SERIES 5 • ISSUE 48 • DECEMBER 7, 2015
CULLMANSENSE
COMMUNITY MATTERS


SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

HAY PEOPLE MAKE FIRST CHRISTMAS APPEARANCE P6

REGISTER FOR SPRING SEMESTER NOW AT
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CULLMAN COUNTY CANDIDATES

HOLLY POND RESIDENT HEATH ALLBRIGHT ANNOUNCES RUN FOR SEAT ON CCBOE P2

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JARED FOLKS

RELIGIOUS SPOTLIGHT

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RODEO RETURNING TO AG CENTER DEC. 11-12, SPECIAL NEEDS DAY DEC. 10 P2

HANCEVILLE HOSTS 26TH ANNUAL CULLMAN COUNTY CHRISTMAS PARADE

Noah Chandler
noah@cullmansense.com

HANCEVILLE - A plethora of emergency vehicles from across the area filled Ala. Highway 31 S on Saturday as the City of Hanceville played host to the 26th annual Cullman County Christmas Parade, with Hanceville Mayor Kenneth Nail taking the lead as Grand Marshall.

"Kenneth was chosen as this year's Grand Marshall because over the years he has supported the parade by showing love for the City of Hanceville," said Joann Walls, Civitan Club Member. "He has dedicated his life to the betterment of Hanceville and Cullman County."

Spectators lined the roadway P3


NOAH CHANDLER/CULLMANSENSE

Santa made a special trip from the North Pole to see Hanceville's boys and girls.

CARMIKE 10 HOSTS SENSORY-FRIENDLY MOVIE FOR AREA'S SPECIAL NEEDS CITIZENS


SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Rhonda Davis and Louie Wright take up tickets and welcome friends at the movie theater.

P6


SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Spider ornaments like this are common on Christmas trees in some parts of Europe.

AGRIPLEX TRANSFORMS INTO SANTA'S WORKSHOP

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – On Saturday, Dec. 5, the North Alabama Agriplex transformed into Santa's Workshop. This month's Farm Kid's Club event featured various workstations where children and their parents or grandparents could visit and make old-fashioned Christmas decorations together.

Volunteers P2


SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

The North Alabama Agriplex turned in to Santa's Workshop on Saturday, where children of all ages made old-fashioned Christmas crafts.

THE LEGEND OF THE CHRISTMAS SPIDER

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Spiders in your Christmas tree? Sounds like something you'd want to avoid. But this reporter learned something new this holiday season.

A couple weeks ago I attended an arts and crafts show at the Cullman Civic Center. As I weaved in and out of the many vendor booths, I saw a lot of creative and colorful goodies. After browsing for about an hour, I was making my way to the door when I noticed a small room to the side, filled with crafts that I had missed. I was immediately drawn to a table with a small Christmas tree. The tree was covered with spider ornaments. Each little spider was different and made from various types of beads. Like a little kid, I had to touch each one of those beauti- P12

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CULLMAN COUNTY CANDIDATES

HOLLY POND RESIDENT HEATH ALLBRIGHT ANNOUNCES RUN FOR CCBOE SEAT

Will Hogue
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CULLMAN – Holly Pond resident Heath Allbright is running for a seat on the Cullman County Board of Education (CCBOE).

Allbright owns Brighton Forestry Services and cites the experience he has gained there as something he will use if elected to the CCBOE.

"It takes a special kind of person to be able to own their own business, you know," Allbright said.

"The decisions I make on a daily basis affect 75-80 people directly."

The sort of leadership that Allbright views as important for anyone running for public office is something he believes he has.

When someone is running for public office, it is nearly obligatory that he or she has a clear and defined set of goals or initiatives for voters to get behind.

Allbright does not have any of those.

Instead, Allbright believes it is his lack of agenda that makes him especially qualified for the position.

"I have never held public office before, so I can't say, 'We can do this, or we're going to do that.' Before I make any promises to any people I want to look at a budget, at the skeleton of the thing, and see what needs to be done first," he said.

About initiatives such as getting each student his or her own personal computer, Allbright says that is a great idea, but he wants to put first things first.

"Each kid having their own computer is a great idea, but I want to make sure the money is there first," he said.

"I want to make sure we can have the schools heated during the winter, to have the windows insulated, those types of things, before I start introducing other things."

Allbright made the statement that "just about everything in the government is misspent."

His goal is to reintroduce order to the system, and, again, put first things first.

"I am running because several people urged me to run during the last election, and even more leading up to this one, and I believe I can serve and give a voice back to the community."



CONTRIBUTED

Allbright will make use of his business experience if elected.

HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS FROM SHERIFF MATT GENTRY

Will Hogue
will@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Shopping during the holidays can be stressful. Every store is crowded, seemingly from open to close. However, there is one thing that cannot be overlooked during all the hustle and bustle: safety.

Sheriff Matt Gentry offered a handful of advice to those who plan on hitting the stores this holiday season. In other words, everyone.

"If you are going to be out, you need to know you should always lock your car door," Gentry said.

"Also, do not leave your valuables out and on view for anyone and everyone to see. For instance, do not leave your purse just sitting in the front seat."

Gentry also said that while shopping in the stores people should keep personal items close.

"Keep your wallet in a place that you can feel it at all times," he said.

Although Gentry said that the towns in the county do not run into as many issues as the areas in the city of Cullman, he gave some advice for all the citizens of Cullman County.

"Do not park in dark areas," Gentry said.

"Also, do not walk out of stores by yourself. During the holidays, if you are out shopping, people know you will probably have cash on you, and you will also be carrying gifts around. So, if you see a big group leaving a store, walk out with them as opposed to just walking out by yourself."

Even though Gentry could not name a specific incident that stands out, he says that the potential for trouble is always there.

"No matter where you live or where you go," Gentry said, "be wary and use caution."

RODEO RETURNING TO AG CENTER DEC. 11-12, SPECIAL NEEDS DAY DEC. 10

Will Hogue
will@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Hang on to your hats, because next Friday and Saturday, Dec. 11-12, the rodeo is returning to the Cullman County Agricultural Trade Center. Doors to the event, dubbed the New 2015 Cullman County Sherriff's Office Jimmy Arrington Memorial Rodeo, will open each night at 5:30 p.m., with the rodeo starting at 7 p.m. Admission is $10 for adults and $8 for children. Also, on Thursday, Dec. 10 from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., the rodeo will be the main event for Special Needs Day.

The event, which was started by former Sheriff Tyler Roden, was not held last year.

"We had to get legislation passed so we could have it again this year," Sheriff Matt Gentry said.

This year, according to Gentry, will have a different feel and atmosphere from previous years because of who is running the show.

"We contracted new people to put this one on," Gentry said.

Special Needs Day will be on Thursday, Dec. 10. All special needs children from the county are welcome to attend.

"The goal of the Special Needs Day is to give the kids something they have never had, to really make it a special day for them. You know, the rodeo is a big thing for the special needs kids, and we want to help make it enjoyable for them," Gentry said.

A portion of the funds raised from the rodeo will go to special needs programs around the county.

"We hope to have 900-plus special needs children to get to see the rodeo," Gentry said.

Gentry hopes to make the rodeo an annual event, as it is a fundraiser for the Sheriff's department. More importantly, Gentry truly believes this is a fun community event.

"This is a good time for the community; it is a good family event," he said.

Gentry said the return of the rodeo was because of a tremendous amount of citizen support.

Advance tickets can be purchased at Jack's Western Wear, Traditions Bank and the Sheriff's Office.

The Cullman Ag Center is located at 17645 U.S. Highway 31 N. in Cullman.

Find out more at www.cullmancountyparks.com/atc.html or call 256-734-0342.

Workshop (from Front)

were on hand with lots of supplies and assisted with the creative process.

Excited boys and girls rolled up their sleeves and happily assembled festive items such as grapevine wreaths, tiny Christmas trees, paper chains, potpourri bags, mini gardens, popcorn garland and ornaments.

"I really love that they are doing this," said home schooler Lucy Stallings, as she watched her daughter, 8-year-old Rebecca work.

"It's really great to have something that the homeschool kids can do too. This is one of the things they usually miss out on."

The Farm Kid's Club is a parent or grandparent and child program that takes place on either the first or second Saturday of each month (except Aug.) from 9:00-10:30 a.m. at the Agriplex.

It is targeted towards children ages 5 years and up. The programs cost $5 per child, but are free for adults and max out at $10 per family.

Each month they explore a different topic in agriculture or history.

"We just got here so this is my first craft so far," said sixth-grader Mackenzie, while standing at the wreath table.

"This is the third time we have come here to do things. It's really fun! We have just now started home schooling. I love it so far; I got all my work done Thursday and got to play all day Friday," she beamed.

It was hard to tell who had the best time in Santa's Workshop, the children or the volunteers who were helping them.

"I love it here," said Beverly Cole, as she helped a little boy string a mixture of popcorn and cranberries for his garland. "I live in Hayden and I come to the Agriplex and do as many things as I can," she chuckled.

"I had attended a workshop here through the extension office once, and after that I began asking them for volunteer opportunities," she smiled.

Children of all ages enjoy visiting the Agriplex, especially for arts and crafts. If your child hasn't participated in a Farm Kid's Club activity yet, why not check it out?

The North Alabama Agriplex is located at 1714 Talley Ho St. in Cullman. For more information, call 256-297-1044 or visit them online at agriplex.org or facebook.com/NorthAlabamaAgriplex.





HIGHWAY PATROL MARKS 80 YEARS

FIRST FEMALE MOTOR UNIT STATE TROOPER PATROLS ALABAMA ROADWAYS



Alabama State Troopers first Motor Unit. Courtesy of policemotorunits.com.

ALABAMA STATE TROOPERS

ALEA
Contributor

MONTGOMERY – In 1935, Governor Bibb Graves made his mark in Alabama history by fulfilling his campaign promise when the state hired and trained 74 men who patrolled Alabama's highways on motorcycles.

Eighty years later, history is made again as Trooper Lucy Still becomes the first female member of the Alabama State Trooper Motor Unit.

"Trooper Lucy Still is a symbol of the positive changes that have been made in state law enforcement and in our great state," said Secretary of Law Enforcement Spencer Collier.

"I am proud of Trooper Still not only for her commitment to protect the citizens of Alabama, but for her hard work and dedication, allowing her to achieve her goal of becoming a member of the State Trooper Motor Unit."

Trooper Still attended the Alabama Criminal Justice Training Center Trooper Academy in Selma during 2006.

"During my training at the Trooper Academy, my roommate, Trooper Jennifer Jacobs, and I, observed members of the Motor Unit in the distance and continued to watch as they drove their motors to the Academy, leaving a lasting impression on us. That day, that moment, is when Trooper Jacobs and I, together, set a goal of becoming members of the Motor Unit," said Trooper Still.

After recently completing the 80-hour Motor Unit training course, Trooper Still now patrols Alabama roadways as a member of the nostalgic Alabama State Trooper Motor Unit.

Trooper Jacobs, however, was tragically killed several years ago. Trooper Still continued, "Achieving this goal is especially meaningful for me because I am doing this for both us."

Over the past 80 years, state law enforcement has evolved from a motorcycle-mounted Highway Patrol to a multifaceted, comprehensive, statewide law enforcement agency that provides public safety to the citizens of Alabama.

The emphasis of the State Trooper Motor Unit changed over the years with the Unit diminishing to a fleet of four motorcycles that only patrolled at such special events as Mardi Gras, Talladega races and the Trail of Tears.

In 2000, through the use of grant funding, the Unit was revamped, allowing the focus to expand beyond special events to include routine patrols and Flying Wheel Details – four- to seven-day proactive data-driven enforcement details in high-crash corridors, focusing on such violations as speeding, DUIs and seat-belt usage.



ALABAMA STATE TROOPERS

Trooper Lucy Still

Parade (from Front)

from Wallace State Community College to City Hall. Tim and Cinda Simmons brought their young family out to enjoy the sights and sounds of the parade. The family has been attending the parading for the past four years.

"It's a good environment and we love the parade during the daytime," said Cinda. "It's great event for the whole family."

Latrice Simmons, from Hanceville, said she came out so her son so they could have some fun on the sunny Saturday afternoon. She was also excited to see someone special to her marching in the parade.

"Well, we came out today to watch my daughter, Dynasia, march with the Hanceville Middle School Cheerleaders," said Latrice. "It's exciting to see her out there since we've been coming to the parade for a while."

For more photos visit CullmanSense.com.



Local superheroes greet Saturday's crowd.

NOAH CHANDLER/CULLMANSENSE

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



DECEMBER HOSTS SPECIAL NEEDS BOWLING

CULLMAN'S AUTISM & SPECIAL NEEDS FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP SPONSORS TUESDAY EVENT AT CULLMAN BOWLING CENTER

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Cullman's Autism & Special Needs Family Support Group will sponsor several nights of bowling for individuals with special needs and their families. The Tuesday night events will take place at the Cullman Bowling Center on Dec. 8, 15, 22 and 29 from 6-8:00 p.m. The cost is $3 per bowler.

Anyone interested in attending is asked to RSVP before noon the day of the event to support group coordinator Rhonda Davis at 256-962-2208.

"The event is for individuals, of all ages, with disabilities and their families," said Davis.

"On those nights, the bowling alley doesn't require the individual with disabilities to wear the bowling shoes, because a lot of them have sensory issues and it is difficult to get shoes on and off, tied and untied. It's just less pressure on the family members that bring them. We will have some lanes at the end of the bowling alley so there will be a little bit of privacy," she added.

"And of course they put the little bumpers up so they can enjoy and have more sense of satisfaction in bowling."

"We've had a decent turnout on these nights in the past," said Josh Tolbert of the Cullman Bowling Center. "They really seem to enjoy themselves," he smiled.

Cullman Autism & Special Needs Family Support Group is affiliated with the Autism Society of Alabama. They meet on the second Saturday of each month (except for this month) from 5-7 p.m. at the Margaret Jean Jones Center located at 1807 Beech Ave. S.E. in Cullman.

Their next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, Jan. 9. To attend one of the special needs bowling nights or to obtain more information about them or the Cullman Autism & Special Needs Family Support Group, contact Rhonda Davis at 256-962-2208, pdrd@hotmail.com or CullmanNetworkingGroup@autism-alabama.org.

"On those nights, the bowling alley doesn't require the individual with disabilities to wear the bowling shoes, because a lot of them have sensory issues and it is difficult to get shoes on and off, tied and untied. It's just less pressure on the family members that bring them."

Rhonda Davis, Cullman Autism & Special Needs Family Support Group coordinator

PREP BASKETBALL SCHEDULE

WEEK OF DEC. 7

All games slated to start at 6 p.m. (girls) and 7:30 p.m. (boys) unless noted

MONDAY
West Point @ Cold Springs

TUESDAY
Fairview @ Lawrence County
5:30 p.m. (girls) 7 p.m. (boys)
Good Hope @ Oneonta
Vinemont @ Hanceville 6:30 p.m. (girls) 8 p.m. (boys)
Holly Pond @ Susan Moore
St. Bernard @ Southeastern 7 p.m. (girls) 8:30 p.m. (boys)

THURSDAY
Hanceville @ Fairview
St. Bernard @ Pennington
Vinemont @ West End

FRIDAY
Cold Springs @ Hanceville 6:30 p.m. (girls) 8 p.m. (boys)
Cullman @ Gardendale
Fairview @ Holly Pond 5:30 p.m. (girls) 7 p.m. (boys)
Good Hope @ Locust Fork
St. Bernard @ Lindsey Lane 7 p.m. (girls) 8:30 p.m. (boys)
West Point @ Lawrence County
Vinemont @ Winston County 6:45 p.m. (girls) 8:15 p.m (boys)

PREP BASKETBALL SCORING WRAP-UP

MONDAY
Girls
Cold Springs 62 – Addison 20

Boys
Cold Springs 72 – Addison 42

TUESDAY
Girls
Cullman 22 – Arab 70
Fairview 57 – Russellville 25
West Point 42 – Good Hope 62

Boys
Vinemont 57 – Susan Moore 53
Cullman 59 – Arab 62
Holly Pond 73 – Hanceville 49
West Point 68 – Good Hope 23

THURSDAY
Girls
Cullman 51 – Arab 60

Boys
Cullman 48 – Arab 47

FRIDAY
Girls
Holly Pond 53 – Cold Springs 50
West Point 45 – Russellville 66
Hanceville 63 – Oakman 37
Cullman 30 – Brewer 56
Fairview 78 – Vinemont 18

Boys
Holly Pond 87 – Cold Springs 80
West Point 69 – Russellville 62
Hanceville 91 – Oakman 37
Cullman 52 – Brewer 78
Fairview 54 – Vinemont 52

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CULLMAN FIRE RESCUE

Application Process and Job Requirements for a City of Cullman Firefighter/Advanced EMT Position

A. Submit an application to the City of Cullman Human Resources Department

Applicant Requirements:
- Must be at least 20 years of age
- High school diploma or GED
- Valid Alabama driver's license

B. Successfully complete firefighter written exam with a passing score of 70%

C. Provide written confirmation of successful completion of Alabama Fire College approved Candidate Physical Agility Test (CPAT) or State of Alabama Firefighter I/II certification. *(Information relating to CPAT and other prerequisites for Firefighter I/II certification can be found at www.alabamafirecollege.net)*

D. Dependent upon qualifications and/or eligibility list placement may be called for a panel interview

If recommended by the Fire Chief for potential employment must successfully accomplish:

F. Interview with the Mayor

G. Drug and Alcohol Testing

H. NFPA 1582 Physical Exam

I. Employment Background Screening

The following requirements must be successfully accomplished and maintained in order to retain permanent employment:

J. Annual NFPA 1582 Physical Exam and Physical Agility Test

K. Random Drug and Alcohol Testing

L. State of Alabama Firefighter I/II certification within 1 year of employment (Approximately 10 weeks)

M. Emergency Medical Technician certification within 1 year of employment - (EMS certification in Alabama is granted by the Alabama Department of Public Health and administered through various community colleges (Approximately 1 college semester)

N. Emergency Medical Technician-(Advanced) within 3 years of employment- (Approximately 1 college semester)

O. Hazardous Materials Technician certification (40 hour course)

P. Be or become a resident of Cullman County within one year





CONTRIBUTED

The Winter Wonderland includes many different Christmas light displays.

WINTER WONDERLAND

SPORTSMAN LAKE PARK LIGHTS UP FOR 13TH ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DISPLAY

Will Hogue
will@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – The 13th annual Winter Wonderland Christmas lights display will be up at Sportsman Lake Park from Dec. 4-23.

The display, open from 5-9 p.m., is a drive-through course. The cost is $5 per vehicle, or $4 for a Victorian horse and carriage ride. Children can visit with Santa Claus, who will be serving hot chocolate and candy canes. According to Sportsman Lake Park Office Manager Lindsey Cagle, the whole display takes 10 minutes to drive through.

"I have been here (working at Sportsman Lake Park) for three years, and the display has gotten significantly bigger each year," Cagle said.

The display takes over a month and a half to set up, according to Cagle.

The park will be closed on Dec. 7,8,14 and 15.

Funds raised during the event go straight to the park, to help make next year's event bigger and better.

"Friday and Saturday are usually the busiest days," Cagle said. "So it is probably best to beat the crowds if you come during the week."

For more information, call 256-734-3052, e-mail sportsman@co.cullman.al.us or visit www.cullmancountyparks.com.

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DRAFT

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
CITY OF HANCEVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION

The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing at 6:00 o'clock p.m., Monday, December 28, 2015, in the Hanceville City Hall Council Chambers, located at 112 Main Street SE, Hanceville, Alabama, 35077, regarding Proposed Ordinance No. 608. All interested citizens shall have the opportunity to be heard concerning this ordinance during this public hearing, prior to any further consideration of the ordinance.

ORDINANCE NO. 608
Amending Ordinance No. 555 to allow
business and residential mixed occupancies
(Loft Apartments) in Bl and B2 zones

WHEREAS, Ordinance No. 510 is the City of Hanceville Zoning Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, Ordinance No. 510 was Amended by Ordinance No. *555* on July 9, 2009 to allow loft apartments in B1and B2 Zones under certain conditions; and

WHEREAS, the restrictions on loft apartments are burdensome and it is in the best interest of the City to amend the Ordinances again., THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HANCEVILLE, ALABAMA, AS FOLLOWS:

Ordinance No. 555 dated July 9, 2009, is vacated, deleted and held for nought.

Further, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HANCEVILLE, ALABAMA, AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Under the authority of Chapter 52, Articles I through 4, Section 11-52-1 through 11-52-84, Code of Alabama, 1975, as amended, Zoning Ordinance No. 510, is hereby amended as follows:

Section 2. In Table of Uses, add to Item 117, as follows:

In all B-1 and B-2 zoning districts dwelling units above the first floor of a business establishment being apartments, loft apartments, efficiency apartments and similar residential occupancies may be constructed in new and existing business occupancies as a secondary use. All such uses must be approved by the City Planning Commission. All construction/reconstruction will be in strict compliance with the International Builders' Code. These occupancies shall also strictly comply with the City of Hanceville building and fire protection related codes. The primary use of all commercial buildings located in the above mentioned zoning districts shall be those uses listed as permitted uses and conditional uses in the zoning district in which the property is located. Primary use as defined in this ordinance shall mean "the first floor of the development shall be for use or available for use for business or commercial purposes."

Section 3. Balconies shall be permitted at approved loft apartments only.

Section 4. Balconies must meet requirements of the Fire Chief or designee to be used as a rescue area or place of refuge for evacuation purposes.

Section 5. Balconies may not extend more than seventy percent (70%) over public sidewalk.

Section 6. Neither balconies nor supports shall encroach into ADA required sidewalk areas.

Section 7. Balconies must dear sidewalks by a minimum of nine feet above sidewalk elevation or ground elevation, whichever is greater.

Section 8. All balcony support posts must be set back a minimum of 24 inches from the back of the curb of the street and placed on concrete pedestals at least 18 inches above the sidewalk.

Section 9. All balconies must be constructed of non-combustible material acceptable to the City Fire Chief or designee.

Section 10. All balconies constructed/reconstructed must be in strict compliance with the International Builders' Code as determined by the Building Official for the City of Hanceville.

Section 11. Owners of the property must provide a Hold Harmless Agreement to the City relieving the City of Hanceville from any liability related to the structure.

Section 12. All balconies must be designed by an Alabama registered engineer or architect and drawings submitted to the Building Official with stamp. Drawings must not be older than 180 days.

Section 13. Balconies may be open or covered but no balcony shall be allowed to be enclosed either permanently or temporarily.

Section 14. It shall not be permitted for any balcony to have a satellite dish or antenna mounted to it or any portion of the structure supporting or covering the balcony.

Section 15. No objects shall be placed, hung, draped or attached to any portion of balcony except store name and address may be placed so long as they are above 9 feet clearance and approved by the Planning Commission and Building Official.

Section 16. All balconies must be submitted and approved by the Planning Commission and Building Official before a permit to construct shall be issued.

Section 17. This ordinance will be posted at Hanceville City Hall, Hanceville Library and Hanceville Post Office, for at least 15 days prior to the date set for public hearing on and consideration of said ordinance.

That a public hearing be held relative to the passage of this ordinance on the day of _____, 2015, at p.m., in the Hanceville City Hall, at which time interested parties and citizens shall have an opportunity to be heard concerning said ordinance and any changes related thereto.

Section 19. That all notices as required by law be given by the City Clerk concerning the public hearing.

Section 20. Should any part or portion of this ordinance be held invalid, unenforceable or unconstitutional, for whatever reason, by a court of competent jurisdiction, such ruling . . . shall not affect any other part or portion of this ordinance.

Section 21. This ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage and adoption as required by law, including notice, publication and public hearing, all in accordance with Section 11-52-1, et seq., Code of Alabama 1975, as amended.

ADOPTED this the _____ day of _____, 2015.

Attest: KENNETH NAIL, Mayor

_____

HAY PEOPLE MAKE FIRST CHRISTMAS APPEARANCE

"The Christmas Hay People is (sic) a work in process. The lady's apron says, 'Frohe Weihnachte,' which means Merry Christmas in German. Maybe I'll come up with some new designs for clothes in the future, but right now I think they are going to be pretty cool!"

Nancy Moore, creator



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Best-known for Oktoberfest, the Hay People are in town to celebrate Christmas.

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – For more than 20 years, Cullman's most beloved German couple has come to town to celebrate Oktoberfest. This year, for the first time ever, the Hay People are spending their Christmas right here in Cullman.

Creator Nancy Moore and her hard-working Christmas elves performed their magic and arranged for the couple's arrival.

The two will be residing at St. John's Evangelical Protestant Church, where they plan to greet everyone at the Cullman Christmas Festival and Outdoor Market on Dec. 12 from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Moore's parents, Phillip and Patricia Clemmons, started making the Hay People after they saw Hay People in Germany in the mid-1990s.

The Clemmonses were members of St. John's Church and always helped with the church's Oktoberfest dinner.

They also served on the Oktoberfest committee. Mrs. Clemmons came up with the idea to introduce the Hay People to Cullman.

Thankfully, Moore has kept the tradition going.

"I go to church at St. John's," said Moore.

"One day the church approached me and asked about putting the couple up for their Market. Of course, I told them I would do it," she smiled.

Moore said that is she excited, because this is the first time Cullman will have Christmas Hay People.

"The Christmas Hay People is (sic) a work in process. The lady's apron says, 'Frohe Weihnachte,' which means Merry Christmas in German. Maybe I'll come up with some new designs for clothes in the future, but right now I think they are going to be pretty cool," she giggled happily.

Knowing that her parents would approve is another plus.

"I just know my parents are smiling and laughing about this because St. John's was their church too," she said.

"It makes me giddy to think about it. Every day in heaven, they are extremely happy there are Hay People at St. John's. They loved the Little Lambs School and now the children can stop and enjoy the Hay People every day."

The third annual Christmas Festival and Outdoor Market, hosted by St. John's Church and Christ Lutheran Church, is Saturday, Dec.12 from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. It will include free games, carnival rides and more than 50 market vendors. There will also be a live nativity scene, along with great music and entertainment. Santa and Mrs. Claus will be onsite for photos.

St. John's Evangelical Protestant Church is located at 512 Second Ave. S.E. in Cullman.

For more information, call 256-734-0344 or visit www.sjepc.com.

Movie (from Front)

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – On Friday, Dec. 4, Cullman Carmike 10 had a sensory-friendly showing of "The Good Dinosaur" for individuals and their families who are dealing with sensory issues related to delays or disabilities. The event was sponsored by the Cullman Autism & Special Needs Family Support Group.

"A sensory-friendly movie is a little different than a regular movie showing," said Rhonda Davis, Cullman Autism & Special Needs Family Support Group coordinator. "The sound is brought down and the lights are brought up about halfway each for those who cannot sit in total darkness. A lot of them need to get up and walk around, especially if they have a lot of sensory issues. We also don't show the previews, we go right to the movie because a lot of them have short attention spans," she added.

Davis said that sensory-friendly movies are wonderful for the families of autistic and special needs individuals.

"Some special needs or autistic friends are a little louder than others, so everyone is very understanding," Davis explained. "We don't say, 'Please keep your child quiet!' which has happened to a lot of our families. In fact, when we started doing this two years ago, it was the first time some of our families had actually gone to the movies as a family. It's been such a blessing."

The event was a huge success. The entire group sat together like one big happy family, eating popcorn, sipping cokes and watching the show.

"The movie was great, it had some wonderful life lessons in it," said Sabrina Hudson, who was there to help support the group. "All ages that were there enjoyed it, including myself," she smiled. "It teaches children and adults valuable lessons."

"I am having fun," said Louie Wright, an attendee who was at the theater early in anticipation. "I really like the movies and my friends," he grinned.

Davis, who has a son with autism, says that the support group ministers to all ages and all disabilities.

"We want to make sure everyone understands that just because they have a disability, though it may not be autism related, they have a family group they can come and enjoy outings and different things (with) throughout the year."

If you or someone you know would like more information about the Cullman Autism & Special Needs Family Support Group and any upcoming events, contact Rhonda Davis at 256-962-2208 or email her at pdrd@hotmail.com or CullmanNetworkingGroup@autism-alabama.org.

Cullman Autism & Special Needs Family Support Group is affiliated with the Autism Society of Alabama. They meet on the second Saturday of each month (except for this month) from 5-7:00 p.m. at the Margaret Jean Jones Center located at 1807 Beech Ave. S.E. in Cullman. Their next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, Jan. 9.





RELIGIOUS SPOTLIGHT: JARED FOLKS OF FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH VINEMONT

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

VINEMONT — Faith Baptist Church Vinemont has a long and rich history. Since its humble beginning in August 1971, the church has been engaged in ongoing and inspirational mission work both locally and around the world. The congregation truly believes in sharing the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

God has worked powerfully in the church through the men and women of faith who laid its foundation. The church continues to grow and flourish through the leadership of its pastor, Jared Folks. Fairly new to Alabama, Folks said God brought him to Cullman "to care for his flock."

"I grew up on a ranch just outside of Rock Springs, Wyoming," Folks explained. "Upon completion of junior college I moved to Dallas, Texas to finish my undergraduate degree at Dallas Baptist University. While working a summer camp in Clinton, Mississippi I met my beautiful wife Taylor (a Cullman native). Taylor and I got married and lived in Dallas while I finished seminary at Dallas Theological Seminary. God has blessed Taylor and me with two beautiful girls- Elsi and Eva.

"I believe I was always called to preach; however, it took me a long time to understand that God was leading me toward ministry," he continued. "By God's grace and through many men and women praying for and investing in me, I realized God was leading me to pastor. That calling has been affirmed and reaffirmed as I have followed God's leading in my life. The calling God has placed on my life is the only explanation I have for how a Wyoming guy ends up pastoring in Alabama," he chuckled.

Life is full of challenges and rewarding moments. Pastors are just like anyone else, they work tirelessly in their field; sowing the seeds of faith and watching them grow and flourish. It's hard work but very rewarding.

"I believe the biggest challenge I face as a church leader is engaging a rapidly changing and diverse culture that is increasingly unchurched," he began. "The challenge is to unapologetically present the gospel and teach the word of God in a way that engages and challenges all who walk into the church. I want to be able to clearly communicate the truth of scripture so that both the first-time churchgoer and the longtime church member can be challenged and changed to be more like Christ."



Pastor Jared Folks of Faith Baptist Church Vinemont was led by God to preach in Alabama.

JARED FOLKS

Folks said the most rewarding moments are those 'aha moments' people have when they see or experience how the Bible applies directly to their lives for the first time.

"I love to see lives shaped and changed by the gospel right before my eyes. Nothing is greater than watching people grow in spiritual maturity and biblical literacy as they begin to learn how all of scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, ties together and applies to their life. Teaching people the truth of the Bible is an awesome calling, but seeing how God uses his word to change lives in so many different ways is the most amazing thing to witness."

When speaking about the church, Folks has a sparkle in his eyes. He obviously loves his congregation and it shows.

"Faith Baptist Church, like any church, has had its ups and downs, but we are moving forward in a direction that seeks, above all else, to glorify God, equip believers to do ministry and reach our surrounding community and world with the gospel of Jesus Christ," he beamed. "In essence, our aim is to teach truth and love well.

"Faith is made up of wonderful people who love the Lord and love his church. These are exciting times at Faith Baptist, and no matter what your church background is we would love to meet you."

Faith Baptist Church is located at 25 County Road 1302 in Cullman. Service times are as follows: Sunday school at 10 a.m.; worship service at 11 a.m. and Wednesday Bible study at 7 p.m.

For more information, visit www.faithbcvinemont.com or call 256-734-7307. Find them on Facebook atfacebook.com/faithbcvinemont.

Christmas Wagon Rides
Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament
3222 County Road 548, Hanceville AL 35077

Enjoy a horse wagon ride around the Shrine property with your family and friends! Rides begin at Castle San Miguel. While you are waiting, please enjoy complimentary coffee and hot chocolate in the downstairs dining area. **All rides are free!**

Dates Available:
(Evening rides include viewing of our Christmas lights)

December 12th 10:00AM-4:00PM
December 14th-18th 1:00-2:30 PM & 4:00-8:00 PM
December 21st-23rd 1:00-2:30 PM & 4:00-8:00 PM
December 28th-30th 1:00-2:30 PM & 4:00-8:00 PM



RSVP at 205-795-5722 to reserve your seats. (Rides book fast!)
Rides are 20-25 minutes long. Wagon can seat 8 Adults per ride
(if there are children, we can seat more)

If severe/rainy weather, we will have to cancel the rides, and you will be notified.
Since seating is limited, we **cannot guarentee that we will be able to reschedule your ride.**
For more information: *www.olamshrine.com*



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Monday

Overeaters Anonymous
Overeaters Anonymous will be meeting at 9:30 a.m. in the Carriage House, located behind Grace Episcopal Church. For more information, contact 724-376-2124 or 256-352-1143.

Free Online Tutoring
The Cullman County Library is offering to students of all ages free one-one-one help live online from professional tutors. Sessions are offered from 3-10 p.m. For more information, visit homeworkalabama.org.

Tuesday

Board Games at the Library
Each Tuesday the Cullman County Public Library will host a gaming program from 9 a.m. - 8 p.m. A variety of board games, cards and dominoes are available for play at the library for teens and adults.

Cullman Senior Center
The Cullman Senior Center will have a live band or karaoke from 8 a.m. - noon every Tuesday. A hot meal is served at 11:30 a.m. daily. For more information call 256-734-0145. Cullman Senior Center is located by Sportsman Lake Park.

Free Online Tutoring
The Cullman County Library is offering to students of all ages free one-one-one help live online from professional tutors. Sessions are offered from 3-10 p.m. For more information, visit homeworkalabama.org.

Yoga Classes
The Cullman City Parks and Recreation Senior Spirit Program will offer free yoga classes from 9:30 a.m. -10:30 a.m. for men and women 50 years and older. The classes will held at the Donald E. Green Senior Center. Fabian Holland will conduct the classes. Participants may use a mat or chair. To register, contact Angie Jochum or Catherine Hasenbein at 256-734-4803.

Wednesday

Free Online Tutoring
The Cullman County Library is offering to students of all ages free one-one-one help live online from professional tutors. Sessions are offered from 3-10 p.m. For more information, visit homeworkalabama.org.

Kid Konnect
Spirit Life Church of God offers a way for young people to meet at Kid Konnect. The group is for children 12 and younger and meets at 7 p.m. For more information, please call 256-739-3326.

Saint Monica's Group
Saint Monica's Group is for those who are addicted to drugs or alcohol. The meetings begin at 7 p.m. each week in the Rectory basement of Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church. For more information, please contact either Brian at 256-595-5015 or Rita at 256-507-0358.

Thursday

Special Needs Rodeo
The Cullman County Sheriff's Office Jimmy Arrington Memorial Rodeo will be hosting the Special Needs Rodeo from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. at the Cullman Ag Center, located at17645 U.S. Highway 31 N. For more information, call 256-734-0342.

Free Online Tutoring
The Cullman County Library is offering to students of all ages free one-one-one help live online from professional tutors. Sessions are offered from 3-10 p.m. For more information, visit homeworkalabama.org.

Cullman Bands Christmas Concert
The students and directors of the Cullman City Schools band program extend to you a special invitation to attend the 32nd Annual Christmas Concert at 7 p.m. in the Cullman High School Auditorium. The Beginner Band, Middle School Band, combined CHS Symphonic and Concert Bands and the CHS Jazz Band will perform. There is no charge for admission.

Friday

Cullman Senior Center Gospel Singing
The Cullman Senior Center will have a Gospel Singing beginning at 9:30 a.m. every Friday. Special guests share devotions at 10:30 a.m. A hot meal is served at 11:30 a.m. daily. For more information, call 256-734-0145. Cullman Senior Center is located by Sportsman Lake Park.

Cullman County Sheriff's Office Jimmy Arrington Memorial Rodeo
The Cullman County Sheriff's Office Jimmy Arrington Memorial Rodeo will open each night at 5:30 p.m., with the rodeo starting at 7 p.m. and lasting until after the last rider. The rodeo will be hosted at the Cullman Ag Center, located at 17645 U.S. Highway 31 N. For more information, call 256-734-0342.

Saturday

Cullman County Sheriff's Office Jimmy Arrington Memorial Rodeo
The Cullman County Sheriff's Office Jimmy Arrington Memorial Rodeo will open each night at 5:30 p.m., with the rodeo starting at 7 p.m. and lasting until after the last rider. The rodeo will be hosted at the Cullman Ag Center, located at 17645 U.S. Highway 31 N. For more information, call 256-734-0342.

Christmas Festival 5K
The Christmas Festival 5K will begin at 9 a.m. at the Ruehl Building, located at the corner of Sixth Street and Third Avenue Southeast in Cullman. If you've any questions about the run, sponsorship or volunteer opportunities, please contact Mark Aderhold at 256-708-3569 or markaa05@bellsouth.net. This event benefits First Source for Women.

5K Schedule:
• 8 a.m.- 8:30 a.m. Registration/ Check-in - Ruehl Bldg
• 8:45 a.m.- 8:55 a.m. Race Line-up
• 8:55 a.m. Prayer for Runners
• 9 a.m. 5K Begins
• 10 a.m. Awards Ceremony*
• Awards Ceremony located at the Christmas Festival and Outdoor Market entertainment stage.

Annual Turkey Shoot
The annual Turkey Shoot at the Cullman Moose Lodge will be held every Saturday until Dec. 19, starting at 8 a.m. Proceeds will benefit the Cullman County Child Development Center. For more information, call 256-255-5266.

Arley Christmas Parade
The Arley Christmas Parade will begin at 5 p.m., with lineup beginning at 4 p.m., at Masons Market and Dollar General. Arley Baptist Church will be hosting a visit with Santa, along with hot cocoa and cookies at Meek Elementary Gymnasium. For more information, call 205-384-4667.

The Hoppers Concert
The Hoppers will be playing a concert at Bethlehem West Baptist Church, located at 14310 AL. Highway 157 in Vinemont, beginning at 4 p.m. A love offering will be received. For more information, please call 256-739-5858.

Good Hope Christmas in the Park, Arts & Crafts Fair and Christmas Parade
Arts & Crafts Fair is from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. at the Good Hope ball fields. The Christmas Parade starts at 2 p.m. at Good Hope High School, ending at Municipal Park. Parade entry, as well as arts and crafts vendor sites, are free!

Sunday

Free Online Tutoring
The Cullman County Library is offering to students of all ages free one-one-one help live online from professional tutors. Sessions are offered from 3-10 p.m. For more information, visit homeworkalabama.org.

Announcements

Cullman Community Band Christmas Concert
The Cullman Community Band Christmas Concert will be held at the Cullman High School auditorium on Monday, Dec. 14. Admission is free and the concert begins promptly at 7 p.m.

Special Needs Bowling Night
Individuals with special needs and their families are invited to the Cullman Area Special Needs bowling nights, from 6-8 p.m. at the Cullman Bowling Center. Please RSVP before 12 noon the day of the events, which are Dec. 8, 15, 22 and 29. The charge is $3 per person. For more information, contact Rhonda at 256-962-2208.

Aluminum Can Donation Drive
The Cullman County Animal Shelter is asking anyone with aluminum cans to please make a donation to their recycling bin, located at 935 Convent Road N.E. For more information, please call Candie at 256-734-5448.

First Source for Women
The First Source for Women Center provides free pregnancy tests, pregnancy and abortion and counseling Tuesday-Friday from 9:30 a.m. -2:30 p.m. If you need to speak with someone, but are unable to do so during normal hours, you can make an appointment. Please call 1-800-712-HELP.

Living Bread Food Bank
The Living Bread Food Bank, located at Hanceville First United Methodist Church has changed its food bank opening from the third to the second Saturday of the month for November and December. For more information, please call 256-352-5536.

WSCC Alumni Foundation 2016 Trips
The WSCC Alumni Foundation is planning a number of trips to popular tourist destinations throughout 2016. Please contact Gail at 256-352-8604 or gailcrutchfield@wallacestate.edu.

Church's New Gathering Place
East Battleground Baptist Church will now be hosting services in a mobile chapel on the home site. Members and visitors will be in this location until the new church is completed.

Church's New Gathering Place
Due to a fire in the Bread of Life Church in Holly Pond, members will now attend services in the old New Life Worship Center building, located at 721 Brooklyn Road in Holly Pond until further notice. Please contact Brenda at 256-507-2650.

Bob's Grief Support Group
On the last Thursday of each month, Bob's Grief Support Group meets at the Chapel at Smith Lake Park. For more information, please call 256-595-7331.

Good Hope Christmas Love-Deadline Extended
The deadline for dropping off items for the Good Hope Christmas Love families in need has been extended to Dec. 11. Items needed are new, unwrapped toys, non-perishable food items, stocking stuffers and anything else you feel led to contribute. Drop items off at Dollar General or Good Hope City Hall.

LOCAL ENTERTAINMENT
Sponsored by Busy Bee Café

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

TUESDAY
• Tuesday Night Trivia at Augusta's Sports Grill beginning at 7 p.m. 1st place receives $50 gift card.
• 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.

THURSDAY
• Open Mic Night at Brothers from 8 p.m. to close
• Happy Hour at Moe's from 3-7 p.m.

FRIDAY
• Live Music at Brothers
• Live Music at Moe's
• Happy Hour at Moe's from 3-6 p.m.

SATURDAY
• Live Music at Brothers
• Live Music at Moe's
• Happy Hour at Moe's from 3-6 p.m.

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

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ST. BERNARD

The Founding Members of the St. Bernard Clairvaux Society gathered on the St. Bernard campus for their Fourth Annual Mass and Dinner. Attending this year's festivities were front row: Carol Rooney, Jack Natter, Nancy Natter, Roy Drinkard, Cathy Rymer, Bonnie Perilloux, Mike Blais, Shirley Blackwelder, Ed Blackwelder, Lynn Gielser, and Rev. Richard Altenbaugh. Second row: Chris Rooney, Rev. John McDonald, Dorenda Doyle, Charlotte Kearney, Carolyn Eckl Eck, Martha Thomas, Don Meagher, Roy Perilloux, Mike Natter, Susan Natter, Gary Giesler, Marth Ann Warnke, Michayla Brown, and Rev. Richard Altenbaugh. Back row: John Kearney, Curt Thomas, Abbot Cletus Meagher, Ronnie Barnes, Rosemary Malinowski, Bill Malinowski and Bill Fiorentino.

ST. BERNARD'S PLANNED GIVING PROGRAM CELEBRATES $10M MARK

Joyce Nix
St. Bernard Contributor

CULLMAN –The Clairvaux Society is an organization, established in 2010, to ensure the long-term future of St. Bernard Abbey and Prep School through planned giving. Members of the society gathered recently to celebrate reaching the society's initial goal of $10M in committed gifts.

The planned gifts from the 79 Founding Members of the Clairvaux Society have been made in the form of insurance policies, annuities, real estate, stocks, bonds, cash, and bequests in wills and estate plans. The values of the planned gifts range from $2,000 to $1M, and the ages of the Founding Members from 19 to 95 years of age.

At the celebration held on November 7, 2015, Abbot Cletus Meagher offered a Mass of thanksgiving in the Abbey Church.

Following the Mass, the group gathered with the monks for a reception and dinner honoring the Founding Members, and inducting the 7 new members: Fr. Richard Altenbaugh, Mr. & Mrs. Clark Branch, Jr, Mr. & Mrs. Tom Brett, Mrs. Carolyn E. Eck, Mr. & Mrs. David Kassouf, Fr. John McDonald and Fr. Augustine Moore, PhD. The celebratory dinner was prepared by Chef Allie Foster and her staff and served by the students of St Bernard Prep School.

In his remarks during the dinner, Abbot Cletus thanked the Founding Members for their very generous support of St. Bernard. He announced that the Clairvaux Society would continue to welcome and honor new members who desired to support St. Bernard through planned gifts. Fr. Marcus Voss announced that the Fifth Annual Clairvaux Society Mass and Dinner will be held on Saturday, November 12, 2016.

As has been the Society's tradition, new members will be inducted at that time, and receive their Clairvaux Society pins, certificates and books.

Anyone desiring further information is asked to contact Fr. Marcus at 256-531-2010 or Chris Rooney at 617-283-5158.

WHEN THE HAUKS CAME MARCHING IN

GERMAN FAMILY BRINGS LOVE OF MUSIC TO EARLY CULLMAN

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN — Being a member of the high school marching band can be lots of fun and extremely rewarding. Of course, there are also times when band members are the butt of jokes for being so-called "band geeks." What the jokesters fail to realize, though, is that without the band geeks of the world, there would be a lot less music. Music speaks to the soul and brings people together. The Hauk family of Bremen, Germany understood this as they packed up their precious instruments and sailed to America around the turn of the century.

In the 1880s, Germany was in political turmoil. Many Germans, including the Fiedegott von Lieblich Hauk family of Bremen, desperately longed to leave, especially after reading the optimistic letters from friends and family who had already taken the plunge and emigrated to America.

The elder Mr. Hauk and his wife had nine children, so moving to America cost quite a bit. But the Hauks scrimped and saved, and before long, they packed up their belongings and started the long trip to their new home.

The excited Hauks bade their homeland goodbye, then Mr. and Mrs. Hauk, followed by Ernest, Emil, C.O., Richard, Alfred, Lena, Guito, Ida and baby Forta, walked up the gangplank to their steerage quarters.

Sadly, even after years of sacrifice and saving, they could only afford the lowest class fares, traveling in the cargo area in steerage, as the decks above were reserved for the wealthy.

The days seemed to last forever as the Hauks endured their painfully cramped quarters. That is, until the day a sailor checking on the passengers saw C.O. Hauk's violin hanging on the wall and inquired about it.

"All my children and I play instruments," Mr. Hauk announced. "We have an orchestra," he poked out his chest and smiled proudly. The sailor perked up and smiled, "Do you have your instruments with you?"

"Yes, but they are packed up in the ship's hold. We can't get them," Mr. Hauk explained.

The sailor, unmistakably a music lover, told the captain about the Hauk family band. The captain was curious and after meeting with Mr. Hauk, he ordered the Hauk baggage to be fished out of the baggage of 1,300 other passengers. When the instruments were retrieved, he sat down and listened to a medley of beautiful German music.

Sometimes music can be pure magic, and it certainly was for the Hauks that afternoon.

They played so well, the captain invited them on deck with the wealthy passengers whom they entertained for the remainder of the voyage.

When the ship landed in Baltimore, the admiring sailors personally led the Hauk family musicians on a march through the city. The townspeople were delighted, and the sailors were so impressed, they filled boxes with enough food to last the family until they reached their destination of Cullman.

In Cullman, the talented Hauk family orchestra entertained the town. Mr. Hauk organized the Cullman Coronet Band, which became quite popular.

They would often practice on the front porch of the family's living quarters, located above the ice factory Mr. Hauk founded.

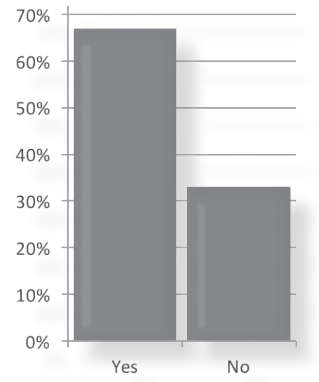
Neighbors would gather together and listen. Afterward, Mrs. Hauk would serve glasses of beer to the adults and lemonade to the children.

Music allowed the Hauk family to travel a little more comfortably than most people of their class. It gained them boxes of much needed food for their travels, opened up the ears of those around them and helped them find friendship in a big new world.

Were the Hauk children ever called band geeks (or whatever the equivalent was at the time)? Or were they automatically cool because of their incredible talent? No one knows. But either way, they brought happiness to those around them, just like today's young musicians bring to us.

Poll

Should President Obama put soldiers on the ground in Syria?



This Week's Poll

Do you feel stricter gun laws and banning of automatic weapons is a good start to ending domestic terrorism?

Vote Today at CullmanSense.com/Poll

WHAT'S ONLINE



WSCC

WSCC THEATRE PRESENTING 'A CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS'

Wallace State Community College's Theatre department is paying homage to Peanuts creator Charles M. Schulz and the 50th anniversary of the debut of "A Charlie Brown Christmas." **QRNE.WS/412**



BEARCATS WIN HOLLY POND THANKSGIVING TOURNAMENT

It was an offensive explosion in the fifth-place game between the West Point Warriors and the Hartselle Tigers. The Warriors got it going early thanks in part to Cameron Moors who had eight of the 26 Warriors first quarter points. Hartselle responded well in the second... **QRNE.WS/413**

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CRMC HOSTS ANNUAL LIGHTS OF LOVE CEREMONY

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com



People from all over Cullman County attended this year's Lights of Love ceremony at CRMC Thursday night. SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

CULLMAN – On Thursday, Dec. 3, the Cullman Regional Medical Center (CRMC) Foundation hosted its annual Dr. Herman C. Ensor Lights of Love Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony. Many community members were recognized and remembered during the event, with music provided by the First Baptist Church Ladies Ensemble, the First United Methodist Church Chanel Choir, the Lunsford family and Dr. Joe Johnson.

"Lights of Love has been a tradition at CRMC since 1981," said Danny McAfee, CRMC Foundation Board of Trustees.

"It started as a way to pay tribute to those who had passed away during the year. In 2010, the CRMC Foundation Board appropriately renamed Lights of Love in memory of the many contributions made by Dr. Herman Ensor, who also started the event."

In keeping with the tradition of service started by Ensor, the event has evolved to honor and/or remember members of the community who have provided leadership to CRMC, the Foundation and/or Hospice over the years.

For a minimum donation of $20, a personalized card is sent to those chosen by the donor to be honored or to the family of those being remembered.

Each donation is represented by a light on the Christmas tree. Honorees, family members and contributors are invited to the tree lighting ceremony to view a presentation of the names of those honored or remembered.

The donations support the Foundation's mission of advancing healthcare services at CRMC.

"We are recognizing many individuals this evening, two of whom dedicated countless hours of service to the hospital," McAfee explained.

"I would like to honor Mrs. Janie Ensor, who passed away earlier this year, for her service, and I would also like to pay tribute to Mr. Mike Duke for his years of service to the Foundation.

"Dr. Ensor was well known as a caring and dedicated physician, and Mrs. Ensor was always by his side supporting and encouraging him to help others," he continued.

"Mrs. Ensor had a sweet and loving spirit. She was a dedicated wife and faithful friend.

"Mr. Duke served as president of the CRMC Foundation from 1997 to 1999 and served in various capacities on the board. He gave his time and talents to help many civic organizations, making a long lasting impact on our community."

The culmination of the event is when everyone walks outside together to share in the lighting of the tree atop CRMC.

Mr. Duke's wife, Derinda and son, Tyler had the honor of lighting the Christmas tree at the end of this year's ceremony.

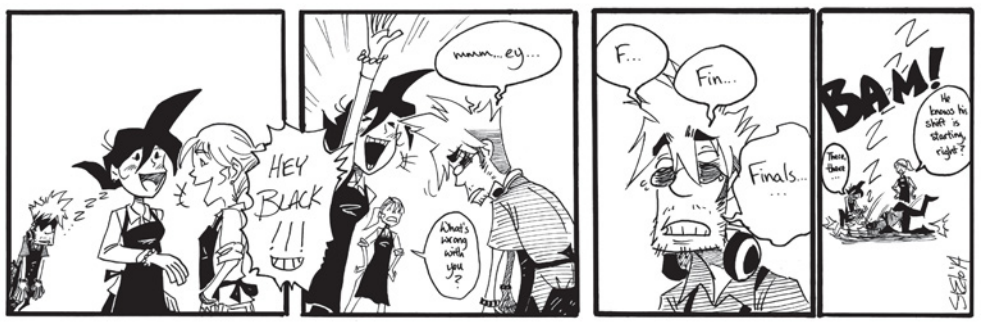
"I would also like to thank everyone that (who) helped with the program this evening, and I extend my deepest appreciation to each of you for attending the ceremony this evening," said Stephanie Jowers, CRMC Foundation president.

"On behalf of the CRMC Foundation Board of Trustees, we say thank you for giving the gift of love to honor loved ones at this time. You are helping make a difference with our mission of advancing healthcare services at CRMC, and we are grateful."

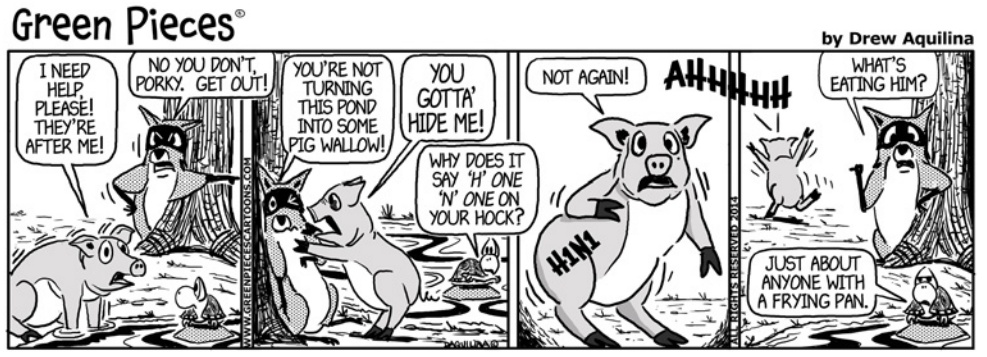
If you were not able to attend the ceremony, but would still like to donate to the CRMC Foundation, donations will be accepted throughout the holiday season. Payments can be made online at www.crmchospital.com/LightsofLove or you can contact the CRMC Foundation office at 256-737-2565 or crmcfoundation@crmchosital.com for more information.

COMICS

WHITE & BLACK • "The All-niter" • st.edo@cullmansense.com



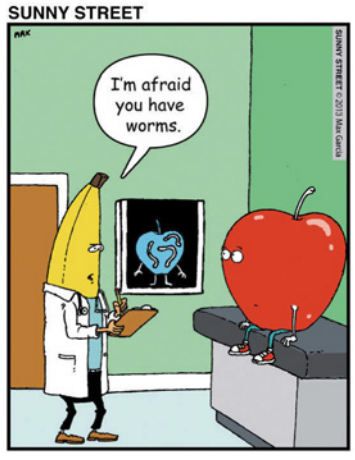
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OBITUARY ANNOUNCEMENTS

NOVEMBER 30 - DECEMBER. 6

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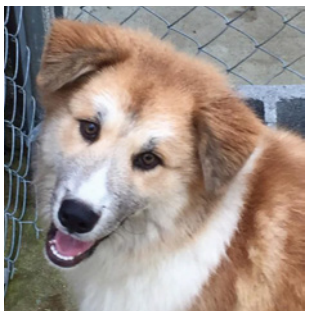
Larry Andrew Nuss
Daniel Lee Zinsmeister
Betty Marie Johns
Lovie Leedale Folds
Bobby Joe Smith
William Thomas McAnally
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Maurice O. White
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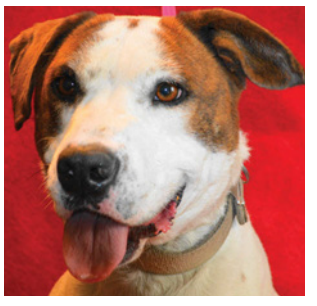
PETS OF THE WEEK

RIDDLE



Hello my name is Riddle and I am about 1 years old. I am a Collie mix and I currently weigh 42 lbs. I am a stray but if no one claims me by 11/10/15 at 9:30 a.m. I will be put up for adoption at that time. My adoption fee is $90 and that includes my spay/neuter, vaccines, wormer, and also covers my general exam at the Vet, the rabies vaccine, microchip, free 45-day health insurance policy and our local Pet Depot will give you a free bag of food (you pay the taxes) in support of adopting me.

ROXIE



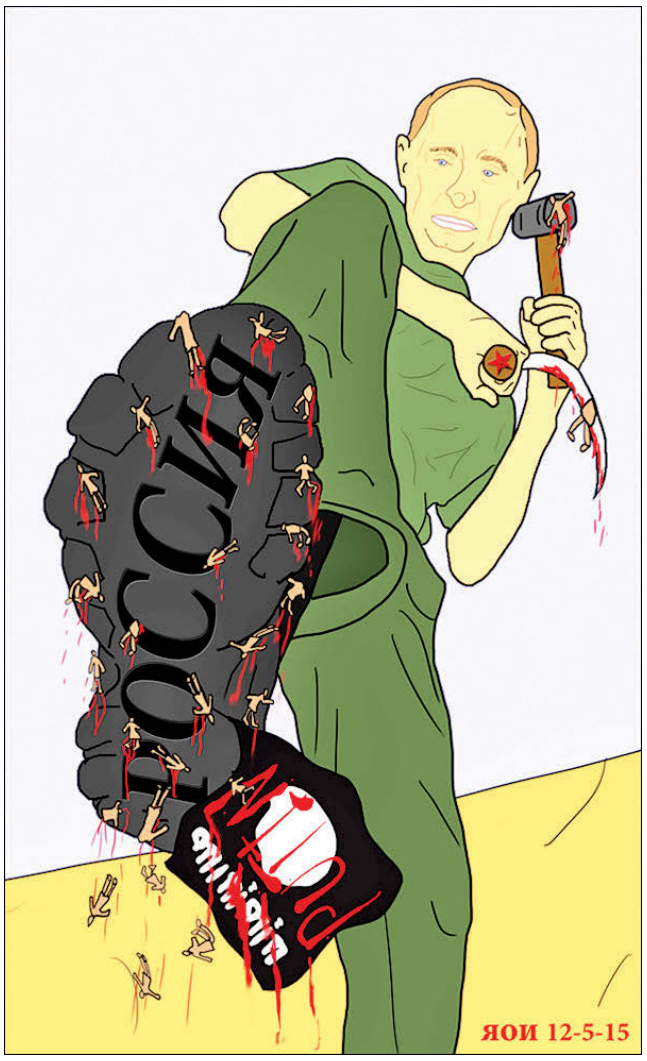
Hello my name is Roxie and I am about 5 years old. I am a Jack Russell Terrier Mix and I currently weigh 40 lbs. My adoption fee is $25 because I came to the Shelter already spayed. That also covers my microchip, free 45 day health insurance policy and our local Pet Depot will give you a free bag of food (you pay the taxes) in support of you adopting a Shelter animal. That is a great deal and I will give you a lifetime of love and loyalty.

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.

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OPINION

CAN WE PLEASE STOP

Laura Finley
PeaceVoice

Surely some uber-conservative political candidates will call me out on "politicizing tragedy" but I don't care. I don't want to pray for victims. I don't want to seek vengeance on perpetrators. I want this never to happen again; I want to never feel this weight again.

Not just something but so many things must be done. My heart is so heavy to learn of not one but two mass shootings in the U.S. today.

While the news is focused on San Bernadino, California, as I write at least 14 people are dead and 17 seriously injured, another mass shooting occurred earlier in the day on December 2 in Savannah, Georgia.

We have now endured more shootings in 2015 than days in the year. Yes, that's right, an average of more than one per day.

What do we do? It won't be easy, that's for sure. But there are some obvious components, and some other things we need to consider that are rarely part of the public dialogue.

Gun control? Check. We have to create sensible policies that at least make it more difficult for dangerous people to acquire dangerous weapons.

Provide better mental health services? Check.

Without a doubt we need to be way better at recognizing who is suffering from mental illness, who among that population might be a threat to themselves or others, and offer supports for them to reduce the chances of horrific violence.

But in addition to those seemingly obvious answers, we also need to think about what motivates mass shooters in the first place.

While some suffer from mental illness, many are simply people who have lost hope, who see themselves as worthless.

The above-listed solutions do nothing to address how we change the hearts and minds of people.

I do not profess to have all the answers, nor do I think any one thing is "the" solution, but I do think we need to talk a lot more, and act a lot more, to create a populace that sees violence itself as abhorrent.

We need to create a society in which people's natural instinct for dealing with difficult times is not to pull out a gun or other weapon but rather to seek help and guidance and to use their humanity and creativity to work out another answer.

What I am not hearing much about is the importance of teaching people to think and act differently.

We need to teach young people (and every age—it's never too late!) that they can and have to express how they feel.

We need to teach people how to receive that information and how not to judge but to empathize and support.

We need to help people learn how to adapt when things don't go as planned, and we need to learn to be better cheerleaders for one another.

We need to teach people resiliency, as things will likely be challenging at some point but with ample coping skills we can not only survive but thrive.

We need to figure out how to help people see a ray of light, a bit of hope, in what can often be perceived as a hopeless situation.

In essence, we need peace education. Everywhere. All the time.

Peace education teaches people that not only are there nonviolent ways to resolve conflict but that each one of us is responsible for doing so.

It emphasizes that we have to build our capacities for love, acceptance, and understanding if we want a better world.

Laws and policies can help, but changing the way we think is imperative.

Can we please agree to do this? It's hard, but also not that hard.

Our future seriously depends on it. Another way is possible, people. Let's make it happen.

Laura Finley, Ph.D., teaches in the Barry University Department of Sociology & Criminology and is syndicated by PeaceVoice.

POWER IN THE WORD: THE GOSPEL THAT WORKS

THERE ARE TWO ECONOMIC SYSTEMS IN OPERATION TODAY

Dr. Henry W. Roberts, II
Contributor

There are two economic systems in operation today, the world's system and God's system. If there were not two systems, why would God say, "Be not conformed to this world?" When most people get saved and come into the Kingdom, they turn their brains off. God never intended for us to do that. The part of us that gives life comes directly from God. We have creative ability inside of us. But if I turn my brain off, I am not able to tap into the creative ability that He placed in me. Without this creative ability active, it hinders me from being able to come into everything God desires me to have. I cannot afford to stop thinking.

Most people's belief system is powered by one of two sources, the spirit of error or the spirit of truth. That means that what you believe and how you believe it is funneled by one of these two spirits. For the most part, the world has been programming us to think like the world. That is why when you open your Bibles to Romans 12:2, God tells us, "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." That means there has to be two systems of operation. The spirit of error comes from man. The main vein came from Satan himself. The Bible says he was a liar, he is the father of lies and he is a liar from the start. That means that everything that proceeds from Satan is a lie. He cannot tell the truth. The truth is not in him.

Knowing this, then, we have a good foundation to open this up and reveal it to you. Please turn with me to Matthew 6:21-24. In these scriptures, God deals with your sight and perception. Your perception is vital. How you see a thing has a whole lot to do with what you will understand.

Matthew 6:21-24 "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

Again, there are two systems. Another name for the school board is a "system." Everything has a system. In the medical field, they have a system. In the plant, they have a system. When you learn how to weld, it is a system. If you learn how to paint, it is a system. So, it should be no misnomer that they have to have two "systems" of the economy out here.

In Matthew 6, the treasure He is talking about is not your wife or your family, but money. You cannot be afraid to talk about money. I cannot let spiritual intimidation come up against me when I know how the spirit of faith operates. I can have what I say. Therefore, some things, I have to talk about on purpose. Ecclesiastes 10:19 says, "A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things." You cannot be afraid to talk about money because it wants to answer you. Jesus said it like this, "Make unto yourselves friends of unrighteous mammon."

So, money, according to the Master, is supposed to like you. When you develop a right relationship with anything, it will keep responding to you. But if you do not have a right relationship with money, it is going to be running from you because you do not know what to do with it when you get it. The Bible says, "When you ask, you ask amiss because you want to consume it upon your own lusts." (James 4:3)

Even on the monetary note, on the dollar bill, it is saying that we are not trusting in the gold in Fort Knox to sustain this, but we are trusting in God. Without God sustaining anything, it will fall. Even with the world trying to get rid of God, on the money it still says that we trust in Him. We have to ask ourselves, What is our priority?

Dr. Henry W. Roberts, II is the pastor and founder of Word of Life Community Church of Mobile, AL. For your free book, "What Is Salvation" by Dr. Roberts, call 251-456-2652.

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CULLMAN COMMUNITY BAND TO PERFORM ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Will Hogue
will@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN — On Monday, Dec. 14 at 7 p.m. in the Cullman High School auditorium, the Cullman Community Band will perform its annual Christmas Concert.

The concert, according to the band's conductor Garry Taylor, will last less than an hour and is free to attend.

"We'll start at 7 p.m. and we'll be out of there well before 8 p.m.," Taylor said.

Taylor, who has been the conductor of the community band since 2010 and involved with the group since its inception in 2005, said that the band provides something special for the Cullman community that nothing else does. "The city does a great job, you know, with the Parks and Recreation department, keeping everyone active and (with) physical exercise," Taylor said. "But we provide cultural exercise for the community."

The community band is a traditional concert style band, meaning that the band does not do parades or anything outside of a concert venue. The band is made up of musicians from the Cullman community.

"I am amazed by the number of talented people we have in the local area," Taylor said. The ages of the band members range from 19-86 years old. "Or 87, he might be 87 by now," Taylor said, half joking.

The goal of the Christmas concert is to provide an event for the community that is unique and free to experience. The musicians have as much fun playing as the audience does hearing them.

"This really gives these instrumental musicians an opportunity to show their abilities," Taylor said.

The concert will be almost all Christmas music, with a small portion of the show being a medley of the band Chicago's hits.



Cullman Community Band performs at last year's Christmas concert. GARRY TAYLOR

"We will also do a song from 'The Nutcracker' by Manheim Steamroller, as well as a couple Christmas classics arranged in a way to make them sound like they are something out of a spy movie or something," Taylor said. "It is going to be a lot of fun, that's for sure."

The Cullman Community Band's season begins after Labor Day and ends in early June. Rehearsals are held on Monday evenings from 6:30 — 8 p.m. in the Cullman Middle School band room. To join the band or for more information, contact conductor Garry Taylor at 256-636-2754 or garry54@bellsouth.net.

Visit facebook.com/CullmanCommunityBand to stay up-to-date on the band's schedule.

Spider (from Front)

ful spiders.

Before long, the sweet grandmotherly woman behind the table began talking to me about her spider tree. She spoke with a British accent, and the more we talked the more I learned.

She was born in England and moved to the United States many years ago. Now living in Moulton, she makes stuffed animals – and spider Christmas ornaments to sell around the holidays.

"Tell her the story that goes along with your spiders," smiled the man in the booth next to hers.

She looked at me and grinned, then plucked a spider from the little tree and began her tale.

"Long ago, on Christmas Eve, a mother prepared for a visit from Christ. She cleaned and scrubbed her humble home, and carefully decorated the tree. When all was quiet, the little spiders that had been swept away crept back in to see the tree. They crawled on every branch, admiring each ornament.

"Alas, when they finished climbing, the tree was draped with cobwebs! Christ smiled when he saw the happy spiders, but he knew the mother would be heartbroken over the shrouded tree. So, he turned the webs into silver and gold, and the tree was even more beautiful."

After she finished, all I could do was stand there and smile at the lovely little critters that covered her tiny tree.

What an interesting tale she had shared with me. Believe it or not, it was one I had never heard before.

Then, the next thing I know, the woman told me to pick out a spider of my own; she said I could have it for free.

I picked the spider ornament that had originally caught my eye, thanking the kind lady profusely. She grinned and placed my special gift into a little white box and wished me a Merry Christmas.

The box had The Legend of the Christmas Spider glued into the bottom, and once I got home, I read over it several times.

I wondered about the story's origins and how in the world I had never heard it before.

I began to research the legend and found out some pretty interesting things.

The Legend of the Christmas Spider is a European folk tale which supposedly explains the origin of tinsel on Christmas trees.

It is not known where the folk tale originated, but it is believed to have come from Germany or Ukraine. Did Cullman's early German settlers tell the story to their children during those first, rustic Christmases?

The story is most prevalent in Ukraine, where small, spider-shaped ornaments, made from paper and wire, are traditionally part of Christmas tree decorations.

In Germany, Poland and Ukraine, finding a spider or a spider's web on a Christmas tree is considered good luck. They also decorate Christmas trees with artificial spider webs.

I love the Legend of the Christmas Spider and I love my little spider-shaped ornament. Special thanks to Ms. Sheila of Sheila's Critters who gave me such a special treasure that day.

To learn more about the legend or to purchase a Christmas spider, contact Ms. Sheila at 256-974-0424. Sheila's Critters is located at 930 County Road 243 in Moulton.

