SERIES 5 • ISSUE 11 • MARCH 16, 2015
CULLMANSENSE
COMMUNITY MATTERS


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FEELING FROGGY

BELOVED LOCAL ELEMENTARY TEACHER AND MUSICIAN TIM CLEMMONS INSPIRES CHILDREN FOR DECADES WITH "THE FROG SONG"

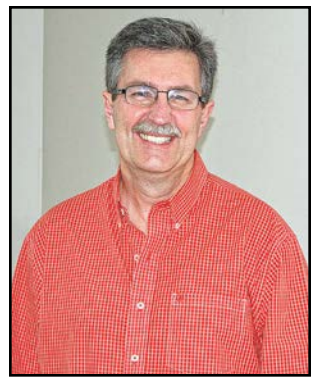
Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Tim Clemmons is the music teacher for both East and West Elementary schools. Back in the '80s he created a song that has followed him around ever since. The melody in question is called "The Frog Song" and every student who has attended either elementary school will instantly remember the catchy song, as well as the man who allowed them to be creative.

"I'm actually on my 35th year as a music teacher as of this past February," Clemmons grinned. "I've been teaching at East and West Elementary all that time except for two years, which I spent in Germany where I taught over there."

Due to the amount of time spent teaching Cullman's el-

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SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Many of Clemmons' compositions can be heard on popular television shows.

SMALL CHILDREN REACH LARGE GOAL

MRS. STIDHAM'S KINDERGARTEN CLASS COLLECTS 1,003 BOX TOPS TO WIN CONTEST - P6



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Mrs. Stidham's "Pony Class" celebrates winning the school's Box Tops contest. The class will vote on what the money raised will be used for.

VICTIM SERVICES SERVES HOMELESS COMMUNITY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – When you think of Victim Services of Cullman (VSOC), you probably know that their prime objective is to help rehabilitate and protect those that are victims of domestic violence. Their role in our community, however, reaches even more than what you might think with their services to those in the homeless population, which often goes hand-in-hand with domestic violence.

VSOC is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization funded by the United Way of Cullman County, grants and community contributions. They work through a variety of programs to educate, raise awareness and help those who are going through one of the most difficult points in their lives. According to Donna Jacobs, executive director of Victim Services, they also do a lot of work with the homeless population at large in the area.

"We belong to the Alabama Rural Coalition on Homelessness," said Jacobs. "And we do try to keep up with the homeless population in Cullman. Basically we have all the problems of a larger city; they are just not as obvious. It would be unusual to see someone laying on the sidewalk panhandling here, but we do have a homeless population."

Jacobs went on to say that while the economy is

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VICTIM SERVICES OF CULLMAN

Victim Services of Cullman helps those that are affected by domestic violence and the homeless population.

AGRIPLEX HOLDS DINNER AND SILENT AUCTION TO RAISE FUNDS

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – The North Alabama Agriplex is a magical place where children learn, play and grow as they explore their natural world. Farm Kid's Club, Heritage Skills, Living Landscapes and the Heritage Homeschool Program are just a few of the classes taught at the Agriplex.

"It started as a vision," Rachel Dawsey, coordinator for the Agriplex said. "A long time ago, two men were sitting at the Cullman County Fair, and they were chatting as Lion's Club Members like to do. They were sitting in front of the produce and agriculture exhibits, and they said that Cullman really needs a museum for Cullman because Cullman is number one in agriculture in the state and because we have a great heritage that people need to know about."

Dawsey went on to say that the two men of whom she was

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CANCER SURVIVOR TO SPEAK AT COMMON READ EVENT

Gail Crutchfield
WSCC Contributor

HANCEVILLE – Wallace State Community College's Common Read committee will join forces with the American Cancer Society's Relay For Life of Cullman County when they hold a March 25 event at the Hanceville campus.

"The Fault in Our Stars" by John Green is the book used for the 2014-2015 Common

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AMERICAN RED CROSS OF CULLMAN HOSTS OPEN HOUSE TO SHOWCASE NEW FACILITY

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CULLMAN – The American Red Cross of Cullman County hosted an open house last Thursday. People from all over Cullman came to see what our local Red Cross has been up to. Many local volunteers were on site to meet, greet and show everyone around.

"This is a brand new facility; our other facility got hit in the 2011 tornadoes," said Jennifer Parker, Red Cross Board Member.

"In this new building, we can comfortably accommodate 250 people. There is a full kitchen upstairs, as well as a smaller kitchen down here. There is a storage area where we keep all the extras, in case of emergencies. It's great to have everything here onsite. If something were to happen, we can easily load the supplies up and go."

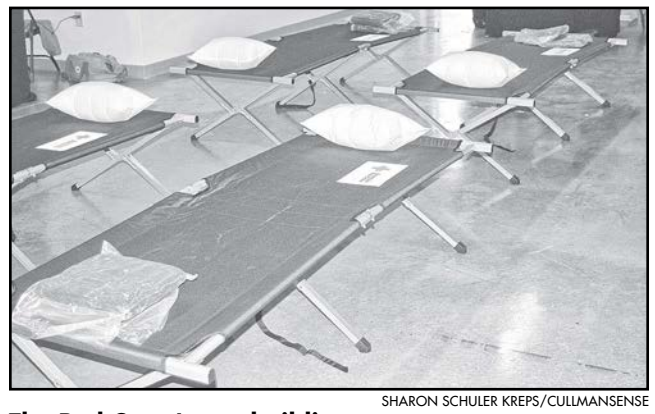
Our Local Red Cross Chapter's staff and volunteers provide the following services through Disaster Response, Health & Safety training, Service to the Armed Forces and Project SHARE to citizens of Cullman, Blount and Winston Counties.

Representatives from each service were on hand to explain in detail what they do.

The American Red Cross provides a wealth of help for those in need, especially during times of emergencies such as the tornado outbreak in 2011. Volunteers are always needed.

For information on becoming a Red Cross volunteer, visit RedCross.org. Follow them on Facebook at Facebook.com/CullWinBl.

The American Red Cross of Cullman is located in the lower level of The Beech Center at 1803 Beech Avenue Southeast, Cullman, AL 35055.



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

The Red Cross' new building can comfortably accommodate 250 people.

CULLMAN CIVITAN CLUB'S SPAGHETTI DINNER AND SILENT AUCTION BENEFITS LOCAL CHARITY

Sharon Schuler Kreps
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CULLMAN – The Cullman Civitan Club held their Annual Spaghetti Dinner and Silent Auction on Friday at St. Andrew's United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall. Spaghetti, fresh salad, garlic bread and homemade desserts were served. The Civitans did things a little different this year and allowed local businesses to purchase spaghetti lunches for delivery.

"This is our annual fundraiser that we do - it's one that always does well," said Amy Higdon, Cullman Civitan Club president.

"We've been here all day - We did deliveries to area businesses and then we have the eat-in or carry-out this evening."

The Cullman Civitan Club is dedicated to helping people in the community. The civitans help wherever the need arises.

The mission of Civitan Club is to provide a volunteer association of clubs to identify and meet community needs with emphasis on helping people with mental and developmental disabilities.

"The money we make here today will go to the sensory trail out at H.O.P.E. (Horses Offering People Encouragement) that we are sponsoring," Higdon explained.

"We also do a lot of things with a group home here in town," she said as she smiled at a table full of young men from the home enjoying their spaghetti.

"Any time you are doing a service project, it takes money," smiled Civitan Governor Julia Floyd of Alabama District North.

"The spaghetti supper tonight goes to fund projects that help people with mental and developmental disabilities."

"One of the district's biggest fundraisers is selling vidalia onions," said Walt Floyd, civitan governor-elect for Alabama District North.

"We start taking orders now; the cost is $10 for a 10 lb bag. So all the clubs in the district start selling onions and the money raised will be used for the clubs in whatever they need."

This year's annual spaghetti dinner was delicious and the silent auction had a variety of great items available for bidding.

The event raised much needed funds for the Civitan Club to fulfill their role in the community. For more information about the Cullman Civitan Club, visit their websites at CullmanCivitan.com and ALDistrictNorth.com.



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Attendees browse items available for auction at St. Andrew's United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall.

Agriplex (from Front)

speaking was her grandfather, Chester Freeman, and James Hutchison who started to share their vision.

They began to look around at other museums that were similar to what they wanted to do.

After many committees and meetings later, the board of the North Alabama Agriplex was formed by legislation in the year 2000.

"The reason we are here tonight is to raise money for our programs," Dawsey said. "Programs that recognize the benefits of agriculture in Cullman County. Our two founding members started right away after that, and started with Touring Farms for Kids, and this was in the year of 2001, making this our 15th anniversary."

A full house showed up to the event to show their support for the programs and take part in the Agriplex community.

Many local shops and artisans donated items and gift certificates, garden supplies, paintings and baked goods, which were just a few of the items available. After the auction, a wonderful meal of homegrown foods was presented.

"I want to thank our sponsor tonight TriGreen Equipment who offset our costs and also our food donors," Dawsey said.

"All of our greens for the salads came from Gratitude Farms and we have Cullman grown chicken donated by Ronnie Melton. Our pork BBQ was prepared by Freddie Day, with southern grown collards from Moe's Original BBQ. Kress Farms donated our wonderful sweet potatoes, and the meal is topped off with a fresh apple cake from Steele Orchard."

In addition to the many educational programs, the Agriplex works hard making a difference with their Food for Life program that allows for Americorp Vistas to serve.

"I am here through a grant the Agriplex got from the Americorps VISTA," Kaitlyn Parks said.

"I am here for a year of service. I work on grant writing for the Agriplex through the Food for Life Program. That is our effort to provide supplementary science education in the community, feeding the hungry, and changing the food insecurity in the area through education."

Since August of last year, the VISTA workers have collected and distributed approximately 14,000 pounds of food and 42,000 servings to those in need in the community. According to Dawsey, it is the organization's hope to raise enough money through this fundraiser to keep the education and love of nature going.

More information on the North Alabama Agriplex and their programs can be found by visiting their Facebook at Facebook.com/NorthAlabamaAgriplex or on their website Agriplex.org.

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A FEW HOURS OF YOUR LIFE MIGHT JUST SAVE IT

WINDELL TURNER, CANCER SURVIVOR, URGES OTHERS TO GET TESTED DURING COLON CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – There are many different kinds of cancer that medicine has no way to catch early with tests, but the second leading cause of cancer-related death does. March is Colon Cancer Awareness Month, and one of Cullman's own residents, Windell Turner, has a message for everyone.

Turner, who is now in remission from colon cancer, spoke of his journey about hearing the news that no one ever wants to receive.

"I had several issues going on," Turner said. "It all started out with us thinking it was my gallbladder. I was in a lot of pain and was nauseated all the time. So I had surgery to have it removed, and felt great after, but a week or so later I was back to having the same symptoms. My doctor then decided I needed to have a colonoscopy done."

According to Turner, when the doctor asked how long it had been since the 52-year-old male had undergone the procedure, he reported that it had been several years.

"So I went and had my colonoscopy done with Dr. Cunningham, and a week later I got a call to come in because they needed to talk to me," he said.

"When I got there he asked me about my mother, who had died of colon cancer, and he told me, 'Well, unfortunately, you have it too.'"

Upon hearing the news, Turner knew two things about the situation: first that there was nothing he could do but move on and fight; second that his cancer may have been avoided had he gone for regular testing.

"I knew it was my own stupidity," Turner said. "They probably could have caught this much earlier if I had gone in when I was supposed to get my colonoscopy. I could have probably avoided chemotherapy and surgery."

Turner, however, is not alone in making that mistake. Many people put off or avoid having a regular colonoscopy done all together.

There are different excuses that people tell themselves to keep from going through with it, but Turner says that others should take a lesson from his experience and his mother's story, that this disease can hit anyone and it's surely worth the small time out of your life to get tests done.

"The testing is nothing compared to going through chemotherapy," said Turner. "You go off to lala land for a bit for a colonoscopy and then you wake up and it's over. There's nothing really to it. It is just a few hours out of your life, or possibly the end of your life."

By the time Turner did have his colonoscopy done, he was already between stages two and three.

He endured 12 rounds of chemo over 24 weeks, and surgery, and is still living with the side effects of treatment.

"I have no feeling in the ends of my fingers thanks to chemo," Turner said.

"My feet feel like I walk on glass all the time. For me, I also can't drink anything cold. Hot drinks don't bother me, but cold drinks feel like a million needles in my mouth. And I just want people to learn that this could have probably been avoided if I had just gotten that test done when I was supposed to."

Currently there are more than 1 million colon cancer survivors because of testing, and it is also the second leading cause of cancer-related death in the U.S.

Ninety percent of those with colon cancer are over the age of 50.

Those who have a parent, sibling or offspring with colon cancer are two to three times more likely to be diagnosed with the disease as well.

For more information on the latest research, statistics and general info, go to CCAlliance.org.

POSITION AVAILABLE

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

Clemmons (from Front)

ementary school children over the years, there is one common memory when Mr. Clemmons' name comes up in conversation – "The Frog Song".

"The Frog Song" began as part of a lesson plan for young children. It was a way of introducing the wonderful world of music and imagination to the youngsters.

"It's kinda wild," Clemmons mused.

"Back when I was doing my student teaching, I had my very first class, so I thought I would try to write a children's song - I had never done that before," he chuckled.

"It was a group of third graders and I sort of just sprang it on them. They seemed to like it. When I got my job at the two schools here in town, I thought, 'Let's see what happens' and I have been singing it ever since!"

A big hit it was, indeed. To this day, people of all ages remember "The Frog Song" from their youth and each time they think of it, it brings back memories of a time when life was simple and full of wonders.

"My son loved it and Mr. Clemmons," said Jamie Erwin. "He gave Eli the gift of music and he's loved it ever since!"

"One of my former students put it on YouTube.com," Clemmons said.

"It's on there as Mr. Clemmons' Frog Song. It's got over 6,000 views so that's pretty good. It's no Justin Bieber, but it's a start," he said happily.

Mr. Clemmons is more than just a well-loved music teacher; he is also a composer whose work has been featured in different venues throughout the United States.

"I compose music and do that pretty regularly. I have some stuff out that's actually been on television."

Mr. Clemmons has written and composed music that has been played on the History Channel's "American Pickers" and "Pawn Stars"; FOX's "The Simpsons"; Lifetime's "Dance Moms"; The Learning Channel's "Here Comes Honey Boo Boo" and NBC's "The Voice". His music has also graced other television networks, such as MTV, National Geographic, Nickelodeon, Animal Planet and Comedy Central.

"It is really kind of strange to be watching TV and you hear your music playing," he said a little sheepishly.

To hear "The Frog Song" visit youtube.com/watch?v=sFY77DmD7YA.

Cullman is full of talented and imaginative people, and Tim Clemmons is just one of them. This week we honor Tim as CullmanSense's Outstanding Citizen of the Week. If you know someone that you feel should be honored as an Outstanding Citizen, please let us know by e-mailing sharon@cullmansense.com.

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VSOC (from Front)

growing and helping with this problem, there are still many factors that play into homelessness.

"I think the economy growing will help," Jacobs said.

"But when people get laid off or there is an illness, for one reason or another, they are unable to pay their rent anymore, and they end up homeless. A lot of homeless situations in Cullman comes from what is called 'couch surfing', but the government doesn't allow us to include those in our numbers, but they are still homeless."

One of the biggest, if not the biggest reason for homelessness in Cullman is due to domestic violence, Jacobs said.

"When people come to our shelter, they are homeless at that point," said Jacobs.

"We also do a lot of work on education and outreach programs to combat this. It is because of our work with the Victim Services' shelter, that we see firsthand how devastating homelessness can be. We get a lot of phone calls from members of the community about someone that is homeless or needs help to prevent their homelessness, but most of the homelessness we see is due to domestic violence. So if we can reduce domestic violence, then we can somewhat reduce the homeless population."

Victim Services, along with other shelters in the community, work hard to offer as much assistance as possible to those in need.

According to Jacobs, the first step toward solving the problems our community faces on both domestic violence and homelessness is community awareness.

More information about Victim Services of Cullman can be found online at VSOCCullman.org or by calling 256-775-2600.

The 24-hour crisis hotline can be reached at 256-734-6100.

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SPOTLIGHT ON LOCAL RELIGIOUS LEADERS

REVEREND JOHN RICHTER: A TEACHER AT HEART

Sharon Schuler Kreps
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CULLMAN – Rev. John Richter is the Sr. Pastor of St. John's Evangelical Protestant Church. Born and raised in Cullman, he is a lifetime member of St. John's and began his role as Sr. Pastor in 2003. He has been married to his beautiful wife Tiffany for nearly 10 years. They met on a blind date in New Braunfels, Texas while he was there for church meetings. The couple has two children, Vella, 5, and John Isaac, almost 3.

Each religious leader has a story to tell. Some realize early on that he/she was born to spread the Word of God, while others receive their calling much later in life. Richter shared his story to the religious life.

"I presume I have always been called to preach from the perspective that God knows the plans He has for us," he explained.

"For me, though, the calling to ministry was gradual. I didn't necessarily run like Jonah but was seeking a career in academia, looking to teach history or religion at the college level."

"Some ministers have powerful, Paul-like road to Damascus experiences," he continued.

"That wasn't me. I suppose I knew intuitively that I was being formed for the task. A couple of short-term mission trips, desires, interests, and a love for Christ and his church were/are key. It just always seemed a possibility that I'd be connected to the church in some way, though I never knew exactly what that would look like. Things have simply fallen into place," he smiled warmly.

When asked about some of his most rewarding moments as a pastor, Richter's face lit up and a big smile spread across his face.

"Here's where I'm a teacher at heart," he beamed. "I love the moment the light bulb turns on and someone gets it. It's that moment when someone realizes, 'Oh, that's what God is doing in my life.' I love helping people navigate spiritual waters."

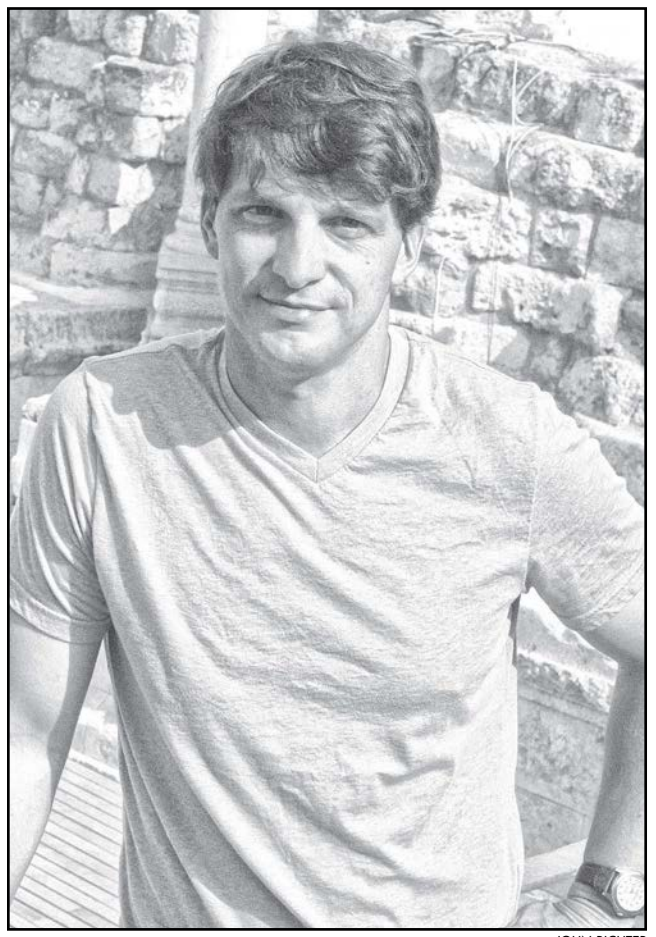
Just like the rest of us, Richter enjoyed telling about the church he leads.

> **"I love the moment the light bulb turns on and someone gets it. It's that moment when someone realizes, 'Oh, that's what God is doing in my life.' I love helping people navigate spiritual waters."**
>
> Rev. John Richter, Sr. Pastor of St. John's Evangelical Protestant Church

"St. John's is the oldest congregation in the city of Cullman. It was founded by the German settlers who arrived in the 1870s. If someone is into theology, I say we are the church that exists because Lutherans and Presbyterians were told to get along and play nice, which reflects our formal theology," he grinned.

"On a simpler note, we are a good fit for people who appreciate the diversity of Christian expression. Those who come from formal church backgrounds will likely find us informal, while those who come from informal backgrounds will tend to think we are formal. Either way, we are the only church of our kind in the state of Alabama as congregations like ours are more common in the Midwest and upper Midwest where many 19th century German immigrants settled."

Rooted in local history, St. John's has a passionate leader to guide them into the future. Full of faith and dedication, Rev. John has been the perfect fit as Sr. Pastor. St. John's Evangelical Protestant Church is located at 512 2nd Avenue SE, Cullman, AL 35055. Call them at 256-734-0344 and visit their webpage at SJEPC.com.



JOHN RICHTER

Rev. John Richter is the Sr. Pastor of St. John's Evangelical Protestant Church.

"YOURS ETERNALLY: LETTERS OF A LIFETIME"

BEN JOHNSON SOUTH'S NEW PLAY ENTERTAINS THE MASSES

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

HANCEVILLE – "Yours Eternally: Letters of a Lifetime" is a brand new play written by local playwright Ben Johnson South. It made its debut this Saturday evening at the Burrow Center for the Fine and Performing Arts in Hanceville. The production starred former Alabama First Lady Marsha Folsom and her son James Folsom. All proceeds from the show will go to the Wallace State Fine Arts Department.

"Yours Eternally: Letters of a Lifetime" is a playful, yet meaningful series of exchanges between a nurturing mother and child over a lifetime of letters.

The audience laughed a lot throughout the show and in the end, they shed a few heartfelt tears. Marsha and son James did a fabulous job.

"Marsha and James really make it. It's almost like I wrote it just for them to perform," said Ben South, playwright.

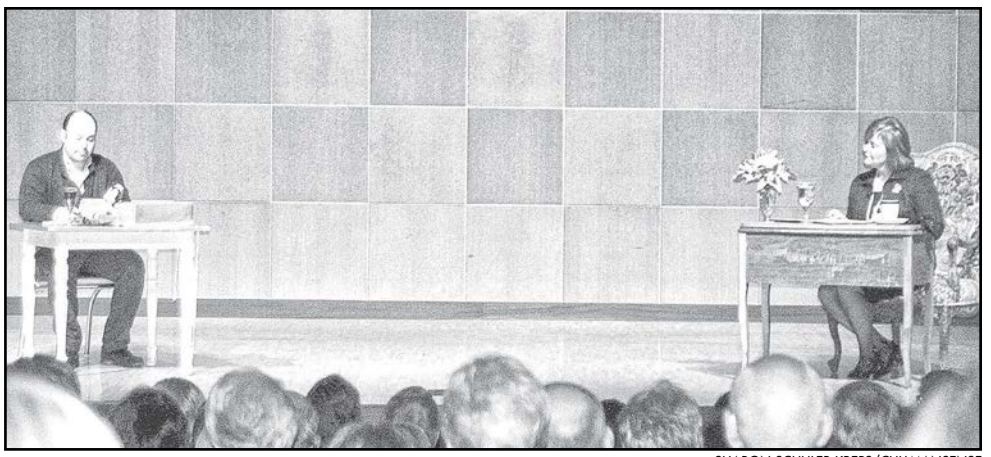
"The stars were aligned. Actually, after they signed on to perform 'Yours Eternally', I wrote in a couple of things just for them. Listen for her to say, 'You are my sunshine.' Miz Jamelle must be bragging to my Mama in their heavenly beauty parlor. Marsha and James are super duper!"

"As all you creative folks know, sometimes stuff you make works and it soars," South continued.

"And, then sometimes stuff you make just lays on the ground DOA. These actors soar like brilliant, delightful birds. To them, I sincerely say, I am, YOURS ETERNALLY."

Cullman County is home to a lot of great talent. Ben Johnson South is a writer and artist with several projects he has completed in the area.

The Folsom's performance Saturday night was an engaging experience whose story stayed with the audience long after they left. For those who were able to attend "Yours Eternally: Letters of a Lifetime" witnessed excellent homegrown fun.



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Former First Lady Marsha Folsom and son James perform in the play "Yours Eternally: Letters of a Lifetime".



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JOHN W. SPARKS: CULLMAN COUNTY'S 15TH SHERIFF KILLED IN THE LINE OF FIRE

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – John W. Sparks served as Cullman's 15th sheriff and the only sheriff to die in the line of duty. He was a family man and served as Chief of Police in Cullman for five years prior to being elected sheriff. Although he is gone, he will never be forgotten, especially by our local law enforcement.

John W. Sparks was born November 1869 in Carroll County, Georgia. He was the son of William H. Sparks and Elizabeth Houseworth.

He married Miss Ida Elizabeth Williams, the daughter of George L. William and Amanda Boatright on August 15, 1890. All of them were from Carroll County, Georgia.

John and Ida moved to Cullman in 1904 with their three young daughters, Vera Grace, Kathleen and Jewell.

Not long after arriving in Cullman, the couple was blessed with another baby girl they named Reba.

Sadly, in 1907, Reba passed away, having only lived one month.

About a year after Reba died, in 1908, John bought a whole city block in Cullman on the SW side of 2nd Ave and 9th St SW.

John and Ida built their home on the NW quarter and the plan was for the daughters to marry and build houses on the same block.

Sparks became Cullman's Chief of Police in 1913. His salary was $60 per month. He held the position for five years until he resigned after being elected Sheriff in November 1918.

His job as Sheriff did not last very long as he was shot to death during a prohibition raid on a Sunday evening on July 20, 1919.

Only six months after being sworn into office, Sheriff Sparks, along with the Cullman Police Chief had attempted to make an arrest at a downtown apartment.

When they arrived at the location, a female refused to let the sheriff in. Without missing a beat, the sheriff cut his way through the screen door and was confronted by the suspect just after he entered the apartment.

"Drop your weapon!" the sheriff and the suspect both told each other simultaneously. Instead of dropping their guns, they immediately fired their guns at each other.

As a result, the suspect was killed instantly and Sheriff Sparks was mortally wounded.

He was able to walk, hobbling painfully to a local drug store where he died approximately one hour later at the age of 49.

He was survived by his wife and daughters.

John's body was taken to his home to lie in state in the family's parlor the day after his death.

His body was viewed and mourned by hundreds of Cullman County's heartbroken citizens.

The funeral took place on the following Tuesday afternoon at the First Baptist Church with burial in Cullman City Cemetery.



FACEBOOK.COM/SHERIFFSPARKSMEMORIAL

Sheriff John W. Sparks is the only Cullman County Sheriff killed in the line of duty.

MIRRORING HISTORY

EUREKA HOTEL AND REXALL DRUGSTORE BECOMES CULLMAN SAVINGS BANK'S PARKING DECK

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CULLMAN – The Eureka Hotel and Rexall Drugstore was located at the intersection of 1st Street SW and 4th Street SW in downtown Cullman. The building was purchased by E.C. Kinney in 1909 and was remodeled in 1927.

Despite a fire in the late 1940s or early 1950s, the building was still used until the 1970s.

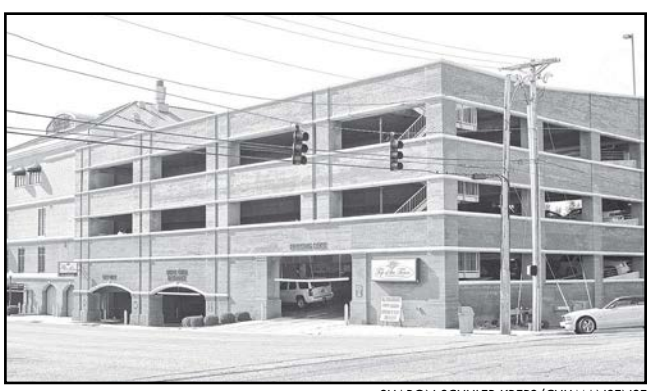
To the left side of the pictured hotel is the second Cullman County Courthouse, which was in use from 1912 until the mid 1960s.

Today the land is home to the Cullman Savings Bank multi-leveled parking deck.



CULLMAN COUNTY MUSEUM

The Eureka Hotel building was purchased in 1909.



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

What once was the Eureka Hotel is now the Cullman Savings Bank parking lot.

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HELPING KEEP PEACE, LOVE AND COFFEE ALIVE

ENTREPRENEUR KATIE NELMS LAUNCHES KICKSTARTER CAMPAIGN TO HELP SAVE BERKELEY BOB'S COFFEE HOUSE

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Over the past 12 years Berkeley Bob's Coffee House has become a staple for locals and visitors. The friendly service, aromatic coffee and chilled out vibe are all part of what makes this shop so special to those who visit it. Now, with the original owners Bob and Geri Keefe looking to retire, employee Katie Nelms is looking to buy the business and keep the tradition alive.

"I have been working on buying the shop since August or September of last year," Nelms said. "Well I kept running into problems, and we had a deadline toward the end of February and early March. Well after Bob posted online that I wouldn't be able to buy it, someone suggested that I start a Kickstarter campaign."

The Kickstarter website is a place for entrepreneurs of all varieties to share their vision and dream, and acquire financial support through backers who donate their money. Thousands of people have been able to successfully fund businesses and projects all over the world using the site, and with some luck and generosity, Nelms hopes to do the same.

"So we started a Kickstarter that night," Nelms said. "We launched it for 24 days. As of right now, we are over $3,400 dollars with 16 days left. We need $38,500 to buy the place, so we are only at 9 percent of our goal, but I figured we have to try."

No one is quite sure what the fate of the beloved coffee shop will be if Nelms and friends are unsuccessful in raising the funds in time, and Nelms said that she will not be able to stay to find out.

"I won't be sticking around to watch whatever happens," said Nelms. "If I'm not able to buy it, then it's going to be sad for me. I just couldn't watch someone else come in and turn it into something else, like a bar. It's not that vibe, and it should never be that way."

If the campaign is successful, and Berkeley Bob's is saved, then Nelms said that it will still be all the things people love with just a few extras.

"I want to make a few changes but nothing crazy," Nelms said. "We have had customers wanting us to open a little earlier, and also I would like to extend the hours just a little on Fridays and Saturdays. I want to add homemade popsicles to the menu, make some more vegetarian foods and also make real fruit smoothies."

An important element to the coffee shop that Nelms says she will definitely keep is the music.

"We would definitely keep the music going," she said. "I would like to add more. I thought about an hour show for younger aged people, maybe on Thursday nights. But it's such a big part of the shop with the open mic nights and promoting local artists."

Many have shown their support and Nelms says she is extremely grateful to those and hopes more join in to save one of Cullman's favorite hangouts. According to Nelms, she is trying to save more than a mere coffee shop, she is saving many residents' second home.

"This place has been a huge part of my life for seven years," Nelms said. "I have developed relationships with people that I never would have otherwise. A lot of people have gone through a lot here. It is a therapeutic place for people where they can meet and form these relationships that they couldn't almost anywhere else. I want to be the one to keep it going, and to watch families come in and grow up throughout the years."

> **"I want to be the one to keep it going, and to watch families come in and grow up throughout the years."**
>
> Katie Nelms, Barista and Hopeful Future Owner

Those that wish to donate can do so by following the link: Kickstarter.com/projects/1774330171/Berkeley-Bobs-Coffee-House-Keep-Peace-Alive.



KATIE NELMS

Nelms enjoys a delicious helping of red beans at Berkeley Bob's Coffee House.

Read (from Front)

Read program at Wallace State. Instructors across campus use the book in their classes as a way to engage students and encourage reading.

Because cancer is a major part of the plot line for the book, the committee asked the WSCC Relay For Life team and Relay For Life of Cullman County to participate in the event. On March 25, students enrolled in the college's Learning Communities classes will join in the morning's activities, starting at 9:30 a.m.

The students will hear from UAH freshman and cancer survivor Lindsey Jones. Jones, of Gurley, was almost 4 years old when she was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer, which caused blindness, similar to a character in "The Fault in Our Stars." Now a cancer survivor of almost 15 years, Jones shares her story with others as a Hero of Hope for the American Cancer Society.

The students will also view a skit performed by the Nursing Department's Kids on the Block puppetry program.

Students, faculty, staff and visitors will get to visit booths set up by the ACS and Wallace State programs, take part in games and activities, and have a chance to support the WSCC Relay For Life team's fundraising efforts.

Fundraising efforts that day will include meals from Dewey's Cajun Shack food truck, which will donate a portion of their proceeds that day to the Wallace State Relay team. A cupcake bar will be offered by the WSCC Relay For Life team, with participants choosing the flavor of cupcake, icing and toppings to go on their treat. Anyone wishing to purchase a luminary in honor or in memory of a loved one can do so at the event. A quilt made from team t-shirts from the 2014 event will be on display. There will be opportunities to win that and a prize package for Dollywood, which will both be given away at the May 1 Relay For Life of Cullman County event at the Cullman County Fairgrounds.

Anyone interested in doing so can also sign up to participate in Relay For Life of Cullman County at the Common Read event. For more on Relay For Life of Cullman County, visit relayforlife.org/cullmanal or call Helen Allen at 256-709-4019.

Contest (from Front)

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Young children can make big things happen. Take, for example, Mrs. Stidham's kindergarten class, also known as the 'Pony Class'. The group is made up of 17 students, and together, the class collected more Box Tops than all the other classes at the Primary School. As a result, the Ponies will celebrate by having an ice cream party in their classroom.

"We are so excited! Our class collected a total of 1,003 Box Tops," said Mrs. Stidham, Kindergarten teacher.

"The money from the Box Tops goes directly to our classroom. "Collecting Box Tops is a big fundraiser for the PTO."

"The kids were very, very excited when they heard they won," Stidham continued.

"We are going to do a poll and see what we need for the classroom. The kids love to read, so I'm thinking we will probably get new reading books. They are great readers – they are doing a good job reading and a great job at becoming writers!" she smiled.

The students happily explained their technique for gathering Box Tops. The process called for help from their grandmas, grandpas, moms, dads, neighbors and friends. The project proved that this young group of children has a high level of persistence, dedication and a deep love for their school.

Box Tops is one of America's largest school earnings loyalty programs.

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Box Tops can be sent to a school anytime. For more information, visit BoxTops4Education.com.

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THE ANTIQUE MARKET OF CULLMAN

QUAINT NEW BUSINESS FILLED WITH BITS AND PIECES OF CULLMAN HISTORY

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – There is a new business in town and it is full of antiques and Cullman history. The Antique Market opened its beautiful old doors on February 3, 2015. It is located in the heart of the Downtown Historic District of Cullman.

"The store is nice and quaint," said Proprietor Beth Veigl. "I do have several booth vendors; some of them have antique furniture, it's mostly antiques. There is also some antique china and things like that. We are going to be getting some local artwork in here as well," she smiled happily.

What makes The Antique Market innovative is that much of its construction is material from Cullman's historic buildings that were either damaged or destroyed during the tornadoes of 2011.

"We tried to salvage pieces from around town after the tornado and things like that," Veigl said.

"We got what we could within reason because of safety concerns, but we got what we could."

There is a huge door that came from the old Ford Motor Company, which later became Little Bit of Everything and is now home to The All Steak. The door weighs over 950 lbs and is now used to close off the store's storage room.

The aged beams that were the bones in the old, original store were taken down and used to make the counter space where the cash register is located. Edgar Veigl, Beth's husband, planed the 20-foot beams himself and constructed the counters.

A true must see is the glorious display located behind the cash register.

"It is a Hugo Buettner," she explained. "It was originally located in the Buettner Jeweler building. We bought it from them when they were going to lease the building. It took Edgar a couple weeks to get it all over here and installed. It has the original glass and each are counterweighted with 80 lbs. Hugo Buettner's plaque is still there above the mirror."

The beautiful shop has been created with plenty of Cullman's memories, but there is something else that is very different than any other place in town. Just like the days when the old antiques were sold as new, the shopkeeper's family lived above the store.

Some things never change, and in this case, it is perfect for the Veigl family.

Step back in time and take a trip to The Antique Market of Cullman.

They are located at 220 1st Avenue SE, Cullman, AL 35055. Call them at 256-345-6204 and e-mail the store at theantiquemarket@live.com or visit their website at TheAntiqueMarketofCullman.com. Follow them on Facebook at Facebook.com/TheAntiqueMarketofCullman. Store hours are Tuesday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

The Antique Marketplace of Cullman houses several booth vendors that offer a variety of antique merchandise.

CULLMAN COUNTY AWARDED OVER $27,000 FOR EMERGENCY FOOD AND SHELTER

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Congress has appropriated $120 million to supplement and expand emergency food and shelter programs. Each jurisdiction's award is based upon the jurisdiction's total number of unemployed as compared to the total number of unemployed in all qualifying jurisdictions. Cullman's total award amount is $27,708. According to Executive Director of Victim Services, Donna Jacobs, funds will be distributed to local agencies.

"Places like the local food banks, Daystar House and Victim Services use these funds to purchase food," Jacobs said. "There is a great need for these funds because there is a homeless population in Cullman, and it isn't just homeless that are in need of food assistance. There are many who work that are in need of this help as well."

Local boards must ensure that agencies selected for funding meet the requirements on the Local Recipient Organization (LRO) certification form. Agencies selected must be able to completely and accurately obtain, retain and submit (if requested) the required expenditure documentation with their final reports and required spreadsheets in keeping with the emergency nature of this award; the award materials include a due date for the Local Board Plan to be received by the National Board.

Under the terms of the grant from the National Board, local agencies chosen to receive funds must: 1) be private voluntary non-profits or units of government; 2) be eligible to receive federal funds; 3) have an accounting system; 4) practice nondiscrimination; 5) have demonstrated the capability to deliver emergency food and/or shelter programs; and 6) if they are private voluntary organization, they must have a voluntary board. Qualifying agencies are urged to apply.

Public or Private voluntary agencies interested in applying for emergency food and shelter program funds must contact Donna Jacobs, local board chair.

Call 256-775-2600 or contact via e-mail at vosced@vsoccullman.org for an application.

The deadline for applications is March 18, 2015.



County Wide
Yard Sale
March 21, 2015
7:00am-3:00pm
Sportsman Lake Park
Contact 256-734-3052

THE **UNIQUE** MALE
MEN'S CONFERENCE

Empowering males to step up & be the men God created them to be

Featuring Guest Speakers

Saturday
March 21

Registration
8:15-8:45 am

Event
8:45-noon

Loft 212
212 4th St. SW
Cullman, AL

Targeting
Men 10 & up

For group seating, please call 256.338.9083

Free admission



John Croyle

Former college football All-American, John founded and is the executive director of Big Oak Ranch, a home for abandoned and abused children. As a young man, John passed up a lucrative opportunity to play in the National Football League to do what God had placed on his heart, developing the best children's home in America.



Chad Williams

Chad is a retired Navy seal who served on Seal Team One and Seven. He has been a featured guest on *Fox News, CNN, Anderson Cooper 360, TBN* and the *Hour of Power*. He uses the principles learned as a Seal to speak on *Leading Like a Seal, Freedom Paid for in Bloodshed* and *Tragedy to Triumph*.



Jerry Lawson

Lead Pastor at Daystar Church in Cullman, Pastor Jerry clearly and often humorously describes the unique man that God created. He will also help us understand why it is so important for men to be the strong leaders of their home, family and community.

Free public event sponsored by Senator Paul Bussman

Paid for by PAUL BUSSMAN FOR STATE SENATE, 1625 MAIN AVE SW CULLMAN, AL 35055

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

Happy St. Patrick's Day!
Wear some green and find some shamrocks. It's all about the luck of the Irish today!

Shanghai Circus Comes to Wallace State
Acclaimed Chinese acrobat troupe, the New Shanghai Circus, will present a variety of feats of skill and daring at The Betty Leeth Haynes Theatre on the Wallace Stage Community College campus on Tuesday, March 17, 2015 at 7 p.m. Single tickets will be available at the door for $30 (adults) and $10 (students). For more information please call 256-339-4447, or visit the association online at www.cullmancommunityconcertassociation.com.

Soapmaking at the Agriplex
Join us as we learn to make old fashioned, homemade soap! The program begins at 6 p.m. Cost: $5. For more information, email cullmanag@gmail.com or call 256-297-1044.

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.

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

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.

"The Starfish Throwers" - Independent Film Series
"The Starfish Throwers" is a documentary about three very different people working toward the same goal – feeding the hungry in their communities. Visit the film's website at www.thestarfishthrowers.com or see the trailer at http://vimeo.com/44292667. The film will show from 6-8 p.m. at the Burrow Center at WSCC. Call 256-352-8457 for more information. Free admission.

'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.

Cullman Rodeo at the Agricultural Trade Center
For more information, call the Agricultural Trade Center at 256-739-4959.

Rational Rewards and Sensible Savings: Couponing for Beginners
Learn to shop sensibly before clipping a single coupon and how to make the most of every coupon you do clip. Class provides all materials needed to begin couponing like a pro. Registration and Prepayment Required. $20. 3/20/15 10-11 a.m. and 1-2 p.m. Call Fancher Tutoring at 256-706-7180.

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

Rational Rewards and Sensible Savings: Couponing for Beginners
Learn to shop sensibly before clipping a single coupon and how to make the most of every coupon you do clip. Class provides all materials needed to begin couponing like a pro. Registration and Prepayment Required. $20. 3/21/15 10-11 a.m. Call Fancher Tutoring at 256-706-7180.

Sportsman Lake Park Yard Sale
Call Cullman County Parks & Recreation for more information: 256-734-9157 or call 256-734-3052.

Grant Brown Memorial 5K and One Mile Fun Run
The Grant Brown Memorial 5K And One mile Fun Run/Walk Date is Saturday, March 21, 2015 and will be held on the campus of WSCC. Maps are available upon request. ALL proceeds will go toward the Grant Brown Memorial Scholarship Fund. Registration: 8:00-8:25 a.m. Start Time: 8:30 a.m. - Entry Fee: $10 donation / No T-shirt; $ 20 donation / Includes a T-shirt. Only Pre-registrations by March 11 receive t-shirts. One Mile Fun Run/Walk Start Time: 9:30 a.m. - Entry Fee: $10 donation / No T-shirt; $ 20.00 donation / Get a T-shirt. Pre-registration receives T-shirts. Awards: Each Division will be divided into Male and Female Age groups - 1st place in each division - Age as of day of race. 8 a.m. to 12 noon.

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.

Cullman Rodeo at the Agricultural Trade Center
For more information, call the Agricultural Trade Center at 256-739-4959.

Sunday

Annual ACIES Reconsecration Ceremony
Legion of Mary Members of the Diocesan Our Lady Queen of Joyful Hope Curia from Birmingham, Alabama, invite everyone to attend the annual Mass and ACIES Reconsecration Ceremony on Sunday, March 22 at 2 pm. This event, hosted by Our Lady Queen of Peace Praesidium in Cullman, will take place at Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church. The Church is located at 205 3rd Avenue SE in Cullman. ACIES is a Latin word meaning "an Army set in battle array". The Legionnaires, both women and men, assemble as a body to renew their fidelity to Mary, Queen of the Legion, and to receive strength and blessings for another year's battle with the forces of evil Refreshments served afterwards in the Family Life Center of the Church. For additional information please contact Teresita Martinez at 256-775-3794 or Clara Puckett at 256-736-5569. All are welcome.

Sacred Heart Catholic School in Cullman Sponsors 'Open House'
Faculty, staff and students of Sacred Heart School in Cullman invite everyone to their annual 'Open House'. This event will take place on Sunday afternoon, March 22, starting at 2:00 pm. They are currently accepting Pre-K through 6th grade applications for the 2015-16 school year. The 137 year old school is NCEA, AdvancED (SACS) and State certifies and accredited. Sacred Heart School is located at 12 Second Avenue, SE, and the phone number is 256-734-4563; shsoffice@shscullman.org.

Next Monday

Bosom Buddies Support Group
The Bosom Buddies Support Group offers support to individuals affected by breast cancer. The group will hold its next meeting on Monday, March 16th from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. in Cullman Regional Medical Center's Ave Maria Room in the Community Education Center located in Professional Office Building 2 (1890 AL Highway 157, Cullman, AL 35058).

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.

CRMC's Farm Fresh Produce Sale
Eat healthy while supporting your local farmers. Cullman Regional Medical Center will be hosting a Farm Fresh Produce Sale on Monday from 3-5 p.m. Local farmers will be selling seasonal fruits and vegetables in the front Main Hospital parking lot.

Overeaters Anonymous Gather at Grace Episcopal
Members of Overeaters Anonymous meet every Monday, at 9:30 a.m. at Grace Episcopal Church in the Carriage House located on Church premises. Further information is available at 256-747-6218 or 256-352-1143. Everyone is invited to attend these gatherings.

Cornerstone Revival Ladies Prayer Meeting
A Ladies Prayer meeting is conducted each Monday night at 7 p.m. at Cornerstone Revival Center. For additional information call 256-796-2899. All interested women are invited to attend.

LOCAL ENTERTAINMENT
Sponsored by Busy Bee Café

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

TUESDAY
- Happy St. Patrick's Day!
- Shanghai Circus to perform at WSCC at 7 p.m.
- Soapmaking at the Agriplex at 6 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
- The Starfish Throwers - Independent Film Series - at WSCC from 6-8 p.m.
- Open Mic Night at Brothers from 8 p.m. to close
- Happy Hour at Moe's from 3-7 p.m.
- Karaoke Night at Cadillac Ron's at 7 p.m.

FRIDAY
- Cullman Rodeo at the Agricultural Trade Center
- Couponing for Beginners at the Cullman Chamber from 10-11 a.m.
- Couponing for Beginners at the Cullman Chamber from 1-2 p.m.
- 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
- Cullman Rodeo at the Agricultural Trade Center
- Couponing for Beginners at the Cullman Chamber from 10-11 a.m.
- Sportsman Lake Park Yard Sale
- Grant Brown Memorial 5K from 8 a.m. to 12 noon
- Live Music at Brothers
- Live Music at Moe's
- Happy Hour at Moe's from 3-6 p.m.
- Live Music at Cadillac Ron's from 8 p.m. to close

NEXT MONDAY
- 79 cent wings at Rodney G's Hickory Grill from 6-9 p.m.
- CRMC's Farm Fresh Produce Sale from 3-5 p.m.

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

FROM THE DESK OF
JOLAINE WELLS
CULLMANSENSE'S NEW DIRECTOR OF MARKETING



I am so excited to be a part of CullmanSense! It makes me so happy to be affiliated with a newspaper that's all about Cullman, my hometown, and its wonderful citizens! I am looking forward to seeing a lot of old friends and making new ones as I will be contacting all of the businesses of Cullman to help you grow your business at affordable rates. I encourage all of the citizens of Cullman to patronize the advertisers of CullmanSense. Let's all work together to keep Cullman special and support a local paper that's keeping us informed about our great city, county and its citizens.

CONTACT ME AT 256-595-3620
OR JWELLS@CULLMANSENSE.COM

THE LINK OF CULLMAN COUNTY 'FLOURISHES'

PRAISE GIVEN TO GOD FOR ORGANIZATION'S BLESSINGS AT ANNUAL YEAR IN REVIEW EVENT

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – The Link of Cullman County celebrated all that God has done in 2014 through their ministry non-profit by hosting their annual event called, "Flourish" on Thursday at Loft 212. This year's event included a review of 2014, along with the winners of the 2014 "Dream Big" award, and an overview of how their funds have helped turn several dreams into realities as The Link was able to help an innumerable amount of people across the Cullman area.

The Link of Cullman County is a faith-based, non-profit organization that supports the needs of our neighbors. They provide encouragement, goal-setting, career coaching, financial counseling, adult literacy coaching, English as a Second Language classes, Jobs for Life(TM) classes, GED classes and orientation, and Wise Up Money Skills for Teens.

"I am constantly in awe of how God has used this organization in our community to transform lives through the love of Jesus Christ," said Lindsey Dossey, Past Board Chair for the Link.

"It amazes me every day that it all started with a dream. It was a dream to help people see life transformation through the love of Jesus Christ and by turning them to God so that He can help them see what their true calling was."

"We are praising God today for all the blessings we received from our Annual Event, Flourish," said The Link's Founder and Executive Director Dawn Owens.

"We saw one of our Adult Literacy students (who could barely read when she came to us) get up and read Scripture with her coach, a VIPS student tell the audience his college plans, and an amazing video of how God has redeemed the lives of so many because you choose to donate, volunteer and pray for The Link. Thank you to all who came out to support us. Thank you to our sponsors: Clay Colvard Allstate Agency, Jim 'N Nick's and Loft 212."

The Link is a wonderful organization that continues to change lives for the good. They continue to grow by leaps and bounds and the blessings they see every day make it all worthwhile.

If you or someone you know feel called to help, or if you know someone that needs their help, visit The Link at 1101 3rd Ave SE, Cullman, Alabama 35055. Call them at 256-775-0028, e-mail them at info@linkingcullman.org and visit their website at LinkingCullman.org.

For frequently updated information, follow them on Facebook at Facebook.com/TheLinkofCullmanCounty.



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Along with looking back at the previous year, the "Flourish" event announced the winners of the 2014 "Dream Big" Award.

> **"I am constantly in awe of how God has used this organization in our community to transform lives through the love of Jesus Christ."**
>
> Lindsey Dossey, Past Board Chair for The Link of Cullman County

THE LUCK OF THE IRISH: CELEBRATE ST. PATRICK'S DAY IN CULLMAN

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Local restaurants are offering big fun and entertainment for this year's St. Patrick's Day festivities. Live music, giveaways and drink specials are what you can expect at some of Cullman's favorite night spots.

"We're going to be having a corn beef and cabbage special for dinner," said Kyle Spears of Busy Bee. "We'll also be having $6 Irish Car Bombs, Irish Red on tap, and $3 Irish stouts."

Brothers Kitchen & Pourhouse will be bringing out the Irish cheer with drink specials, giveaways and more.

"We'll be having a fun time here," said Brothers Manager Jared Smith. "We will be open all day, and that night starting around 7 p.m. and we'll be having live music, drink specials and hope to be doing some fun giveaways to everyone. Should be a great time."

If you are looking to get an authentic feel for the holiday, then look no further than The Irish Chipper. You won't need luck this St. Paddy's Day to enjoy delicious food and much more at this quaint restaurant, which will be opening at 10:30 a.m. and celebrating until 8 p.m. Dancing, music, food and more will be offered by this genuine Irish couple.

"We will be having an Irish Celtic band playing," said owner Martin Merriman.

"We will also have dancing and will be serving a special menu of authentic Irish food. The oldies radio station will be coming in from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. We hope everyone comes out and has a great time."



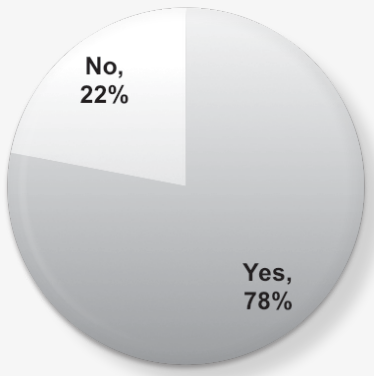
SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

The Irish Chipper is among many local establishments that will celebrate St. Patrick's Day.

No matter where you choose to eat, drink and be merry this holiday you are sure to have a grand time in Cullman. Live music, Irish drinks and lots of food will make for a festive night throughout the city. And as the Irish blessing goes, "May your troubles be less and your blessings be more and nothing but happiness come through your door."

Poll

Do you think the U.S. Supreme Court should repeal the Affordable Care Act?



This Week's Poll

Does your family have a fire evacuation plan?

Vote Today at CullmanSense.com/Poll

cullman city parks & recreation

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

www.cullmanrecreation.org
256-734-9157

- **CP&R Lacrosse:** A FREE Lacrosse clinic will be held at Heritage Park on Saturday, March 21, at 10am. All equipment will be available for use for free, and the clinic will take any interested individuals through the basics of playing the game. The clinic will also feature games to be played. Call 256-739-9931 to register for FREE!
- **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 in March.** 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 .
- **Father/Son Night Out** will take place on Friday, April 17 from 7-10:30pm at Heritage Park. This event will feature great bonding time for sons ages 5-12 and their fathers with games including team events, capture the flag and more. Registration is $30 for a father/son pair at the Civic Center.
- **Mother/Daughter PJ Party** will also take place April 17 from 7-10:30pm at the Wellness & Aquatic Center. Register at the Civic Center for games, makeovers, and great bonding time!

What's Online

CP&R HOSTING PARENT/ CHILD NIGHT OUT

A family night out can be one of the best ways to bond together. CP&R will be holding a Mother/ Daughter PJ Party and a Father/ Son Night Out on Friday, April 17, 2015 from 7p.m.-10:30p.m. Registration is open at the Civic Center.

qrne.ws/330

IRS SCAM BULLIES LOCAL RESIDENTS

A growing scam has been spreading rapidly across the nation, and has affected some residents of Cullman County and surrounding areas. The scam artist will make threatening phone calls to the victim and claim to be from the Internal Revenue Service with the aim of scaring the victim into paying large...

qrne.ws/331

SPRING CLEANING IS RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER

Despite all the snow and ice lately, spring is just around the corner. Flowers will begin to bloom and the grass will suddenly become a lot greener. During the spring, most people find themselves outside, enjoying the sunshine and nice weather. Others will take the opportunity...

qrne.ws/332

2ND FRIDAYS KICKS OFF

CULLMAN CHAMBER AND ROCK THE SOUTH HIGHLIGHT LOCAL TALENT

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com



CHELSEA SPARKS/CULLMANSENSE

The popular band DownSouth lead off the first night of 2nd Fridays and Battle of the Bands.

"I love that Cullman can finally have events like this. We have evolved so much in the past five years."
Ashley Love, 2nd Fridays Attendee

CULLMAN – The Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce launched their kickoff event, 2nd Fridays, where they have partnered with Rock the South for a Battle of the Bands style competition. The event kick-off was the first of a series running from March through October. Local stores in downtown Cullman extended their hours and offered a special giveaway, while local restaurants offered a variety of food & free entertainment for everyone to enjoy, while seeking nominations for the bands that will rival it out in the months to come.

"We put this on primarily for the folks in Cullman that own restaurants and retail businesses," said Cullman Chamber President Leah Bolin. "And for those that don't know Cullman to come out and discover it. That's why partnering with Rock the South was a perfect choice to draw people to our local businesses."

While the weather was not exactly cooperative with cold temperatures, everyone that participated still had a great time listening to the stellar music of DownSouth.

"I like that our hometown has something like this where people can come together and support local bands," said attendee Ashley Love from Trimble. "I love that Cullman can finally have events like this. We have evolved so much in the past five years. We never had events like this, and music like this here just a few years ago."

The first few months of 2nd Fridays will feature Battle of the Bands. Citizens were invited on the kick-off night to nominate their favorite local band to participate in the battle. One band who is hopeful to make the cut is a new band in town called Southern Stitches. Lead singer Jesse Priest and lead guitarist Tyler Phillips were both excited to have the opportunity this event offers. Phillips was especially excited after recently coming back from two tours in Afghanistan with the Marine Corps.

"Music is what we love to do," Priest said. "We play southern rock, we do some original and some covers, we mix it up. We're freshly started but we have a lot of support. It would just be an honor to be nominated; this is a great opportunity for us."

2nd Fridays and Battle of the Bands Schedule

- April 10th - 1st Round
- May 8th - 2nd Round
- June 12th - Final Round
- June 19th - Rock the South

The winner of the final round will perform at the Rock the South music festival. 2nd Fridays, combined with the crowd drawing power of Rock the South, should create a supportive atmosphere for local artists, retailers and restaurants alike, according to Leah Bolin.

More information on this event can be found at CullmanChamber.org/Fridays.

COMICS

WHITE & BLACK • "Future Daughter" • st.edo@cullmansense.com

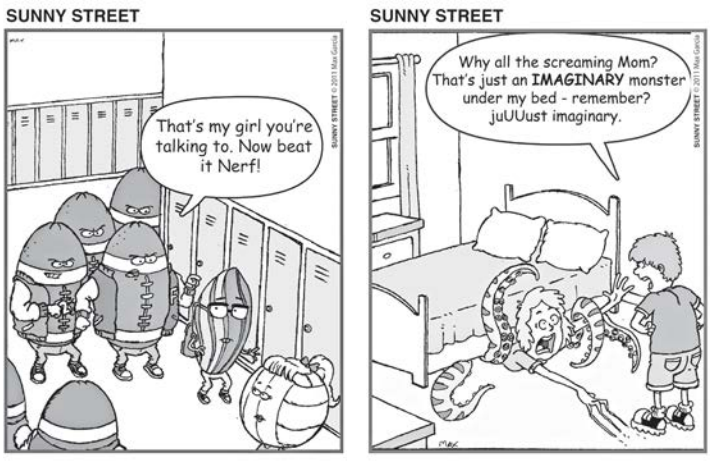


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SPRING RECIPES

STRAWBERRY HOKEY-POKEY CAKE

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

Springtime brings a lot of things like sunshine, green grass, flowers, fresh fruits and vegetables. Celebrate this spring with a poke cake topped with fresh strawberries. This dish will be perfect for Easter Sunday lunch before you hunt those eggs!

Ingredients:

- 1 package - white cake mix (regular size)
- 1-1/4 cups - water
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 cup - canola oil
- 2 packages (10 ounces each) – frozen, sweetened sliced strawberries, thawed
- 2 packages (3 ounces each) strawberry gelatin
- 1 Carton (12 ounces) frozen whipped topping, thawed, divided
- Fresh strawberries

Instructions:

1. Combine the cake mix, water, eggs and oil; beat on low speed for 30 seconds. Beat on medium for 2 minutes.
2. Grease 9 inch round baking dish. Bake at 350° for 25-35 minutes. Cool for 10 minutes out of the pans.
3. Return layers, top side up, to two clean 9-in. round baking pans. Using a larger fork or skewer, poke holes into the cake around 1/2 inch apart.
4. Separate the juice from berries in a measuring cup. Add water to juice to measure 2 cups; pour into a small saucepan. Bring to a boil; stir in gelatin until dissolved. Chill for 30 minutes. Gently spoon over each cake layer. Chill for 2-3 hours.
5. Dip the bottom of one pan into warm water for 10 seconds. Invert cake onto a serving platter. Top with reserved strawberries and 1 cup whipped topping. Place second cake layer over topping.
6. Frost cake with remaining whipped topping. Chill for at least 1 hour.

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 3.5 years old. I am a pure bred Chesapeake Bay Retriever and I currently weigh 63 lbs. I am full of life and I love to play especially in water J. I am good with children and fully house broken and I don't seem to mind the other dogs around me either. 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!

IRISH CREAM



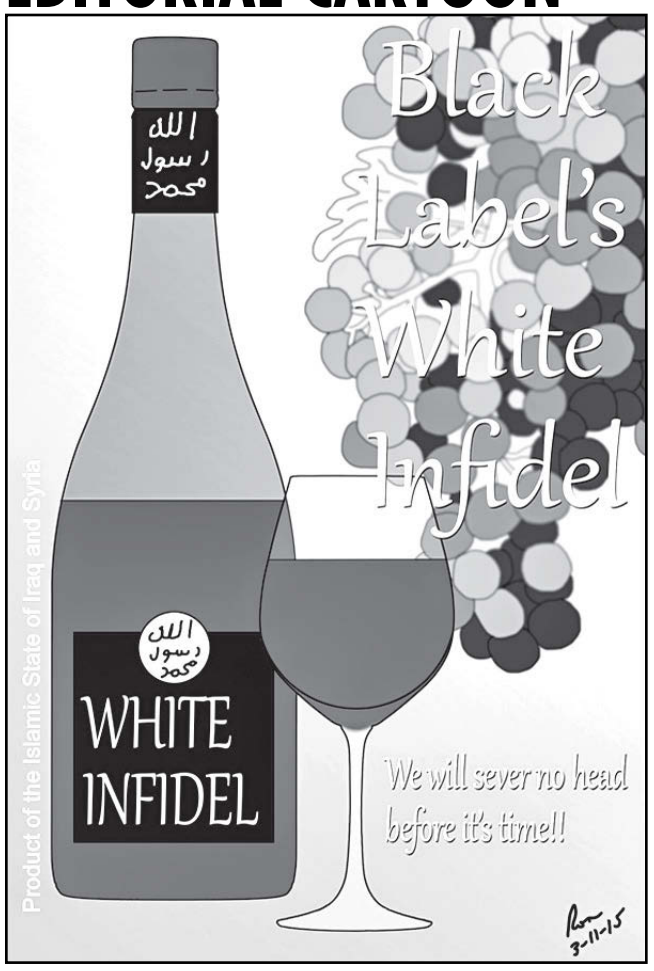
Hello my name is Irish Cream and I am about 1 years old. I am a Samoyed mix and I currently weigh 44 lbs. I am a stray but no one claims me, I will go up for adoption on 03/15/15 at 9 a.m. I am full of life and I love to play, so please come and visit with me! You may find out I'm a lovable companion!

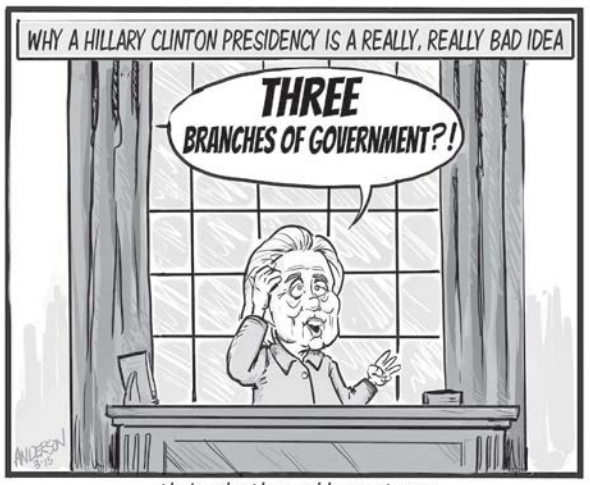
ADOPT THESE PETS TODAY

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.

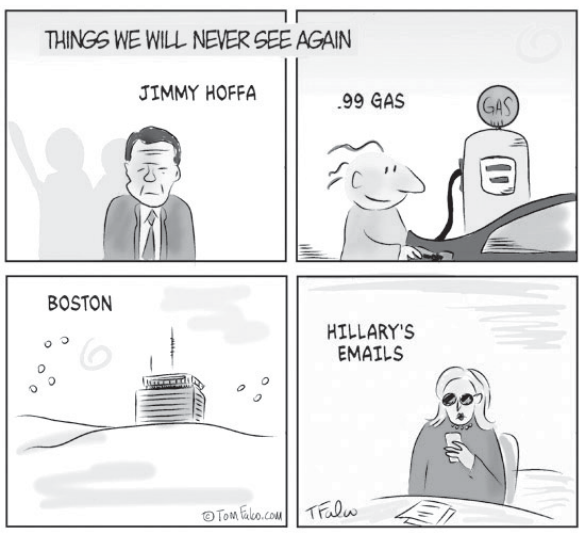
If you know the owner of either dog or if you are interested in adopting one of the dogs, please call 256-734-5448 or come by the Animal Shelter.

EDITORIAL CARTOON





theinsolentlemon.blogspot.com



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OPINION

WE STILL HAVE A LONG WAY TO WALK

ANNIVERSARY OF BLOODY SUNDAY IN SELMA REMINDS US TO KEEP MOVING FORWARD

Chelsea Sparks
chelsea@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Fifty years ago, people of color were subjected to abhorrent treatment in our state, and while it is still not something many want to remember, it is the only way to truly move forward. On March 7, thousands gathered at the bridge in Selma to do just that, not to celebrate, but to remember to keep fighting.

There have been many great strides made toward equality, certainly when comparing today with the events of 50 years ago. The time has not come to simply move on and forget the lessons and atrocities of the past, because in many ways, it is still our present. Many like to think that things like racism, sexism and discrimination are no longer a part of our society; that we have come far enough in this state and country that it should not be a topic discussed. I ask, "How far have we really come?" Stringent voter ID laws are merely a way to restrict the voting population, and injustice in our criminal system where racial profiling runs rampant has locked away a massive amount of black men; meanwhile laws and rhetoric are used every day to undermine women in society, and it wasn't even until the year 2000 that interracial marriage was legalized in Alabama. Not to mention the current treatment of the LGBT minority groups.

While many do not want to look at the ugly faces of our country at present, it is essential to acknowledge our shortcomings if we are to ever achieve a brighter future. Things have taken positive shifts in the past five decades, but these awful mindsets and actions are not gone, they are simply more subtle and buried under a mountain of denial. The first step to solving any problem is admitting that there is one, and then taking a stand to not allow others to simply sweep it under the rug.

Let us not shy away from the truth, but bask in it and understand it. Awareness and education are the only way to achieve true equality, for everyone to truly be free. We are either all equal or none of us are. The blood, sweat and tears of those who have fought for equality before us has brought us too far to turn back now.

OPINION

GREAT SPEECH IN SELMA, MR. PRESIDENT!

Winslow Myers
PeaceVoice

Very stirring and eloquent words at the Edmund Pettus Bridge, Mr. President, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Selma to Montgomery march.

"What they did here will reverberate through the ages. Not because the change they won was preordained; not because their victory was complete; but because they proved that nonviolent change is possible, that love and hope can conquer hate."

Not only that nonviolent change is possible, Mr. President, but that nonviolence is by far the most effective route to change both at home and abroad. So stop sending those drones to kill innocent children in faraway desert lands, murders that create more terrorists than they eliminate!

"What greater expression of faith in the American experiment than this, what greater form of patriotism is there than the belief that America is not yet finished, that we are strong enough to be self-critical, that each successive generation can look upon our imperfections and decide that it is in our power to remake this nation to more closely align with our highest ideals?"

Yes! So rather than forcing him into exile for fear of not getting a fair trial, let's honor the heroism of Edward Snowden for exposing the lies of high officials and their trashing of our inalienable right to freedom and autonomy.

You promised the most transparent government in the history of our country, but there is more secrecy and persecution of whistleblowers than ever.

It's the idea held by generations of citizens who believed that America is a constant work in progress; who believed that loving this country requires more than singing its praises or avoiding uncomfortable truths. It requires the occasional disruption, the willingness to speak out for what is right, to shake up the status quo. That's America."

Indeed it is. And that is why it is a tragedy that no one has been held accountable under the law for the web of deceit that led us into the tragic, budget-busting military campaigns that have only planted the seeds for further violence in the Mideast. These wars went forward in the face of the largest peaceful citizen protest marches in the history of the world.

"What a glorious thing, Dr. King might say. And what a solemn debt we owe. Which leads us to ask, just how might we repay that debt?"

One way we can repay that debt and we ourselves can shine in the light of Dr. King's glory is not to forget Dr. King's truth-telling connection of ill-considered, futile wars abroad with eradicable poverty and racism at home.

"'We are capable of bearing a great burden,' James Baldwin once wrote, 'once we discover that the burden is reality and arrive where reality is.'

There's nothing America can't handle if we actually look squarely at the problem . . . If we want to honor the courage of those who marched that day, then all of us are called to possess their moral imagination. All of us will need to feel as they did the fierce urgency of now. All of us need to recognize as they did that change depends on our actions, on our attitudes, the things we teach our children. And if we make such an effort, no matter how hard it may sometimes seem, laws can be passed, and consciences can be stirred, and consensus can be built."

Right on. These rousing words remind us of your past speeches advocating for the abolition of nuclear weapons. Instead, our government plans to spend untold dollars desperately needed for meeting real human needs on the renewal of our nuclear arsenal, arrogantly disregarding our solemn obligation as a signatory of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty to ramp down and finally eliminate these expensive, useless world-destroying weapons.

"Of course, our democracy is not the task of Congress alone, or the courts alone, or even the President alone. If every new voter-suppression law was struck down today, we would still have, here in America, one of the lowest voting rates among free peoples. . .

What's our excuse today for not voting? How do we so casually discard the right for which so many fought? How do we so fully give away our power, our voice, in shaping America's future?"

Could it have anything to do with cynicism and disillusion with a political game that is rigged against authentic democracy from the get-go, the corruption at the heart of our politics and economics encouraged by our own highest court, corruption that equates money with speech, rotting our electoral system from within, corruption that allows ethically challenged bankers not only to walk free but also to be bailed out by the hard-earned tax dollars of ordinary citizens?

"That's what it means to love America. That's what it means to believe in America. That's what it means when we say America is exceptional."

Sadly, America is also exceptional in its grinding contradictions, as your speech itself demonstrates despite its obvious good intentions and unifying rhetoric. America is indeed exceptional in the incarcerated percentage of its population, in infant mortality, in the number of people who may be uncertain from where their next meal is coming. The exceptional promise of our country will truly be realized when principles applied in one compartment of our national life become relevant to all compartments.

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