
36,000 MILES



~~WAS $27,900~~

NOW $22,729

2005 DODGE RAM 1500 SLT
LIKE NEW



~~WAS $14,900~~

NOW $12,672

2012 CHEVY CRUZE LT
55,000 MILES



~~WAS $16,900~~

NOW $14,000

2009 DODGE CARAVAN
89,000 MILES



~~WAS $14,900~~

NOW $12,872

2011 CADILLAC SRX
ONLY 66,000 MILES



~~WAS $30,900~~

NOW $27,438

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