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CULLMANSENSE
COMMUNITY MATTERS


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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INCIDENT TURNS INTO SHOOTING AT DODGE CITY PETRO LUBE

Noah Chandler
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DODGE CITY – A domestic violence incident escalated to a shooting at the Dodge City Petro Lube Sunday evening around 6 p.m. Michael Dakota Libauskas, 29 years old of Hanceville, was arrested after a shooting at the Dodge City Petro Lube.

"A domestic incident earlier in the day between Libauskas and his girlfriend, who works at the Petro Lube, continued when the girlfriend told a co-worker about the domestic incident and the co-worker contacted Libauskas about the domestic incident," Cullman County Sheriff Matt Gentry said.

Sheriff Gentry said Libauskas then showed up to the Petro Lube to confront the co-worker and began chasing and shooting at him.

"I would like to thank the deputies for their quick response to this situation which kept it from being much worse," Sheriff Gentry said. "The victim did not sustain any injuries."

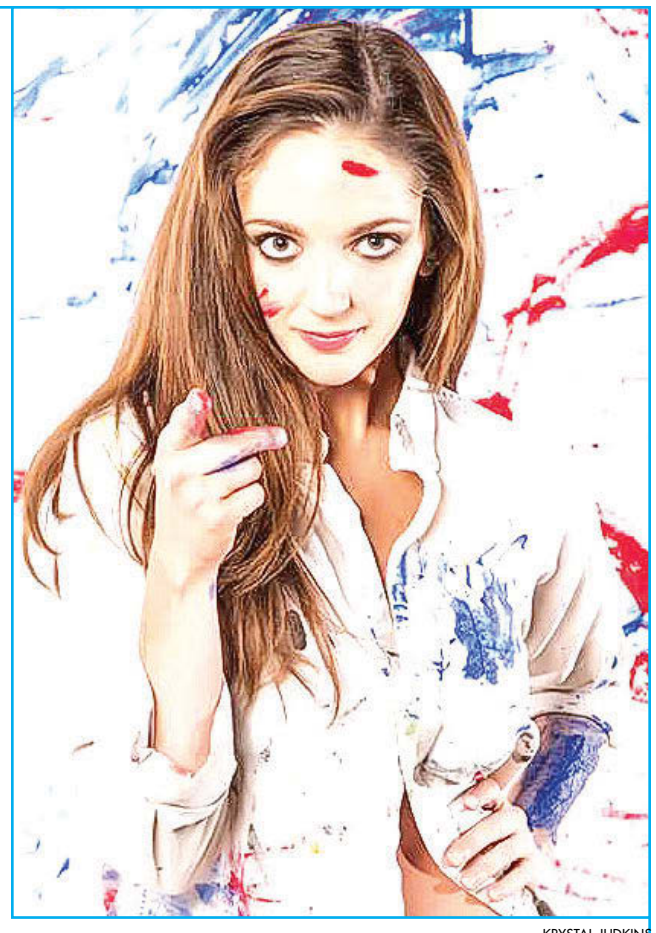
Mr. Labauskis is being charged with Domestic Violence 3rd Degree-Harassment and Attempted Murder. He is being held at the Cullman County Detention Center with no bond.


CCSO

Michael Dakota Labauskis

PAINTING HER PASSION: KRYSTAL CORLEY JUDKINS LAUNCHES FUNDRAISER TO ACHIEVE HER DREAMS

"THE WAY I FELT WAS LIKE MAGIC...LIKE I FOUND WHATEVER I WAS SUPPOSED TO DO ON THIS EARTH."
KRYSTAL CORLEY JUDKINS, PAINTER


KRYSTAL JUDKINS

Corley is raising money to attend the Kentuck Festival of the Arts to gain exposure for her artwork. P6

AREA SENIOR CITIZENS GET DOWN AT SPORTSMAN LAKE P4


SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Senior citizens from across the county came out to Sportsman Lake for the annual shindig.

HANCEVILLE FIRE DEPT. GIVES VOLUNTEER FIRE FIGHTER CERTIFICATION CLASS

Hannah Ward
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HANCEVILLE – The Hanceville Fire Department recently finished up a volunteer fire fighter certification class. The class was a four-month long program, which had four blocks. Thirteen students successfully finished the class and eight fire departments in the surrounding cities participated in the course. Hanceville Fire Department did all the training. Some other instructors from the other P9


HANCEVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Hanceville Fire Department's certified instructors taught the certification class.

STUDENT DONATES 419 BOOKS TO CRMC PEDIATRIC UNIT


CRMC

Angel Kline, director of 3east and 3west and Chloe Bales pictured with the donated books. P3

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DR. SUSAN PATTERSON TO REPLACE DR. DOREEN GRIFFETH AS CULLMAN CITY SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT

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CULLMAN – At a special called meeting Thursday afternoon by the Cullman City School Board, Dr. Doreen Griffeth officially resigned as superintendent following her second year in the system, leaving the reigns to Dr. Susan Patterson.

"On behalf of the entire board, I would like to thank Dr. Griffeth for the time she has devoted to the Cullman City School System," Steven Sides, CBOE President said. "Dr. Griffeth has been a strong instructional leader with great rapport among administrators and coordinators, working long hours and supporting CCS students across all academic and athletic activities."

Dr. Griffeth was hired in July 2013 and signed a three-year contract. With one year remaining on her contract, the CBOE was able to negotiate a severance package following a sub-par evaluation which was conducted by the Alabama Association of School Boards in recent weeks. The total severance package is $92,578.

However, Sides outlined via a slideshow how the severance package would be handled and explained that the school system would only be responsible for $2,324 to cover Dr. Griffeth's final six months.

After accepting Dr. Griffeth's resignation, the school board voted unanimously to hire Dr. Patterson, who was hired in 2014 by Dr. Griffeth as Cullman City Schools Director of Federal Programs and Career Tech.

"The board is confident in our existing leadership team, and because of this, we have asked Dr. Susan Patterson to serve as the Interim Superintendent for the next six months," Sides said. "Our CFO, Russell Raney, will work with Dr. Patterson to ensure a smooth transition."

Dr. Patterson had spent eight years as Fairview Middle School principal before making the transition into the city system in 2014. She said the opportunity to serve as interim superintendent was one which caught her by surprise.

"It was suddenly that I learned of the position and I'm very excited to step into the role," Dr. Patterson said. "As I've said I've been an educator for 25 years and there as so many possibilities here in Cullman City, they are already doing such great things."

Dr. Patterson will be allotted a salary of $125,000 and will also receive a $500 per month car allowance for her 6 month term.

To view Dr. Griffeth's full AASB evaluation, along with all press releases and information released by CCSBOE and Dr. Patterson visit CullmanSense.com.

AS ALABAMA'S LEGISLATIVE SESSION ENDS, ZERO ANTI-LGBT BILLS ADVANCE

Hubert Tate
Contributor

MONTGOMERY – Despite various discriminatory anti-LGBT bills being considered and debated over the past few months, the Alabama Legislature concluded this year's legislative session on Thursday without a single piece of anti-LGBT of legislation becoming law. In addition, a handful of pro-equality bills that would have added explicit new protections for LGBT Alabamians were introduced in this year's session.

HRC Alabama saw both of these developments as noteworthy signs of progress, and urged lawmakers in future legislative sessions to keep discriminatory legislation where it belongs: in the dustbin of history.

"Alabama's future is bright, and its future will be even brighter when we win the critical legal protections that LGBT Alabamians rightly deserve as citizens of our state and our great country," said HRC Alabama Director Patricia Todd.

"In addition, passing these protections would enhance the ability of Alabama's businesses to attract and retain the nation's top talent, and would signal to private sector leaders across the country that Alabama is an open and welcoming place to invest and create jobs. Importantly, not only will HRC Alabama continue to work aggressively to one day make full equality in our state a reality, we will do whatever we can to ensure that discriminatory legislation remains where it belongs: in the dustbin of history. While some may think of such measures as part of Alabama's past, I hope all Alabamians agree that it should absolutely not be a part of our shared future."

HRC Alabama is working to advance equality for LGBT Alabamians who have no statewide protections in housing, workplace, or public accommodations; and legal state recognition for their relationships and families.

Through HRC Alabama, we are working toward a future of fairness every day—changing hearts, minds and laws toward achieving full equality.

REMODELED MARGARET INGLE PARK TO FEATURE VARIETY OF IMPROVEMENTS

Hannah Ward
ward@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – The Cullman City Parks and Recreation Department is at it again. They have started remodel on an old park Cullman has grown to love and will hopefully soon love even more. The remodeling of Margaret Ingle Park is shaping up to make it one of the most attractive spots in Cullman.

According to Nathan Anderson, executive director of Cullman Parks and Recreation, "At its completed state, the remodeled park will feature a new state-of-the-art inclusive playground suitable for children with all abilities, a beautiful butterfly cutting garden that will be open to anyone who would like to pick seasonal flowers and a large pavilion that will include new restrooms, which will be a great addition to the park, as well as Championship Field. We will also have a fun splash pad that will provide a great way to cool off in warmer weather. The park's amphitheater will be an excellent place to host small to medium gatherings. We will also be making improvements to landscaping, expanding the walkways to start a new greenway path and the basketball courts will be resurfaced."

A project like this takes time and patience. The first phase, which will include a multi-use trail, new bathrooms, the pavilion, resurfaced basketball courts, removal of the current fencing, landscaping and new signage, is currently underway. Cullman City Parks and Recreation is hoping to complete this initial phase by this fall. The project will consist of multiple stages that will be completed as funds are available. The necessary funding for this project will come from multiple sources, including capital funding, grants and community fundraisers.

Anderson explained the reason for remodel, "We knew that we needed to address this park after the completion of Championship Field. It is our mission to make this park unique while addressing some of the needs of our community. This park will be more than just a fun place to play; it will be a great place to read a book, have a picnic, exercise or catch a game. It has the potential to meet many of the physical, social and emotional needs of its occupants."

Presently Margaret Ingle Park consists of a baseball field, basketball courts and a playground, but it needed something else, and as Cullman City Parks and Recreation Board Member Woody Jacobs stated eloquently, "Over the years, CP&R has made many improvements to our community. We feel this will be another great addition. This will be a wonderful resource not only for our citizens, but also for the many people who visit Cullman each year." Especially for the thousands of families that visit the baseball fields each year.



SHIRLEY BURDEN

The remodeled park will feature improvements such as a multi-use trail, new bathrooms, a pavilion, and resurfaced basketball courts.

Cullman City Mayor Max A. Townson expressed his enthusiasm for the park, "This will be a fantastic project for this area! I'm glad to see the City Parks & Recreation Department take the initiative to do something for this important section of our community. A lot of people in the community will be very fortunate to have this at their immediate disposal, where they can use it routinely."

Today Margaret Ingle Park's hours are from sunrise to sunset, and that will be one of the few things that will stay the same.

Margaret Ingle Park is located at 1625 Cleveland Ave. SW Cullman, AL 35055



HANCEVILLE'S SUMMER READING PROGRAM HAS CHILDREN RUBBING ELBOWS WITH LOCAL HEROES



SHIRLEY BURDEN

Children met local officials including Mayor Kenneth Nail, the Chief of Police Bob Long, and Fire Chief Roger Green.

Sharon Schuler Kreps
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HANCEVILLE – Last Tuesday was the first day of Hanceville Public Library's Summer Reading Program. The day's theme was 'Hometown Heroes' and the children got to meet a lot of people that the residents of Hanceville consider to be their heroes. The event took place behind the library where the youngsters were welcome to ask the heroes questions about their jobs.

"Yesterday was about the local super heroes or hometown heroes like policemen, firemen, etc.," said Alma Briscoe, library volunteer. "We got to meet Mayor Kenneth Nail, the Chief of Police Bob Long, Fire Chief Roger Green and others."

The highlight of the day was when the children got to take a ride on the county's oldest fire truck, which belongs to Hanceville's Fire Department. The old truck was driven by Mayor Nail and the group even had a police escort. There were pictures taken of the children from atop the 100-foot ladder truck, and everyone was treated to a surprise – being sprayed with water from the truck.

"There were 36 children and 22 adults that came, and so far, we've heard nothing but positive things about the event," said Librarian Shirley Burden.

"Hope to see you all next Tuesday; we will be having someone here from the McWane Center. It will be a Science Superhero program."

"It was awesome today," said Marsha Hawthorne, a parent at the event.

"Thanks to all of our hometown heroes for making today great memories and for all you do every day!"

Children interested in attending the library's Summer Reading Program are welcome to come to the library each Tuesday at 2 p.m. through the month of June. The library is located at 201 Commercial Street, Hanceville, AL 35077. For more information, call 256-352-0685. Follow them on Facebook at Facebook.com/pages/Hanceville-Public-Library/783840161647948.

SUMMER YOUTH CLASSES OFFERED AT WALLACE STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Gail Crutchfield
WSCC Contributor

HANCEVILLE – Summer break has just started for area students, but there are plenty of opportunities for them to keep learning, while having a good time doing it.

The Wallace State Community College Continuing Education program is offering a number of classes specifically for area youth. The course offered range from art and dance to etiquette and pageant preparation. Classes will be held throughout the month of June.

Hip Hop Dance classes will be offered in two sessions, the first for students in grades six through eight and the second for grades nine through 12. All classes will be held from 1 to 3 p.m., in the choreography room of the Burrow Center for the Fine and Performing Arts. The first session will hold classes on Tuesday, June 16 and 23, and the second session classes on Thursday, June 18 and 25. Christian Hip Hop artist Michael Lake will be the instructor for these classes. The fee for the classes is $25.

Cullman photographer Theresa Burns will teach a digital photography class from 1 to 4 p.m., Wednesday, June 17 on the ninth floor of the James C. Bailey Building. The fee is $25. Bring your own digital camera and wear comfortable walking shoes.

Artist Lauran Willingham Walker will teach two different classes, one utilizing plastic bottle lids and the other using the palette knife to create a painting. The Upcycled Tree Painting class will be held from 1 to 4 p.m., Tuesday, June 23, with the Palette Knife Painting class at the same time on Thursday, June 25. The fees for each class are $25, plus $10 for supplies. For the Upcycled Tree Painting class, you are asked to save lids you can use in your artwork.

Certified etiquette, image and protocol consultant Faith Landers will teach the two final classes of the Summer Youth program. Etiquette and Self Confidence is the subject of a Monday, June 29 class, followed by a Pageant Prep class on Tuesday, June 30. Both classes will be held from 9 a.m. to noon on the 12th floor of the James C. Bailey Building. The fee for each class is $25.

To register or for information about these and other classes offered by Wallace State Continuing Education, call 256-353-7826 or visit wallacestate.edu/ce.

Books (from Front)

Meredith Easterwood
CRMC

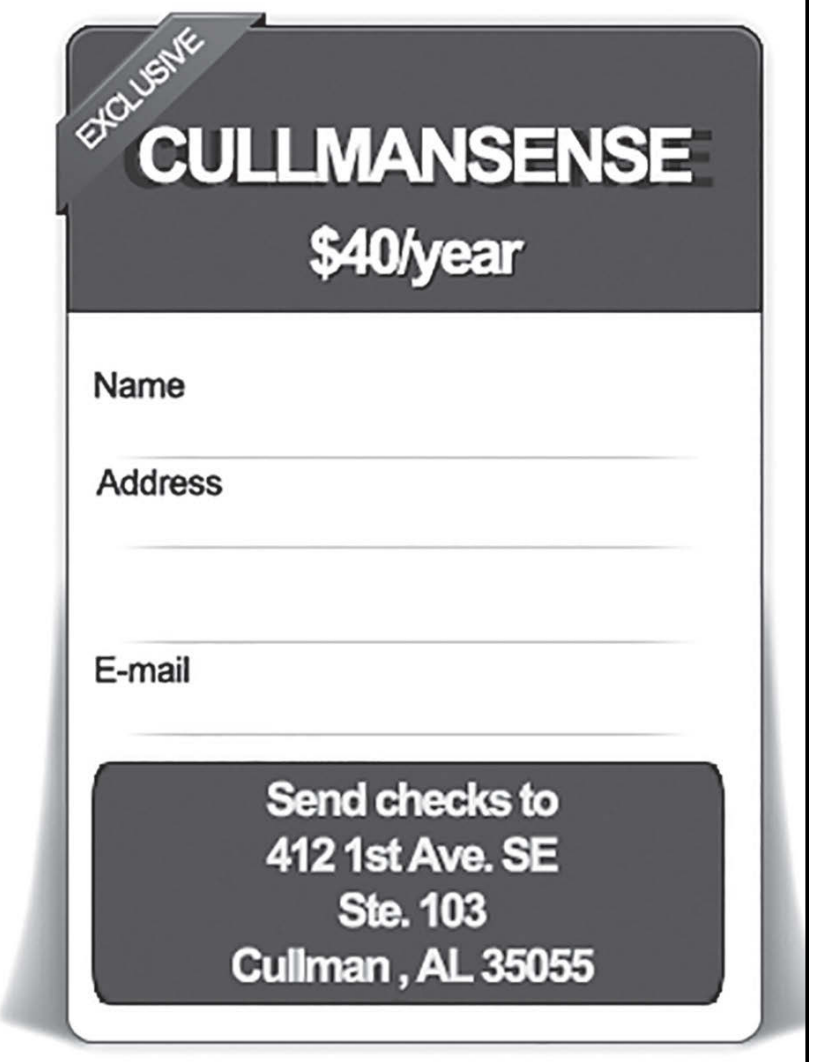
CULLMAN – Chloe Bales, a twelve year-old student from St. Paul's Lutheran School recently donated 419 books to the Cullman Regional Medical Pediatric Unit. "I've always had a love of books," said Bales. "I just decided to share my love of books with kids who are hurt or sick."

For her sixth grade Capstone project, Bales organized a children's book drive to benefit CRMC pediatric patients. She collected new and gently used books by setting up donation boxes throughout St. Paul's Church. She never imagined that she would collect so many books for the kids.

"Chloe is a perfect example of how young people of Cullman are making a difference every day," commented Angel Kline, Director of 3east and 3west. "It is nice to know that our community has youth that are actively working to touch the lives of others. Her book donation is a blessing for our pediatric patients that will get countless hours of enjoyment. We appreciate St. Paul's school for allowing her the opportunity to use their school as a collection point."

For more information on Cullman Regional Medical Center, call 256-737-2000 or visit online at crmchospital.com.

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June 8, 2015

RELIGIOUS SPOTLIGHT: FAITH TABERNACLE CHURCH'S BROTHER LUMMIE SPEAKMAN

Sharon Schuler Kreps
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CULLMAN – Faith Tabernacle Church, located on 4th Street SW in Cullman, was originally established in 1968. It was known as Full Gospel Mission. In 1970 they became First Pentecostal Church of Cullman, and later in 1984, they changed their name to Faith Tabernacle. Brother Lummie Speakman has been the pastor of the church for many years. Humble and devout, Brother Lummie is proud to call Faith Tabernacle home.

"I have been Pastor here at Faith Tabernacle for the past 45 years," he smiled. "I have helped with other churches across Alabama, but this has been the part of the vineyard in which our Lord has entrusted me with, and I am thankful to have been able to serve Him in this calling all these years."

Bro. Lummie was raised on a farm here in Cullman. Born the son of a sharecropper, farm life was all he knew growing up. He and his wife Sue have been married for 56 years and they have two children and five grandchildren.

"I was saved June 26, 1967 while at my job which was at Hayes International Corp. in Birmingham," he explained. "The previous Thursday, I experienced a vision while driving to work. In the vision I entered a 'fog' and when I came out, I was saying 'I'll go to church' as fast as I could, but didn't know why. The following Monday while at my workstation, the Spirit of our Lord convicted me of my sins and I turned my life over to him that day."

"God called me into The Ministry in 1969," he continued. "I began preaching in jails that year but didn't begin to fulfill my calling as a Pastor until the following year (1970). The Lord Jesus gave me a dream one night and in this dream I saw a beautiful blue sky and in the sky was five puffy clouds. Coming down through the sky was a glowing, red-hot iron bar and it continued down until it just lightly touched one of the clouds. It was impressed into my heart that the Five Clouds represented the Five-Fold Ministry of Eph 4:11, the iron bar represented the Spirit of God and the cloud that it touched was the office of Pastor."

Pastoring a church can be tough at times, but very rewarding. It can be hard work and takes a special person to persevere in their mission to serve the Lord.

"I consider the biggest challenge would be seeing so many people pass up the opportunity the God of Heaven has given them," he said solemnly. "He has done so many things in our time to manifest Himself to the world but yet so many pass it by. Knowing what lies ahead for those who choose to ignore God, is something that brings sadness to my heart."



PATRICK JENKINS

Brother Lummie Speakman has been the pastor at Faith Tabernacle Church for 45 years.

Bro. Lummie lit up like a light when he spoke of the good times of his ministry.

"The most rewarding moment has to be when God, by His Spirit, opened up the Scriptures to us all those years ago," he grinned. "He allowed us to see who The Lord Jesus Christ truly was, that truly was a wonderful time. Being able to share this Apostolic Faith with the community of Cullman and areas all around has certainly been a rewarding experience."

When talking about God and all the wonderful things he has done for us, Brother Lummie humbly shines. He loves his church and helping everyone find their way to God. He is an inspiration to everyone he meets.

"I thank you for allowing me to share a little bit about myself, our Church but most importantly, the wonderful things God has done. I invite all readers to come and join us. Services begin at 10 a.m. every Sunday. May God richly bless you all."

Faith Tabernacle Church is located at 1214 4th St SW, Cullman, Alabama 35055. For more information, call them at 256-736-5884 or follow them on Facebook at Facebook.com/FaithTabCullman.

"I consider the biggest challenge would be seeing so many people pass up the opportunity the God of Heaven has given them."

Brother Lummie Speakman of Faith Tabernacle Church

Seniors (from Front)

Sharon Schuler Kreps
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CULLMAN – On Friday, local senior citizens, along with their families, enjoyed a day of fun at Sportsman Lake Park. During the park's annual shindig, the seniors were able to participate in all park activities including putt-putt golf, train rides and the paddleboats - free of charge. While there, the seniors shared a delicious meal together at no cost.

The largest group of people sat under a couple of large tents and listened to a bluegrass concert. After the concert, there were all kinds of contests they were able to compete in.

There was lots of hog calling, buck dancing and even a few got out and did 'The Twist' in hopes of outdoing their competitors. Everyone had a blast as they watched the 'Seniors Got Talent' talent show.

There was a lookalike contest, as well as a sweet tooth contest where everyone brought in their favorite homemade sweets for a chance at winning a prize.

There were also many area healthcare agencies on site, which added to the fun. Each had booths with plenty of freebies, information and friendly people who gladly talked about their services.

"We are at the Shindig here in Cullman, and we have it every year for the seniors," smiled Debi Murphy, consultant for Comfort Care Hospice and Home Health.

"We are giving out watermelons and trying to give the seniors a treat. We've had a great turnout so far, there have been about 200 people so far."

"We are having a good time," said Holly Lansford, senior.

"There are a lot of things to see and a lot of information available for seniors. So far, my favorite part has been the watermelon, it was delicious," she smiled.

"I brought my granddaughter Angel with me today. Plus some of my friends are here, too. One of them is on the stage about to do 'The Twist,'" she pointed toward the stage.

"I've come out to this a couple times. I'm not able to get here every year though."

"We are having a good time. There are a lot of things to see and a lot of information available for seniors."

Holly Lunsford, Senior

POSITION AVAILABLE

Program Facilitator needed for local domestic violence intervention program.

Full time, BS degree required. Send resume to: vsoced@vsoccullman.org

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WHEN LIQUID CROSS MEANT LIQUID COOL

POPULAR 1970S BAND WAS PROUD TO CALL CULLMAN HOME



FACEBOOK.COM/GROUPS/156992987709020

Cullman's own band, Liquid Cross, went on to play all over the southeast during the 1970s.

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Everyone knows that Cullman is considered to be the cream of the crop as far as agriculture is concerned, but it is also very well known for its many talented and charismatic citizens. Scattered throughout town, wonderful works of art from local artists can be found hanging on office walls or behind cash registers. Musicians can always be heard at Berkeley Bob's Coffee House, playing away to the crowds of area music enthusiasts. Sadly, the music lovers of today won't ever know the greatness of the early '70s band Liquid Cross.

Liquid Cross formed when a group of Cullman High School band members decided to get together on their own time and form a pep band to perform at basketball games during the winter. All total, there were about 18 total musicians up for the task – four to five members of the trumpet section, a few trombone players, several saxophone players, a guitar player, a drummer and a keyboard player. The gang would meet at the home of Tony Wachter for practice and then later, they'd lug their equipment into the gymnasium and play big band music and a few pop tunes that were popular at that time.

"I found in this group what was to become the nucleus of the band Liquid Cross," said Tony Wachter, saxophone player. "Michael Reid was our guitar player in the big band along with Billy Teichmiller on trap drums. Steve Davis was the keyboardist, myself, Jamey Goodlett and Dennis Morgan rounded out the early formation on sax, trumpet and trombone, respectively."

The band originally called themselves the name 'Keep on Truckin,' and before long, they added an additional member, a bass player from Decatur named Ray Cheatham. Not long after that, they added a singer and considered themselves a band. Horn bands like Chicago were popular at the time, and Keep on Truckin' played a lot of that kind of music.

Keep on Truckin' played their first concert at the skating rink in Decatur. After that, they began playing shows at the local National Guard Armory, and eventually, they started advertising with the local radio stations and had gigs pop up all over town.

After the band had a few events under their belt, they decided a name change was due. Liquid Cross is definitely a peculiar name for a band, and the way the guys chose the name was just as unique.

"Many names were bandied about but none seemed suitable," said Wachter, "so we decided to go to the high school library, shut our eyes and dragged our fingers down a row of books until someone yelled 'Stop'. The book that was stopped on would be the band's name," he grinned.

"I was tasked with performing that exercise so I shut my eyes, dragged across the titles until 'Stop' was proclaimed," he continued. "The name of the book stopped on was 'Macabre'. I don't think any of us wanted that name but the book to the immediate left was a book called 'Liquid Cross' and that's what we called the band."

Liquid Cross continued to grow in popularity and eventually became one of the 'Southeastern Attractions' featured bands from 1972 to 1975. They played all over the southeast and even did shows with Little Richard, Franki Valli and the Four Seasons, Archie Bell and the Drells, the New Christy Minstrels and others. The band later became Uncle Funk with members from Columbus, Miss.

After the band disbanded, Tony Wachter went on to be a partner at Boutwell Recording Studios in Birmingham. He has written and performed in hundreds of commercial jingles as a singer. He has also been a part of a Grammy nominated recording (Mason Williams) as an engineer and has won two gold records for engineering for Frederick Knight. Michael Reid later was a member of the bands HOTEL and WANG CHUNG. He now lives in Los Angeles and is a successful songwriter, engineer and producer.

Other members included Rick McKuen who now performs with Jim Stafford. Another member was keyboardist Jeff Bone from Decatur, who passed away in 2007. Jamey Goodlett passed away in a car accident in the late '70s. Billy Teichmiller went on to play with the Crawlers out of Huntsville, and Steve Davis played in several groups in the '80s.

MIRRORING HISTORY: ST. BERNARD PREP GYM

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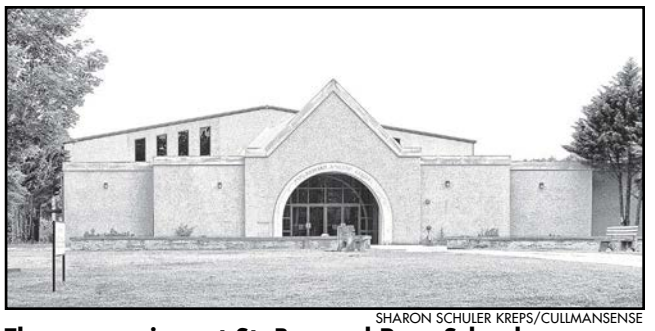
CULLMAN – From 1892 to 1979, the monks at St. Bernard Abbey operated a high school, junior college, four-year college and seminary. Now St. Bernard Preparatory School, which opened in 1984, is the recipient of this Catholic educational heritage.

The gymnasium at St. Bernard looks very different and modern compared to the one that originally stood on the grounds of the campus. Something that hasn't changed in all the years is the student's enthusiasm to enjoy lots of good times as they exercise within the gym's walls.



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

St. Bernard Prep's history dates back to 1892.



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

The gymnasium at St. Bernard Prep School looks very different than it did years ago.

cullman city parks & recreation cp&r

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

www.cullmanrecreation.org
256-734-9157

- **Friday Nights at Festhalle** will take place on Friday, June 5th from 4pm-9pm. The event will feature live bands, free kids games and activities, and fresh produce at the Farmer's Market. Event is FREE to attend!
- **Women's Self Defense Class** starts June 9 and will take place for 4 weeks at 6pm on Tuesday nights through June 30. Cost is $45 which includes a manual; register through June 8 at the Cullman Civic Center.
- **Just Play!** This FREE program for children 5-12 years old will start Friday, June 12 at Culpepper Park. Organized games such as capture the flag, relay games, and more will be held from 1pm-3pm. The program will take place every Friday in June and July . See our website for a full lineup.
- **CP&R Arts Classes** will be offered for homeschoolers and pre-school age students in our Mommy & Me Class starting in June. Call 256-734-9157 for more information.
- **FREE Exercise in the Park** will take place every 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month at 2pm. This Sunday, May 7 will feature a FREE Pilates Class at Heritage Park. Meet at the recognition gardens!
- **Archery Camp** will be held June 29-July 1 at the Cullman Archery Park. Registration is now open at the Cullman Civic Center; call 256-734-9157 for more information.
- **Speed & Agility Camp** will be held this summer for ages 6-14. Starts June 9; two week sessions are available for $60 or 6 weeks for $135. Camp will be taught by Steve Johnson. Call 256-734-9157 or come by the Cullman Civic Center to register.
- **Jr. Golf Clinics** are registering now at the Cullman Golf Course. Clinics will be held every Tuesday in June starting June 2. Cost is $60 for the 5 weeks and includes instruction from PGA Golf Pro Ches Harris. Call 256-739-2386 for details.
- **Cullman Gymnastics and Cheer** is registering now for summer classes in cheer, tumble, and gymnastics. Classes are filling up FAST, so stop by the gym to signup today. Summer classes start June 8. Call 256-739-5567 for more info.

SMITH FARMS: MEATS & TREATS AND THE BEST OF EATS

Hannah Ward
ward@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – From a roadside stand to a two-store location business, Smith Farms has grown immensely since entrepreneur Rodger Turner purchased it in 2001. In 2005 he moved by the interstate to boost business. Because of its success, he realized it was time to grow. He then opened a sister store in Heflin, Ala.

The Smith family started Smith Farms out as a roadside stand selling meats and vegetables. Today Smith Farms is a successful business that sells all sorts of authentic southern products. Whether you are looking to stock up on groceries or create a special dinner, Smith Farms has everything you need to assist in making it a classy event.

Turner claimed, "You can find things here you can't find anywhere else. You can probably walk down there and find things you had never seen before." Although Smith Farms sells a lot more than it did originally, it still offers the meats, canned vegetables, fruit and cheese that is has become known for. The charming shop additionally offers delicious fudges and candy. Any type of sauce you can think of to season your meat you can most likely find at Smith Farms.

This Cullman treasure is not strictly local, they currently ship all over the U.S. Cullman just happens to be lucky enough to have them within driving distance.

Turner discussed everything that Smith Farms has to offer, "I have a lot of Amish stuff: the canned goods, the pickles, the jerky. A lot of the cheese, I got some Nebraska cheese. I have local honey. We do a lot of the aged, thick cut steaks. Rib-eye, filet, New York strip, we smoke the bacon, the bellies and ham. The steak comes from a guy in Nebraska. The hams and bacon come in fresh. I salt it, cure it, smoke it, slice it and put it out."

Smith Farms sells a variety of wines. They offer white and red in their own private labeling. Turner explained, "When we went wet, I brought in the wine cellar. We've got a lot of wines you can't find anywhere else. I get it from all over, some from Europe, some Chilean wines. I do have a private label that is bottled over in Albertville."

"We also keep hot Boston butts, baby back ribs and chicken on the weekend. You can pick them up and carry them home." Great for a family dinner on the weekend, Smith Farms' delicious smoked meats are a sure fire way to get your whole family together. Help Cullman thrive by supporting a local business. Visit Smith Farms today. They are open Monday through Sunday from 10:30 a.m to 6 p.m. Smith Farms in Cullman is located at 1825 4th Street SW Cullman, AL 35055. You can order online SmithFarmsAlabama.com or call them. Their Cullman location is 256-737-0505 and their Heflin location is 256-463-4400. Find them on Facebook under Smith Farms Cullman.



HANNAH WARD/CULLMANSENSE

Smith Farms sells a variety of authentic southern products.



HANNAH WARD/CULLMANSENSE

Smith Farms offers a wide selection of cheeses.



HANNAH WARD/CULLMANSENSE

Along with imported wines Smith Farms also offers a private label that is bottled in Albertville

Judkins (from Front)

Mary Standifer
mary@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Local artist Krystal Corley Judkins is seeking help to fund an opportunity to participate in the prestigious Kentuck Festival of the Arts in Northport, Ala. The artist has started a Kickstarter fundraiser to raise $5,000 to help her achieve her dreams.

She has always enjoyed art and credits her family as being a major influence for her passion. "I've always been in art as far back as I can remember, but it was always drawing and what not," Judkins said.

In 2009, she began her paintings. "I don't even know why I started; I just thought I would go buy a canvas and some paint," she explained, "It was a 16x20; it took me two weeks, but I felt so accomplished when I got done. The way I felt was like magic... like I found whatever I was supposed to do on this earth."

The artist has yet to find a genre that truly represents her style of art. Her unique style varies all the way from landscapes to superheroes.

Judkins uses her talents to support her family. She paints commission pieces of many different subjects while also working as a waitress at Cracker Barrel. Her husband unfortunately was recently laid off from his work. In order to attend the Kentuck Festival of the Arts, she will need time to paint a stock of pieces that she will display and sell at the festival. This means that instead of making money by selling her commission pieces as normal, she is having to devote more time to preparing her stock without being able to immediately sell the pieces.

The money raised from the fundraiser will help Judkins purchase supplies for her paintings as well as keep her family's bills under control for the time it will take to prepare her stock.

Attending the festival will give her both the exposure and the funds from painting sales she needs to join the Flying Monkey Art Guild at Low Mill in Huntsville so that she may work and support her family while doing something she is truly passionate about.

Fans can view the video explaining her fundraiser by visiting her Facebook page at Facebook.com/KrystalCorleyArt. "Even if you can't help monetarily, if you feel inclined after you view it to share it, please share it," Judkins asked of her fan base and friends.

The Kickstarter ends July 27. Visit Kickstarter.com/projects/krystalcorleyart/help-krystal-get-to-kentuck to donate to her cause.



KRYSTAL JUDKINS

An artist since childhood, Judkins has launched a Kickstarter to fund her attendance to the Kentuck Festival of the Arts.

4TH ANNUAL MUSIC FEST AND CAR SHOW AT SPORTSMAN LAKE BENEFITS DAYSTAR HOUSE, INC.

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – On Saturday, Sportsman Lake hosted their 4th Annual Music Fest and Car Show. The event featured the Cullman Community Band, Winslow Davis, Microwave Dave, Bimini Road, Roy Crawford and friends, and more. Concessions were available, and all proceeds went to benefit Daystar House, Inc. - a homeless shelter for women and women with children, which is a United Way Agency.

"This is our fundraiser and it is the fourth year we've been doing it," said Brenda Thomas, senior director of Daystar House, Inc. "What you see with the music and the groups, it's all donated. We do have a cost for the hamburgers and hotdogs, but the music is free to enjoy. The music groups all donated their time today, so we want everyone to come out and have a great time," she smiled.

People of all ages were at the lake, listening to the great music and admiring all the great cars that were on display. The grilled hamburgers and hotdogs were delicious and lots of them were sold during the event. Thankfully the weather cooperated, making the day nice for everyone in attendance.

"I have really enjoyed listening to all the bands today," said Drake Smothers who attended the event. "It's always nice to support a place like Daystar House while having fun at the same time. I can't wait to see what bands will play next year!"

Daystar House, Inc. has been a United Way agency since 1991. Mainly individuals, churches, clubs and organizations support it through the generosity of the community. Fundraising, such as Saturday's Music Fest and Car Show, is also an integral part of its operation.

For more information about Daystar House, call them at 256-734-4942 or follow them on Facebook at Facebook.com/pages/Daystar-House-of-Cullman/1252543794773977. Donations are always welcome.



IMAGES BY SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Musical acts included the Cullman Community Band, Winslow Davis, Microwave Dave, Bimini Road, and Roy Crawford and friends.



People from all over came to Sportsman Lake Saturday to enjoy the music, cars and food while supporting Daystar House.



A variety of customized vehicled were on display at the charity event.

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Monday

Art Shop Around the Corner's 5-8 yr old Art Camp
From June 8-12, Art Shop Around the Corner will do an art camp. Laura Walker will guide your 5-8 year old in doing an acrylic painting, watercolor, pastel, pencil, several mixed medias, painting salt and pepper shakers and bird feeders, and even more! The price of $70 covers all supplies. They often fill up so you should reserve a spot as soon as possible. Please send your child with lunch, snack and a drink in old clothes and old shoes for the paint will fly! Call 256-775-1775 for more information.

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

Beginning Blacksmithing
At 6 p.m. at the North Alabama Agriplex, learn the basics of blacksmithing from professional Allan Kress. $5 charge. Call 256-297-1044 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.

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.

'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

2nd Fridays
Join us in downtown Cullman for the final Battle of the Bands! Everyone will be set up at the Festhalle Market Platz. Come out for a night of fun! Shop late and eat great! For questions or information, call 256-734-0454.

'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

Mopars on the Street Car Show
Pentastar South Car Club is hosting a Mopar Show to raise money for "Secret Meals for Hungry Kids". Come by and see all the nice cars and help us see that no child goes hungry. It will be held at Cullman Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram Dealership HWY 278 just across I-65 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Contact Robert or Brenda Allison for more information: 256-734-1064. Registration fee is $20.00.

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

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
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LOCAL ENTERTAINMENT
Sponsored by Busy Bee Café

MONDAY
- Art Shop Around the Corner's 5-8 yr old Art Camp June 8-12
- 79 cent wings at Rodney G's Hickory Grill from 6-9 p.m.

TUESDAY
- Beginning Blacksmithing at 6 p.m. at the North Alabama Agriplex
- 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.

FRIDAY
- 2nd Fridays and final round of Battle of the Bands at Festhalle
- 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
- Mopars on the Street Car Show from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Cullman Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram
- 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, June 14

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

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BIKERS AGAINST CANCER: BOSOM BUDDIES FOUNDATION'S 3RD ANNUAL CHARITY MOTORCYCLE RIDE SEES 215 ATTENDEES

Mary Standifer
will@cullmansense.com



MARY STANDIFER/CULLMANSENSE

Bosom Buddies Foundation members (back row) former president Mary Dyer, current president Lori McGrath, (front row) Deanie Walker, Jannice Murphy, and Christina McAlpin.

CULLMAN – Saturday marked the Bosom Buddies Foundation's 3rd Annual Charity Motorcycle Ride. Approximately 215 riders attended the event. Both police and the Blue Knights AL VII escorted riders from the Cullman County Fairgrounds at 10 a.m.

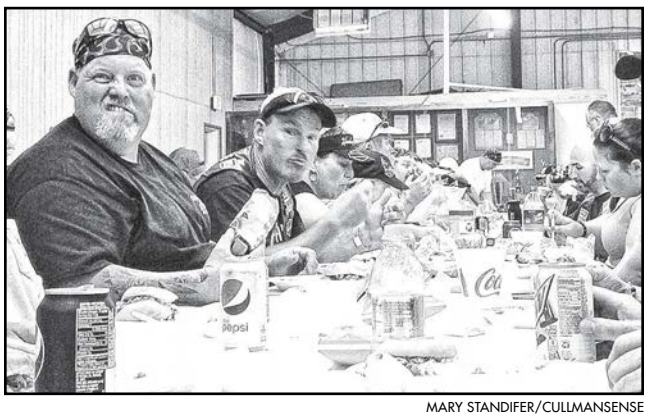
"This is one of our major fundraisers. We raise money [which] stays here in Cullman County to help our men and women that have cancer. We help them address their practical burdens of their disease, like power bills [and] water bills. We help them with those challenges that they have," explained Bosom Buddies Foundation President Lori McGrath, "When you get cancer, usually you lose your job, or you have to step out of work, and then you have a caregiver who also has to take care of you. So those practical things like groceries, power bills, water bills, house payments sometimes, those types of things, we work with them and try to help ease their challenge because they're fighting cancer, and we want to help them not have to worry about paying their bills for that time."

The event had the help of many people and businesses in the area. "We could not do it without the Cullman City Police and the Sherriff's Office helping us with our route," said McGrath. She expressed her gratitude to all of the individuals and businesses who donated their time or products to help make the event successful. Among the list of donors were TJ Maxx, Chrysler & Dodge, Mitch Smith Chevrolet, Werner's Trading Co, Joan Lee, Judy Watts, Pepsi, Coke, Jack's in West Point, Jack's in Holy Pond and Bojangles' just to name a few.

"We've got lots of folks around the county that help take care of us."

The official numbers have not yet been tallied, but McGrath estimates that the event managed to raise between $3-4,000, which will all go directly to help cancer patients in the Cullman County area.

"We just have great participation. Everybody has their job and now we're getting it fined tuned. We just all get together and pick about this same weekend every year to honor those who are survivors. People will stop and wave, and I think that's very encouraging to our survivors who are on the trip to get a little recognition for all they've been through," said McGrath.



MARY STANDIFER/CULLMANSENSE

Bosom Buddies Foundation members (back row) former president Mary Dyer, current president Lori McGrath, (front row) Deanie Walker, Jannice Murphy, and Christina McAlpin.

Next year's ride will likely use the same scenic route through areas of Morgan County and Lacon. The ride has been growing since it's inception three years ago; next year's event is expected to grow, which will allow the foundation to assist even more cancer patients within the community.

Class (from Front)

departments assisted as well.

Hanceville Fire Chief Rodger Green explained, "The 160 course consists of 160 volunteer hours. If they complete all four blocks and pass everything, then they get a certification through the fire college for a volunteer firefighter certification. This is all taught through the fire college; we have certified instructors here to teach these classes. The block starts out with the emergency care provider, it gives them the opportunity to get their CPR, and learn how to use ADs. This is just basic first aid stuff. Then they go into live burns and knowledge of fire hoses. Then you get into the very last block, which goes into Hazmat basic awareness and operations. There is more advanced stuff, but this is just the base of it for now."

All the classes are Tuesday and Thursday nights, and every other Saturday. This helps to allow the volunteers who have full-time jobs the opportunity at nighttime to come down and do the classes.

No matter how busy you may be, the flexibility of this course will help ensure you are successful.

Each block is set up independent of one another. Hanceville's Assistant Fire Chief Bart Absher explained, "They set up the blocks where they can take emergency care provider, take a test, and if they pass it, they're done with that. So if something happens with their job or life and they can't finish the course, they've already completed that block.

They're completely separate so if something does happen, they can come back and pick up where they left off." Absher commended the 13 volunteers who finished all four months for their efforts and time served.

Chief Green stated the purpose of the class, "We do this so that it will help our surrounding departments that come and help us. It helps us and it helps them too. It makes a big difference. That's what we're out here trying to do; make it better for the city and the community."

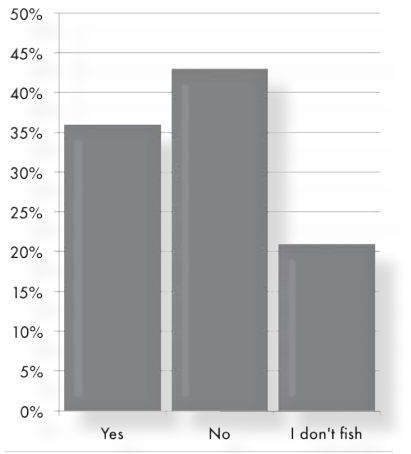
This is a tough course, but all the men and women that completed it will be an asset to their community and should be applauded. Hanceville Fire Department's dedication to this course is a great contribution to the community.

Hanceville Fire Department is a volunteer/paid combination department. They have now started accepting volunteer applications.

They encourage anyone who is interested and lives in the area to put in an application. There are no perquisites needed as long as you live in the fire coverage area. To keep up with what is happening, follow Hanceville Fire Department on Twitter.

Poll

Have you gone fishing this year?



This Week's Poll

Are you going to the beach this summer?

Vote Today at CullmanSense.com/Poll

WHAT'S ONLINE



KELLEY BURGESS

CITIZEN OF THE WEEK: LOCAL BODY BUILDER KELLEY BURGESS ACHIEVES HIGH ACCOLADES DESPITE CRIPPLING CHILDHOOD INJURY

Kelley Burgess has overcome some pretty hard times growing up. As a child, she suffered a horrific accident that has left her with issues that... **QRNE.WS/362**



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

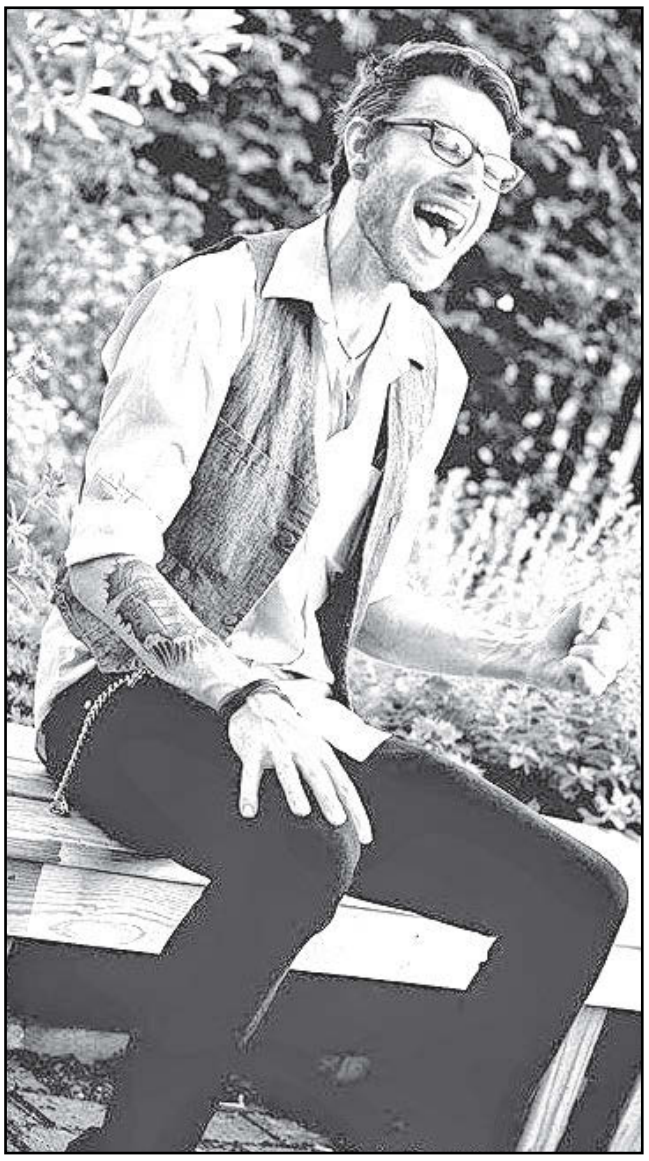
CULLMAN TRACTOR SUPPLY HOSTS PET ADOPTION EVENT

On Saturday, Tractor Supply Company hosted a pet adoption event to encourage adoptions and to support local animal groups. The event was part of Purina Days, which lasted from Wednesday, May 27 -31. **QRNE.WS/363**

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JASON WILKINS: FORMER GETHSEMANE FRONT MAN RELEASES SOLO EP

Mary Standifer
mary@cullmansense.com



WILL HOGUE/CULLMANSENSE

Jason during the shooting of his upcoming music video for "I Am".

CULLMAN – Former Gethsemane front man Jason Wilkins released his EP entitled "In Human Language" Monday evening. The EP consists of three songs: "In Human Language", "I Am", and "Love Wine".

"I wrote a song called 'In Human Language'. A lot of people think Jesus is the good guy and the Father is the bad guy. Basically, what Jesus came to show is that the Father is actually for us because [Jesus] said that I only do what my Father tells me to do; I only speak what my Father tells me to speak. So the reason why Jesus was hanging out with all the so-called people who were going to hell was because the Father told Jesus to go do that," explained Wilkins.

"Jesus didn't condemn people; He just loved. So He did everything that the Father told Him to do. The song 'In Human Language' is my big theological explanation to explain how Jesus is the Father's heart in human language. If you want to know what the Father looks like, you look at Jesus. I want people to get the simplicity that God is for us and not against us, and this is my way of doing that."

Wilkins' EP packs a spiritual punch set to a smooth acoustic sound. His sister, Kena Mathews, provides sweeping vocal harmonies that intertwine well with his own smooth, melodic lead vocals.

The EP is a major jump from what the community is accustomed to hearing from Wilkins; fans have often categorized Gethsemane as a Christian metal band.

Although in the past Wilkins has been approached by Atlantic Records and Provident Label Group about a solo career, his heart is still in metal and he plans to once again sing in a band.

This is good news for Gethsemane fans who were saddened by the bands disbandment.

> **"I want people to get the simplicity that God is for us and not against us, and this is my way of doing that."**
> Jason Wilkins

The band decided to part ways before they were set to go on a three-week tour. Wilkins asserted that all members are still friends and cited financial reasons as the major factor for the break-up.

"We were going to make $100 a day, but they realized that wasn't enough because the majority of the band had already gotten married and had houses. So we realized that even though we had all these great opportunities coming up, it just wasn't paying," said Wilkins.

He and his sister have filmed a music video for "I Am" which will likely be available for viewing at the end of the month. Visit Jason Wilkins' Facebook page at Facebook.com/JasonWilkinsMusic?fref=ts to stay up to date with his latest work. To download "In Human Language," visit Gumroad.com/l/ihlep.

COMICS

WHITE & BLACK • "Hello" • st.edo@cullmansense.com

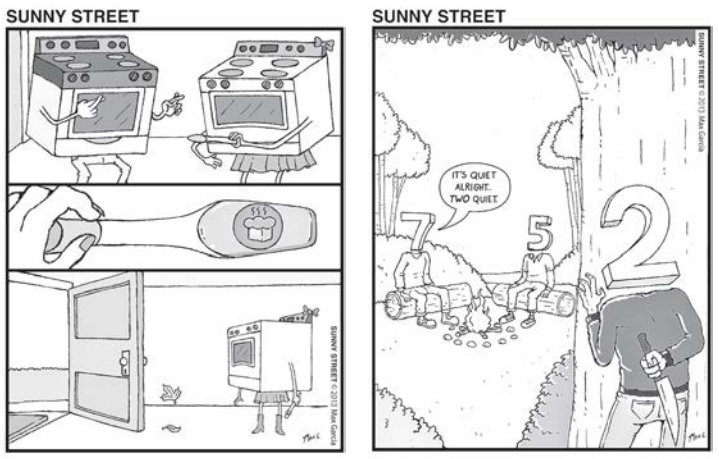


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PETS OF THE WEEK

BUTTERCUP



Hello my name is Buttercup and I am about 4 years old. I am a Feist mix and I currently weigh 45 LBS. I have been at the Shelter since March 2015 and I am beginning to think no one is coming for me. I am full of life and I love to play, so please come and visit with me! Because I was fully vetted upon arrival to the Shelter, my adoption fee is only $25 and that covers my first set of vaccines and wormer at the Shelter. You may find out I'm a lovable companion!

LITTLE MAN



Hello my name is Little Man and I am about 1 year old. I am a Pit Bull and I currently weigh 60 lbs. Because I was fully vetted when coming in to the Shelter, my adoption fee is only $25 and that covers my first set of vaccines and wormer at the Shelter. 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!

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OPINION

WILL AMERICANS VOTE FOR A DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST?

Lawrence S. Wittner
PeaceVoice

The recent announcement by U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders, an avowed "democratic socialist," that he is running for the Democratic nomination for President raises the question of whether Americans will vote for a candidate with that political orientation.

During the first two decades of the twentieth century, the idea of democratic socialism -- democratic control of the economy -- had substantial popularity in the United States. At the time, the Socialist Party of America was a thriving, rapidly-growing political organization, much like its democratic socialist counterparts abroad -- the British Labour Party, the French Socialist Party, the German Social Democratic Party, the Australian Labor Party, and numerous other rising, working class-based political entities around the world. In 1912, when the United States had a much smaller population than today, the Socialist Party had 118,000 dues-paying members and drew nearly a million votes for its candidate, Eugene V. Debs, the great labor leader, for President. Furthermore, the party held 1,200 public offices in 340 cities, including 79 mayors in 24 states. Socialist administrations were elected in: Minneapolis, Minnesota; Butte, Montana; Flint, Michigan; Schenectady, New York, and in 75 other cities across the country. In 1912, the Socialist Party claimed 323 English and foreign language publications with a total circulation in excess of two million.

Of course, this socialist surge didn't last. The Democratic and the Republican parties, faced with this threat to their political future, turned to supporting progressive agendas -- breaking up or regulating giant corporations, curbing corporate abuses, and championing a graduated income tax -- that stole the socialists' thunder.

Even so, democratic socialism retained a lingering influence in American life. When a new wave of reform occurred during the New Deal of the 1930s, it included numerous measures advocated and popularized by the Socialist Party: Social Security; public jobs programs like the WPA; minimum wage laws; maximum hour laws; and a steep tax on the wealthy. Here and there, although rarely, socialists even secured public office, and Milwaukee voters regularly elected socialist mayors until 1948. Starting in 1928 and running through the early post-World War II era,

What nearly eliminated the Socialist Party was a combination of New Deal measures (which drew labor and other key constituencies into the Democratic Party) and the public's identification of Socialism with Communism. Although, in fact, the American Socialist and Communist parties were bitter rivals -- the former championing democratic socialism on the British model and the latter authoritarian socialism on the Soviet model -- many Americans, influenced by dire conservative warnings, confused the two. Particularly during the Cold War, this further undermined the Socialist Party.

In the early 1970s, with the party barely surviving, most democratic socialists decided it was time to reassess their strategy. They asked: Did the collapse of the Socialist Party mean that, in the United States, democratic socialism was unpopular, or did it mean that third party voting was unpopular? After all, large numbers of Americans supported democratic socialist programs, ranging from national healthcare to public education, from public transportation to taxing the rich, from preserving the environment to defending workers' rights. What would happen if democratic socialists worked for their programs within the Democratic Party, where the typical constituencies of the world's democratic socialist parties -- unions, racial minorities, women's rights activists, and environmentalists -- were already located? Led by the party's titular leader, Michael Harrington, whose book The Other America sparked the War on Poverty of the 1960s, they organized Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) and plunged into major social movements and into the Democratic Party.

Although, in the ensuing decades, DSA made little progress toward rebuilding a mass, high profile democratic socialist organization, it did manage to pull thousands of union, racial justice, women's rights, and environmental activists into its orbit.

But will Americans actually support a democratic socialist in the Democratic Presidential primaries? Sanders himself has conceded that the odds are heavily against him. Even so, although a Quinnipiac poll of American voters in late May of this year found him far behind the much better known and better funded Hillary Clinton, his 15 percent of the vote placed him well ahead of all other potential Democratic candidates. Also, there's great potential for broadening his support. The latest poll on Americans' attitudes toward "socialism," taken in December 2011, found that 31 percent of respondents had a positive reaction to it. And what if Americans had been asked about their attitude toward "democratic socialism"?

Consequently, even if Hillary Clinton emerges as the Democratic nominee, as seems likely, a good showing by Sanders could strengthen the democratic socialist current in American life.

Lawrence S. Wittner is Professor of History emeritus at SUNY/Albany and is syndicated by PeaceVoice.

OPINION

DISASTER PREP: STORAGE SOLUTIONS

Dave Robinson
Contributor

Every self-respecting prepper has the same problem. Storage. Preppers, by nature have stocked up on all manner of usable goods. Whether it's First Aid supplies or food or gasoline or medication, storage solutions must be found for all of your supplies. Some food items can be canned, frozen or dehydrated. Food must be kept safe from freezing, (unless, of course you want it frozen), dry, free from mice, bugs and other vermin. One of the best things I have discovered for general purpose storage is a five-gallon bucket (food-grade plastic, of course) with a gamma-seal lid. A gamma-seal lid is one that snaps onto the bucket, then the center of the lid is removed by unscrewing. The whole affair creates an airtight, waterproof seal capable of protecting your stored supplies. Gamma-seal lids can be ordered through several outlets online. Standard lids are fine, but they create a problem when you try to open them (especially without tools) and then reseal the container. Buckets stack neatly and are easily portable. For more ideas check out www.fivegallonideas.com.

Another tool that comes in handy is a food vacuum sealer. You know that thing that sucks out all the air and moisture from your salmon, elk and venison steaks. When you're putting together your get-home bag, use the vacuum sealer to store items you don't want to get wet and also to save space. Not only are food items protected, but so are matches, batteries, ammo and various other items. Vacuum sealers can be expensive, costing as much as $500, but I actually picked one up for $15.00 at a garage sale recently. They usually require special bags, but are really quite handy for storing some of your essentials. Then there is first aid gear. First aid kits are self-contained and usually are designed more for successful marketing than for actual use. (Sorry, it's the cynic in me!) Imagine showing up at an accident scene and jumping out of your car to help with first aid kit in hand. Popping open the lid you find various band-aids, some gauze pads and a small roll of bandage tape. Oh, and maybe a mini-packet of Tylenol. It's then you discover the accident victims have injuries of the life-threatening kind and even if you combined all the stuff in your kit, it wouldn't begin to help. I carry a kit in the toolbox on my ATV. It is marketed as an "Off Road" kit. I was pretty proud of it until I realized that any accident involving an ATV or hunting accident was going to be way above the pay-grade of that little first aid kit. Having said that, I began accumulating bandages, suture kits and various other over-the-counter remedies to the point I needed a storage solution. I finally wound up with a tool box that seems to fill the bill. It's a plastic one made by Husky with a cantilever-style top and carries a massive amount of gear. Trouble is, now it's full.

As always, send your comments, questions and storage solution ideas to disasterprep.dave@gmail.com. Previous columns can be found on my blog at www.disasterprepdave.blogspot.com. Dave Robinson is the Postmaster in Bandon, Oregon, and the author of "Disaster Prep For The Rest Of Us."

CITIZEN OF THE WEEK

STEVE CUMMINGS: FIGHT, FLIGHT OR FREEZE

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Steve Cummings is no stranger to Cullman; his family owned and operated Cummings Sporting Goods for many years. He has worked hard in various areas throughout Cullman in order to help make it a better place. He served as the president of the Chamber of Commerce's Small Business Committee for two years, has been on the City Planning Commission since 2008, and has coached over 40 youth sports teams. Clearly he loves this town and the people who live here.

Steve is the son of Robin and the late Charlotte Cummings of Fairview. He's a 1982 graduate of Cullman High School, and has been married to the beautiful Debby Wood Cummings for 27 years. Steve and Debby have two boys, Cody and Carson. Cody graduated from Auburn with a degree in Industrial Design. Carson is currently at Marine Boot Camp in Parris Island.

"He [Carson] sees it [joining the Marines] as a calling," Steve said. "We all want to help our children make good decisions but eventually we have to trust their ability to hear that still small voice for themselves. Some parents would freak out, but we know Carson and this is a great progression for him. It's cool now with Facebook, you can actually see pictures of your recruit as they march around the base," he smiled proudly.

For those of you who do not know Steve personally, he is a very funny man. His sense of humor is infectious and can have you belly laughing in no time.

"I've always loved comedy," he grinned. "I started writing and doing comedy bits when I was 8 years old. My dad's side of the family is really funny; his mom, Marie Cummings, always has a joke and can break up a room even in her eighties," he chuckled. "My late grandpa, J.O. Cummings, was always the funniest guy in the room, so I just watched and learned. I still love to write and I do stand-up when I get the chance."

> **"I've always loved comedy. I started writing and doing comedy bits when I was 8 years old."**
> Steve Cummings

Steve has a particular fondness for possums as a result of a freak accident in 2013. A mother possum had been killed by a dog which left two tiny baby possums motherless. Steve and his family rescued the babies and raised them. 'Fruit Loop' and 'Chainsaw' were released into the wild as soon as they were big enough to live on their own.

"Possums are cute but misunderstood," he explained. "They're really smart and actually quite fearless. Most of us have the fight or flight response buried deep in our brain. Possums have a third choice - freeze. When they play dead, they hack the prey animal's programming. They win by doing something different. Come to think of it, I guess that's always been my approach to life - win by being different. I guess it's working so far."

'Win by being different' is exactly what Steve strives to do in every aspect of his life. After the family business Cummings Sporting Goods closed in 2013, Steve moved on to the next phase of his career: graphic design work and sales at Creative Design. Always into something, he's got a couple of projects up his sleeve.

"I've combined my love for comedy with my graphic skills to launch a shirt line called, American Possum. It's kind of a redneck knock-off of American Eagle," he grinned sheepishly. "I create funny shirts that make great conversation starters. I'm still trying to get it off the ground. Possums are really slow, you know."

Possum Day is another project Steve has been passionate about. He lights up like a Christmas tree when he speaks of it.

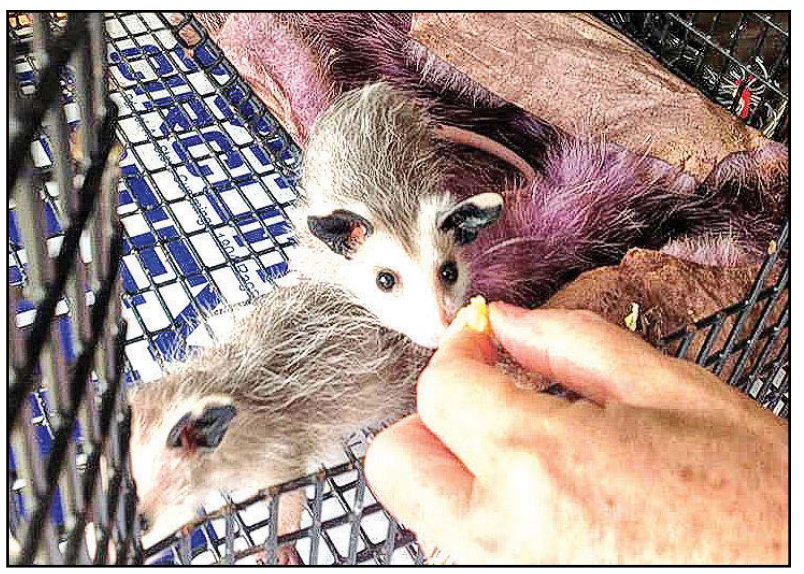
"In 2010 I was given the task of doing a Republican rally to showcase the candidates, so I came up with the idea of Possum Day," he gushed. "Possum Day is a redneck version of Groundhog Day, where we take a possum out at sunset on the last Saturday in August, and if it feels a breeze, then fall will come early. If not, six more weeks of summer. We held a Possum Queen Pageant where the girls must find their outfits on the day of the pageant at yard sales or thrift stores. We had live music and a Redneck Strongman competition," he laughed. "I'd love to host it again this year. It's quirky but fun."

Steve Cummings is a hoot to be around. Talented and smart, he will have you laughing to the point of tears in no time at all. Family oriented and civic minded, he is just another example of the kind of people who are proud to call Cullman their home.



STEVE CUMMINGS

Steve and his beloved wife Debby.



STEVE CUMMINGS

"Fruit Loop" and "Chainsaw," are two baby possums that were rescued and raised by Steve and his family.

