SERIES 5 • ISSUE 49 • DECEMBER 14, 2015
CULLMANSENSE
COMMUNITY MATTERS


SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

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RASH OF STRANGE DAYTIME BREAK-INS HAS COPS CONCERNED

POLICE ASK FOR CITIZENS' HELP IN ENDING SPREE

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Members of the Cullman City Police Department have been scratching their heads over a rash of recent activity in town. More than a dozen break-ins have occurred in residences across the city, but strangely, nothing appears to have been taken from any of the homes.

"It's really odd," said Assistant Chief of Police Craig Green. "Since around November 1, there have been 13 homes that have been entered by someone other than the home-owners. The way they are getting in is by either kicking or shouldering the door. But the really odd part is that of all 13 of those homes that have been entered, nothing has been stolen.

"So they are breaking into these homes and not taking anything," he continued. "This is the time of year where people break in and steal Christmas presents from under a tree, but that's not the case here. One of the homes had cash, an iPad and a laptop sitting on the kitchen counter and none of it was taken. It's just really strange."

Green said that break-ins usually occur at night, but these events are happening during daytime hours. He said most are occurring between 8:30 in the morning and 4:30 in the P3

A FUN-FILLED CHRISTMAS IN DOWNTOWN CULLMAN

THOUSANDS ATTEND DINKLEBERG MARKET AND CHRISTMAS PARADE




NOAH CHANDLER/CULLMANSENSE

P3

SPECIAL NEEDS DAY HELD BEFORE JIMMY ARRINGTON MEMORIAL RODEO

Sharon Schuler Kreps
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CULLMAN – The New 2015 Cullman County Sherriff's Office Jimmy Arrington Memorial Rodeo took place Friday and Saturday, Dec. 11-12 at the Cullman County Agricultural Trade Center. The day prior, however, belonged to the special needs community. Thursday, Dec. 10 was designated P2


The Chick-fil-A cow was a big hit on Special Needs Day at the rodeo Thursday morning.
SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

ALABAMA DEPT. OF SENIOR SERVICES WARNS SENIORS TO BEWARE OF SCAMS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Robyn James
Contributor

MONTGOMERY – The Alabama Department of Senior Services wants seniors and their family members to exercise extra precaution this holiday season and be on the lookout for scams.

While seniors can be primary targets of scams throughout the year, during the holidays it is important for them to be on special notice.

One common example of a scam a senior might encounter during the holiday season is the "Grandparent Scam." This involves the scammer calling pretending to be a relative (grandchild, niece, nephew, etc.). The caller will phone in the middle of the night claiming to be the relative in desperate need of money.

They may say they are out of the country in trouble or they are in jail needing bail money. Usually, they request that money must be paid immediately by credit card or wire transfer. To protect against this type of scam the senior should ask questions about things only that P6

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BAILEYTON DRUG BUST NETS MORE THAN THIRTY GRAMS OF METH

Bradley Williams
CCSO Contributor

BAILEYTON — Sunday, December 7th, 2015, Agents with the Cullman Narcotics Enforcement Team (CNET), arrested Jesse Elijah Durham, 34 years old of Baileyton, Ala.

Durham was arrested for Trafficking in Methamphetamine, Unlawful Possession of Control Substance, Unlawful Possession of Marijuana 2nd, and Unlawful Possession of Drug Paraphernalia.

The drug bust originated in Baileyton, Ala. after a traffic stop was initiated where Durham was arrested at the scene for an outstanding warrant. After a search of the vehicle was conducted CNET agents discovered in excess of thirty grams of methamphetamine and drug paraphernalia.

"I am proud of the job CNET did in getting this drug dealer behind bars," said Cullman County Sheriff Matt Gentry. "The Sheriff's Office will continue our efforts every day to identify, arrest and hold accountable those who harm our community by trafficking meth and other drugs in our county," added Gentry.

Durham is currently being held in the Cullman County Detention Center on a $1,000,000 bond.

CNET agents arrested Jesse Elijah Durham for Trafficking in Methamphetamine, Unlawful Possession of Control Substance, Unlawful Possession of Marijuana 2nd, and Unlawful Possession of Drug Paraphernalia.



CULLMAN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

TRAFFIC ACCIDENT LEADS TO ARREST FOR METH

Bradley Williams
CCSO Contributor

GOOD HOPE – On Tuesday December 8th, 2015, Cullman County Sheriff's Office Deputies arrested Daniel Scott Smith, 20 years old of Cullman, Ala. following a traffic accident near Vans Sporting Goods on County Road 222 near Good Hope, Ala.

After speaking with Smith at the scene, deputies noticed he was messing with something in his pants.

Deputies then discovered Smith had a loaded pistol in his possession as well as methamphetamine, syringes, scales and other drug paraphernalia.

Smith's arrest led to the seizure of methamphetamine, Taurus 9mm handgun, syringes, scales, and other drug paraphernalia.

"I am proud that the deputies were able to get this meth off the streets," said Cullman County Sheriff Matt Gentry.

"Anytime someone is on meth and in possession of a firearm it's dangerous for law enforcement and citizens. I am glad we ended this incident safely," he added.

Smith is currently out on bond but was charged with Unlawful Possession of a Controlled Substance, Carrying a Weapon without a permit, and Unlawful Possession of Drug Paraphernalia.





Officials discovered a loaded pistol, methamphetamine, syringes, scales and other drug paraphernalia.

CULLMAN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Day (from Front)

Special Needs Day, and children of all ages filled the bleachers and cheered as they watched all the rodeo action that played out in the arena in front of them.

"We are doing our Special Needs Rodeo today," said Cullman County Sheriff Matt Gentry. "I was told we had almost 1,000 special needs children come today. All in all, there was (sic) about 1,300 people that came out today," he grinned.

Gentry said the rodeo was for all the special needs children in Cullman County. Children came from the county schools, the city schools, the private schools and from the Margaret Jean Jones Center.

"They bring all the children here and we start out with a clown and then we do a mini rodeo where we do team roping, steer wrestling and finally bull riding. The kids love it," he chuckled. "Later we start the events with the kids which are hay rides, roping and stick-horse races. So the kids have been out doing stick racing, roping bulls and all kinds of stuff. It's been great!"

The rodeo also had a couple of visitors who helped entertain the children. They were 2015's Miss Rodeo of the Mid-South, Mary Ashley Rohrscheib and the Chick-fil-A cow. Both were a big hit with the day's special guests.

"Chick-fil-A is the major sponsor for the rodeo; they fed all the children today," Gentry said.

"We had a lot of our other sponsors come and volunteer their time to help the sheriff's office," he added. "Everyone worked together to make it a special event for the kids. I really want to thank them and the deputies; they have done an awesome job."

"There was a really great turnout today," said Rohrscheib. "I hope everyone had a lot of fun, at least as much fun as I've had today."

From all the activities associated with the rodeo to all the fun that comes with skipping a day of school, there were many happy faces.

"I liked being with my friends," said 17-year-old Tyler, as he patted his buddy on the back.

Hunter, a 16-year-old, giggled shyly, "My favorite part was getting Miss Rodeo's autograph."

For more information about Special Needs Day or the rodeo, call 256-734-0342. You can also check out more photos on Facebook at facebook.com/cullman.sheriff.



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CULLMAN COUNTY CANDIDATES

DESTRY STONE RUNS FOR CULLMAN COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION SEAT

Will Hogue
will@cullmansense.com

HOLLY POND – Holly Pond resident Destry Stone is running for a seat on the Cullman County Board of Education (CCBOE).

Stone, who graduated from the Holly Pond school system, believes in transparency and wants to make sure that the school board and the community work together, not separately.

"There have been a lot of changes in the school system in the past few years," Stone said.

"I want to make sure to involve the community in decisions. The school is the community, especially in Holly Pond, you know?"

Stone said that while it would be wrong for him to assume why certain decisions are being made, he would support some specific changes, such as an elected superintendent.

"Honestly, I think it would take pressure off the school board because it is the community's decision, so the board is not to blame," Stone said.

"I haven't found a good side, a positive side, to any of the changes that have been made."

While Stone does not have any formal experience with leadership roles in education, he has been around the system his whole life.

"My father was on the school board for eight years, and my wife is a special ed teacher at Holly Pond," he said.

Stone is involved in his church, New Hope Church, in Holly Pond.

He also coaches youth softball and basketball in Holly Pond.

Stone's main issue is his belief that leadership roles in the education systems should be filled with selfless people.

"I know the pay that the board members get, and you cannot be in it for the money, you know. I know without money, the system does not work, but money can't be the main focus. I think that sometimes decisions are made solely on a financial level, without thinking about how it will affect people. It is bad when good people leave, or are forced out of a situation, and that is what has happened recently with the changes."



FACEBOOK/DESTRY.STONE

Christmas (from Front)

Noah Chandler
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CULLMAN – The streets of downtown Cullman were filled from St. Johns' Dinkleberg Market and Festival all the way to Depot Park awaiting the end of the nighttime Christmas parade, as part of the city's annual Christmas in Cullman event.

"This year's event was the best weather we have had in my entire lifetime for a Christmas in Cullman event. The weather was a blessing and clearly part of the reason we had such a huge crowd all day long at St. John's and the Outdoor Expo and one of the biggest turnouts for the parade," said Waid Harbison, Cullman Parks and Recreation marketing and events director and 2015 Christmas in Cullman chairman.

Harbison said the crowds for the all-day event, beginning at 10 a.m. and ending at 10 p.m., were steady and large. "We exceeded our goals this year as far as increasing the crowd and getting more people into downtown Cullman. We also were able to add several new additions to the event this year including the Outdoor Expo which we will continue to grow this year from a small start in 2015 on the expo," he said.

Gyzelle Warren, St. John's Dinkleberg committee member, said despite the bad weather they faced the past two years, Saturday could not have been more perfect for residents to come out and celebrate Christmas.

"With the first year we had the rain and last year we had to brave the freezing temperature," Warren said. "However, this year was a true godsend. We had perfect weather, more vendors and a lot more visitors. We are just looking forward to next year's event."

One of the main reasons this year's event was such a success were the many sponsors and community members who took time from their daily schedules to help plan and execute all the plans.

"We have had several partners come together to make this event possible, as well as several other individuals who have served on our Christmas in Cullman board. The main players for this event on Saturday were the City Parks and Recreation, St. John's Church and the Downtown Merchants Association," he said. "We also would like to thank the Chamber of Commerce for their involvement and support, as well as members from the local business community including Beth Keibler, Michael Sapp and Beth Veigel."

One of the hurdles was to synch all the events, which for the past few years have been conducted separately, to better streamline the fun for families and not have any overlap. Harbison again praised those on the Christmas in Cullman board and the community leaders who stepped up to make the entire day possible.

"A big shout out to St. John's Church, John Richter and Gyzelle Warren for their role in the Dinkleberg Market and Festival at St. John's for utilizing their church and resources to help to (create) something great for the community. Also a big shout out to Lee Powell and his volunteers at the Downtown Merchants (Association) for coordinating the parade," he said. "The current board has worked very well together to make this event as big as possible, and we are already looking forward to a bigger and better Christmas in Cullman in 2016. It has been an honor to serve as the chairman of the board this year and offer something that benefits all the citizens of Cullman as well as our local businesses."

For more photos, visit cullmansense.com.

Break-ins (from Front)

afternoon while people are at work or school.

"We want these people caught," Green stated.

"They are entering homes, but not actu-ally stealing anything. Last week we met with the district attorney, and today we sat down with our command staff and sheriffs and brainstormed, trying to figure out why they are doing it by trying to think outside the box. We are working together to stop it."

The police will be revisiting each of the victims and will be asking them to go back and check their clothing and food to see if any is missing.

They need to determine the mo-tive behind the breaking and entering to help solve these crimes.

"We need everyone's help," Green explained. "I ask that people own their neighborhoods, which means to be very vigilant and aware of your surroundings. Drive your neighborhoods; nobody knows your neighborhood better than you do. While driving through, pay attention to your neighbors' homes; are there any unusual cars there? Are any doors left open?"

While the break-ins have many on edge, it is important not to panic. Citizens are urged to be aware of their surroundings and look for anything unusual.

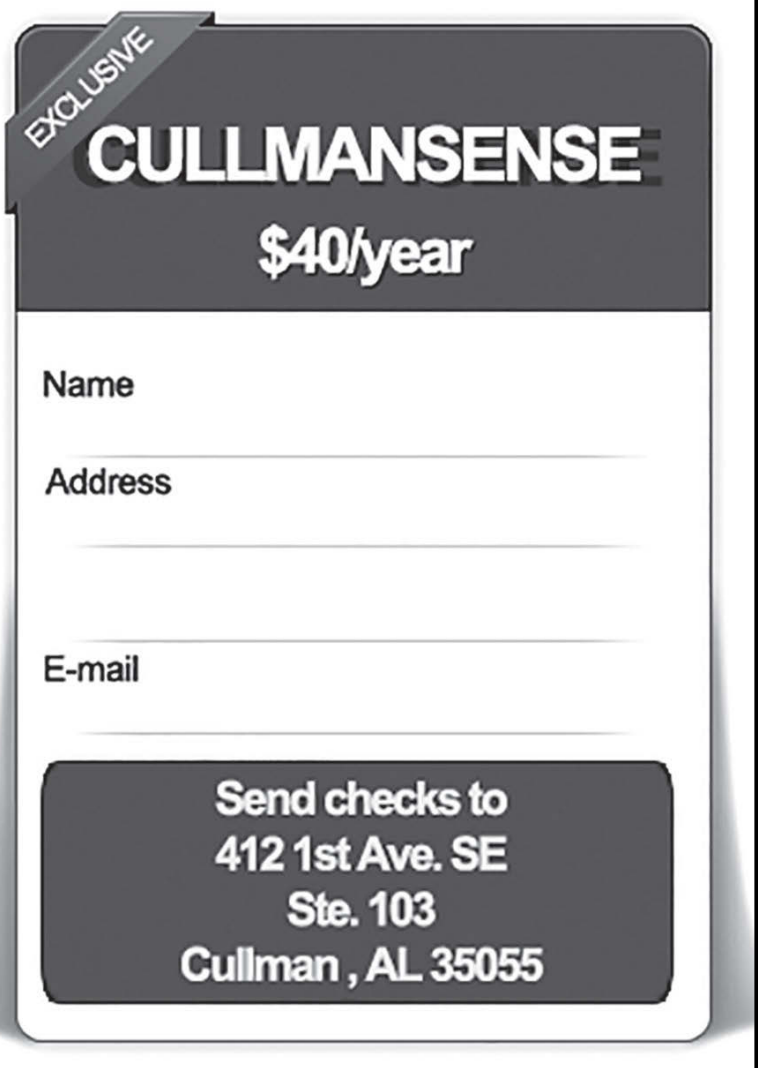
Residents that suspect something odd is happening in their neighborhood or have any information regarding the recent break-ins, should contact the Cullman Police Department at 256-734-1434.

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HO, HO, HOOPS
TEAMS GEAR UP FOR 4TH ANNUAL MITCH SMITH YULE TIDE CLASSIC

Josh McBrayer
Sports Correspondent

CULLMAN – It is that time of year again. Time for the 4th Annual Mitch Smith Yule Tide Classic. The yearly tradition that has seen some wonderful games and some great players in the tournaments short life span. Starting December 28th and wrapping up December 30th, 16 boys and girls teams will invade Tom Drake Coliseum on the campus of Wallace State Community College looking to follow in the footsteps of past Yule Tide Classic winners.

However, the eyes of the Cullman basketball community will be on four teams in particular, the boys and girls from both Holly Pond and Cullman.

The Lady Broncos of Holly Pond have had a solid year year thus far, scoring some big wins against teams like the Cold Springs Lady Eagles and the Lady Bearcats of Cullman.

In the past, Holly Pond has dominated thier opponents with the three point shot and and a smothering press and this year is no different. You can bet the Lady Broncos are going to be ready to play.

The Holly Pond Broncos have been nothing short of spectacular this season. Ranked number two in class 2A, the Broncos have run roughshod over thier competition.

Their only loss has come at the hands of the Cullman Bearcats in the finals of the Holly Pond Thanksgiving Tournament.

No doubt the Broncos will be looking to gain a measure of retribution.

The Cullman Lady Bearcats have had a tough season thus far.

The Lady Cats always play hard and never give up but they don't have much to show for it in the win department.

The Lady black and gold will be looking to get back on track by winning the Yule Tide Classic.

The boys of Cullman have started the 2015-16 campaign with some strong victories and some nail biting losses.

Both winning and losing games at the buzzer, Cullman always goes wire to wire, no matter the score and you can expect nothing less from the Cats when they hit the floor for the Classic.

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PREP BASKETBALL SCHEDULE

WEEK OF DEC. 15

All games slated to start at 6 p.m. with the girls tipoff and 7:30 p.m. for the boys unless noted otherwise.

MONDAY
Cold Springs @ Good Hope
Cullman @ Athens

TUESDAY
Cold Springs @ Fairview
Hanceville @ Susan Moore
5:30 p.m. girls, 7 p.m. boys
Holly Pond @ Vinemont 6:30 p.m. girls, 8 p.m. boys

THURSDAY
Good Hope @ Vinemont 6:30 p.m. girls, 8 p.m. boys

FRIDAY
Cold Springs @ Falkville
Cullman @ Hartselle
Fairview @ West Point
St. Bernard Christmas Tournament

PREP BASKETBALL SCORING WRAP-UP

MONDAY
Girls
West Point 48 - Cold Springs 60

Boys
West Point 71 - Cold Springs 67

TUESDAY
Girls
Hanceville 57 - Vinemont 16
Oneonta 28 - Good Hope 56
Holly Pond 72 - Susan Moore 37
Lawrence County 59 - Fairview 38

Boys
Hanceville 82 - Vinemont 43
Oneonta 66 - Good Hope 44
Holly Pond 72 - Susan Moore 35
Lawrence County 56 - Fairview 54

THURSDAY
Girls
St. Bernard 23 - Pennington 53
Vinemont 37 - West End 56
Fairview 66 - Hanceville 33

Boys
St. Bernard 59 - Pennington 50
Vinemont 47 - West End 44
Fairview 40 - Hanceville 70

FRIDAY
Girls
Fairview 54 - Holly Pond 39
St. Bernard 42 - Lindsay Lane 18
West Point 42 - Lawrence County 54
Cold Springs 55 - Hanceville 41
Good Hope 44 - Locust Fork 59

Boys
Fairview 53 - Holly Pond 68
St. Bernard 53 - Lindsay Lane 40
West Point 54 - Lawrence County 42
Cold Springs 57 - Hanceville 62
Good Hope 45 - Locust Fork 66
Cullman 72 - Gardendale 63
Vinemont 64 - Winston County 59

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

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WALMART DISTRIBUTION TREATS WEST ELEMENTARY TEACHERS TO LUNCH

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

West Elementary teachers enjoyed their Italian lunch Thursday as part of Walmart's Teacher Rewards Celebration.

CULLMAN – On Friday, Dec. 11, West Elementary teachers were honored with a special lunch provided by Cullman's Walmart Distribution Center. The meal was part of Walmart's sixth annual Teacher Rewards Celebration. Carlton's Italian Restaurant supplied the food for the event, while Walmart representatives gave out $50 gift cards, totaling $1,000, to be used for the classrooms, and Yeti merchandise for the school's faculty.

Walmart's Teacher Rewards Program is designed to help offset the money that teachers spend out of their own pockets for classroom supplies during the school year.

This year the program will provide up to $4.5 million dollars to 90,000 teachers across the United States.

"On behalf of everyone at Walmart, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the administration and acknowledge the dedication and sacrifice of the teachers of West Elementary," said Fred Sheppard, Walmart Distribution human resources manager.

"We know that you care for our children and treat them as your own. We believe that the knowledge and skills you teach them today shape them into leaders of tomorrow. And in these challenging times, we recognize that the teachers of West Elementary and teachers across the country reach into their own pockets to give these future leaders the best possible learning experience. Whether it's giving a pencil to a child because hers is worn down to a stub, or providing a nutritious snack for a student who cannot focus because he is hungry, we know the teachers here are going that extra mile to give back to their students. Again, we thank you."

The Walmart representatives weren't the only people who wanted to say thank you to the teachers at Thursday's lunch. Members of the school's Parent Teacher Association were there with gifts as well.

"We are very appreciative of Walmart and our PTA for what they have done for us today," said Dr. Jay Page, principal. "We have the best faculty in the world," he smiled.

"The lunch today was fabulous," said Melanie Townson, third- and sixth-grade assistant.

"We are so appreciative to Walmart for helping us fellowship with one another today during the Christmas season."

West Elementary (second-sixth grades) is one of three elementary schools in the Cullman City Schools system.

The other two are the Cullman City Primary School (kindergarten-first grade) and East Elementary (second-sixth grades). West Elementary is located at 303 Rosemont Ave. S.W. Find out more at wes.cullmancats.net.

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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.

KENNETH NAIL, Mayor

Attest:

_____

GOOD HOPE'S CHRISTMAS IN THE PARK DRAWS HUGE CROWDS



Good Hope's Christmas parade was a hit with everyone, young and old.

IMAGES BY SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE





Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

GOOD HOPE – On Saturday, Dec. 12, Good Hope celebrated the Christmas season by hosting Christmas in the Park, including an arts and crafts fair at the ballpark and a festive parade down the city's main highway.

Along Highway 69, children of all ages waited excitedly for the parade to begin, armed with plastic bags and plans of filling those bags with candy. The parade started off with this year's grand marshal, Good Hope High School Coach Rosemary Brown, in the lead with various floats and bands trailing behind.

"We come to the parade every year; my family is from Good Hope," said Brittany Owen, resident. "We love it. It's great, especially afterwards when we can take the kids to the park," she smiled. "I'm just so happy Good Hope does all of this, especially for the kids."

After the parade, the crowd moved to the municipal park, where pictures were taken with Santa and cookies were decorated in the bakery. There were train rides and bounce houses for kids and free food for everyone at the concession stand. The arts & crafts fair featured homemade Christmas decorations, crocheted scarves and hats and many other unique wares.

"I love getting all the candy from the parade," said 7-year-old Isaiah. "Then I like to go to the park and jump in all the bounce houses," he grinned.

The weather was unseasonably warm, and people from all over the community were able to come out to enjoy the day's festivities.

"I'd like to give a special thanks to all of our staff and others that made Good Hope's Christmas in the Park another great success," said Mayor Jerry Bartlett. "I'd also like to wish everyone a very merry Christmas."



Scams (from Front)

relative would know, for example, the location of the last family reunion or a birthdate.

They should also contact a separate family member to verify that the relative really is in immediate need of help before sending any money. The senior should never wire money to anyone without verifying this information first.

Another common example is the "Fake Charities Scam." Here scammers will take advantage of seniors by posing as a genuine charitable organization. They use high-pressure tactics to attempt to get the senior to donate money immediately, either by cash, credit card, or wire transfer. They will even offer to send a courier or overnight delivery service to your home to collect the donation.

A good practice for these types of calls would be for the senior to ask specific questions about the charity and also ask for a call back number. The senior can then call the organization directly to verify the information and also find out if the organization is aware of someone soliciting on their behalf. The senior should be wary if asked to immediately pay in cash, check or credit card, or a wire transfer. Seniors and all consumers can never be too careful, too prepared, or too aware.

The best method to for seniors to protect themselves is to stop, ask questions, and verify information. If a senior or a caregiver encounters this type of scam during the holidays or throughout the year, they can call 1-800-AGELINE to report it and get to the correct agency for further action.

RELIGIOUS SPOTLIGHT: RANDY LYNCH OF ANTIOCH N.D. CHURCH IN FAIRVIEW

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

FAIRVIEW – Antioch N.D. Church is well-known in its community for being Bible-based and God-fearing. Its members are eager to make a difference in the world. The quaint country church's congregation enjoys being together, whether they are fellowshipping over a covered dish dinner or praying fervently for peace throughout the world. Randy Lynch, the church's pastor, is a perfect fit for this humble little church.

Lynch, a Cullman native, is married to the lovely Kerstin Smith of Birmingham. They have two beautiful daughters, Morgan and Hannah.

A graduate of Cullman High School and Wallace State Community College, Lynch started in sales for Landstar Poole and R.E. Garrison Trucking. He currently works exclusively for R.E. Garrison when he's not pastoring his church family.

"In 2008 I took a youth leadership role in a church in Holly Pond," said Lynch.

"At the time, I knew God had something in store for me, but I just didn't know what it would be," he smiled. "After many sleepless nights of searching for answers, I answered the call to preach in 2010."

Lynch said that when he answered the call to preach, he found himself a mentor who eventually asked him to serve as his associate pastor at Antioch N.D. Church.

A few years later, in March 2014, he became the church's lead pastor and has been there ever since.

"I think the biggest challenge for pastors is keeping people committed to doing God's work," Lynch admitted.

"I think most pastors will agree that our biggest challenge is having everyone see the big picture. We live in hard times and the world will do anything it can to discourage us. People need to know that life with Christ is the only way to make it in this life.

"My biggest reward is when I see people change right before my eyes," he beamed.

"I love seeing them serve God, putting everything they have into it. Being a Christian is a daily struggle and it takes all you've got to do it. Yes, watching people use their gifts and talents for the Lord is definitely one of my greatest rewards," he smiled warmly.

> **"My biggest reward is when I see people change right before my eyes. I love seeing them serve God, putting everything they have into it."**
>
> Randy Lynch

Just listening to Lynch talk about serving the Lord and leading his church, it's quite obvious he takes his calling very seriously. He loves the church and the congregation loves him right back.

"We have church members that have been in the church their whole lives," Lynch grinned.

"We also have others that have just recently converted. Our youth work really well with the adults. In fact, most of our singing is handled by the teenagers in our church," he chuckled.

"We are all in this together, so age isn't an issue with us. We are called to be his hands and feet and that's what we should strive to be. If you want to serve, God has a job for you," he urged.

Lynch said Antioch N.D. Church is like one big family. They love each other and they love the Lord. If you or someone you know is looking for a place to worship, why not drive to Fairview and pay them a visit?

The church is located at the corner of Welcome Road (County Road 1564) and County Road 1518, just north of Fairview. Their Hour of Power takes place on Sundays at 10 a.m. with the Living Word beginning at 11 a.m.

For more information, contact the church at lynch.antioch@gmail.com or 256-962-2831. Find them on Facebook at facebook.com/Antioch-ND-Church-393929904124021.



RANDY LYNCH

Pastor Randy Lynch of Antioch N.D. Church baptizes one of the church's youth in the river.

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 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 and click on the K-College Student Centers button. Online tutoring is available Sunday-Thursday. Visit the library's downtown branch at 200 Clark St. N.E. to learn more.

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

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 meeting at 12 noon each Monday at St. John's Church Christ Hall. Come see what Kiwanis is all about and enjoy a great luncheon meal as well.

Cullman City Council Meeting
The Cullman City Council will meet at 7 p.m. in the City Hall Auditorium. Call 256-775-7109 for more information.

Domestic Violence Survivors' Support Group
Victim Services of Cullman's Domestic Violence Survivors' Support Group meets every Monday from 5-7 p.m. at the old County Board of Education Building (310 Third Ave. S.E.) Childcare is available. Call 256-775-2600 for more information. Crisis Line: 256-734-6100.

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.

Karaoke - 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 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 and click on the K-College Student Centers button. Online tutoring is available Sunday-Thursday. Visit the library's downtown branch at 200 Clark St. N.E. to learn more.

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 be 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. The center is located at Ingle Park at 1621 Cleveland Ave. S.W.

Vinemont High School Baseball Chili Dinner Fundraiser
The VHS baseball team is hosting a chili dinner fundraiser from 5-8 p.m. in the school's lunchroom. For $7, you get chili, a drink and desert. Dine-in or carry-out.

Cullman Knifty Knitters
Members of the Cullman Knifty Knitters group meet each Tuesday afternoon at 3 p.m. in the Cullman County Library. Everyone is invited to 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 are also invited to take part in these weekly meetings. Please call Lesia for more information at 256-734-2720 ext. 23.

Ladies' Auxiliary VFW Dance at Post 2214
The Ladies' Auxiliary of VFW Post 2214 invites the community to their weekly Tuesday night dances at the VFW Post building. The country line dance starts at 7:00 pm each Tuesday night, with admission of only $5 per person. Concessions are available, and all proceeds benefit the Auxiliary's local projects.

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.

Wednesday

Free Online Tutoring
The Cullman County Library is offering 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 and click on the K-College Student Centers button. Online tutoring is available Sunday-Thursday. Visit the library's downtown branch at 200 Clark St. N.E. to learn more.

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.

2015 December Morning Blend
Cullman Chamber of Commerce staff will welcome members and visitors to the Chamber building to discuss the hottest topics in business and share tips, ideas and viewpoints. The event is from 8-9 a.m.

Wii Bowling at the Donald E. Green Senior Center
Wii Bowling at the Donald E. Green Senior Center starts at 1 p.m. and everyone is invited. Come enjoy some exercise (but not too physical) and fellowship with friends. Wii Bowling is every Wednesday and Friday afternoon at 1 p.m. The center is located at Ingle Park at 1621 Cleveland Ave. S.W. Call 256- 734-4803 for more information.

Wednesday Lunch Buffet at TP Country Club
Lunch Buffet at TP Country Club from 11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Call 256-739-0738 for more information.

Thursday

Free Online Tutoring
The Cullman County Library is offering 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 and click on the K-College Student Centers button. Online tutoring is available Sunday-Thursday. Visit the library's downtown branch at 200 Clark St. N.E. to learn more.

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. The Cullman Senior Center is located at 1539 Sportsman Lake Road N.W.

Wii Bowling at the Donald E. Green Senior Center
Wii Bowling at the Donald E. Green Senior Center starts at 1 p.m. and everyone is invited. Come enjoy some exercise (but not too physical) and fellowship with friends. Wii Bowling is every Wednesday and Friday afternoon at 1 p.m. The center is located at Ingle Park at 1621 Cleveland Ave. S.W. Call 256- 734-4803 for more information.

Friday Night Dance at the VFW
Cullman's VFW Post 2214 invites everyone to their weekly Friday night dances at the VFW Hall from 7-10 p.m. The cost is $5 per person and music by the Golden Oldies and Country with the Midnight Highway Band will be filling the air. Funds raised go toward the building rental. Get your dancing shoes on and come out for a great evening of fun and entertainment.

Saturday

Breakfast with Santa
Cullman Church of Christ is hosting a Breakfast with Santa from 8:30-10:30 a.m. The church is located at 4345 AL Highway 157.Cost is $5 per person or $15 per family. RSVP appreciated but not required at cullmanignite@gmail.com.

Cullman Moose Lodge 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.

Saturday Night Dance at the VFW
Cullman's VFW Post 2214 invites everyone to their weekly Saturday night dances which begin at 7 p.m. and last until 10 p.m. The Boogie Night Band provides music on Saturday nights. Entrance fee is $5 for each individual. Come on out and bring your dancing shoes and enjoy an evening of great music, fun and fellowship!

Dodge City Community Connection
Free chili and taco soup will be served starting at 6 p.m. at Dodge City Park. Bring the kids to see Santa and enjoy the light show.

Fairview Lions Club Turkey Shoot
Turkey shoot will be held at the girls' softball field at 1337 Wesley Ave. N. starting at 7 a.m. Proceeds go to the Fairview Lions Club project fund. Contact William at 256-385-5596 for more information.
Free Bags of Beans and Rice Available
Free bags of beans and rice will be available from 10 a.m. - noon at Grace Episcopal Church at 305 Arnold St. N.E. in Cullman at the back of the church, under the covered walkway, through the double glass doors. No qualifying or any other information required.

Sunday

Free Online Tutoring
The Cullman County Library is offering 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 and click on the K-College Student Centers button. Online tutoring is available Sunday-Thursday. Visit the library's downtown branch at 200 Clark St. N.E. to learn more.

Sunday Brunch Buffet at TP Country Club
Sunday Brunch Buffet at TP Country Club from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Call 256-739-0738 for more information.

Announcements

Special Needs Bowling Nights
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.

Relay For Life of Cullman County 2016 Calendar Announcements
• Relay For Life Kickoff, 5:30 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 21, First Baptist Church Fellowship Hall; contact Helen Allen, 256-709-4019; www.relayforlife.org/cullmanal
• Relay For Life Team Spirit Meeting, 5:30 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 4, First Baptist Church Fellowship Hall; contact Helen Allen, 256-709-4019; www.relayforlife.org/cullmanal
• Relay For Life Team Spirit Meeting, 5:30 p.m., Thursday, March 10, First Baptist Church Fellowship Hall; contact Helen Allen, 256-709-4019; www.relayforlife.org/cullmanal
• Relay For Life Team Spirit Meeting, 5:30 p.m., Thursday, April 7, First Baptist Church Fellowship Hall; contact Helen Allen, 256-709-4019; www.relayforlife.org/cullmanal
• Relay For Life Team Spirit Meeting, 5:30 p.m., Thursday, April 28, First Baptist Church Fellowship Hall; contact Helen Allen, 256-709-4019; www.relayforlife.org/cullmanal
• Relay For Life Survivors' Breakfast, 7 a.m., Wednesday, May 4, Cullman Church of Christ; contact Helen Allen, 256-709-4019; www.relayforlife.org/cullmanal
• Relay For Life of Cullman County, 6 p.m.-midnight, Friday, May 6, Cullman County Fairgrounds; contact Helen Allen, 256-709-4019; www.relayforlife.org/cullmanal

Senior Trips
Cullman Parks and Recreation is sponsoring two trips for seniors in 2016. Destinations are Orlando, Fla. in February and Santa Fe and Albuquerque, N.M. in May. Contact Angie at 256-734-4803 for details.

Project Closet
At Longview Church of God, on the second Wednesday of each month from noon - 6 p.m., the public is welcome to come and shop for clothes at no charge. Donations of clothing are accepted, and shoppers can swap donations for any clothing in the closet. Call 256-734-2566 for more information.

Archery Classes
4-H and J.O.A.D. (Junior Olympic Archery Development) classes are being offered in Hanceville. Call Barbara at 256-339-4787 for more information.

Alabama Career Center
The Alabama Career Center has moved back to its old location at 1201 Katherine St. N.W. behind the North Shopping Center. The new phone number is 256-734-5580.

Free Online Tutoring
The Cullman County Library is offering 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 and click on the K-College Student Centers button. Online tutoring is available Sunday-Thursday. Visit the library's downtown branch at 200 Clark St. N.E. to learn more.

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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CULLMAN'S DAR CHAPTER CELEBRATES 45 YEARS OF HISTORY

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – The Dripping Springs chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) recently celebrated its 45th birthday. On Sunday, Dec. 6 the group gathered at First United Methodist Church to mark the occasion with birthday cake and some reminiscing about years gone by.

Cullman's DAR chapter owes its beginnings to Ms. Blanch Williams, who urged her niece, Bettina Pearson Higdon, to join the DAR back in the late 1960s.

The fact that Cullman didn't have a DAR chapter at the time, as Higdon reminded her aunt, didn't faze Williams in the least. "Then start one" was her solution to the problem.

So that's exactly what Higdon did. Because she was a teacher, she began by reaching out to some of her teacher friends and people she knew from the VFW.

She asked them to look into their history, and by December 1970 there were enough people on Higdon's list to start a chapter.

The Cullman chapter took its name from a nearby spring that dripped from a large rock formation at a fork on an Indian trail near what is now Cullman.

Higdon selected the name Dripping Springs because of that spring's beauty. Before European settlement, the area, including Cullman, was a part of the territory of the Cherokee Nation.

"We are actually considered a rather young chapter compared to many of the others," said Rhonda Van Zandt, charter parliamentarian.

"We are part of the state and national organization. I have been a member of the Dripping Springs Chapter for 45 years. I was a junior member when I started, which meant I was less than 35 years of age. I was actually 19 when I joined."

Van Zandt said there are about 112 members of the chapter.

"I know there are several sets of papers from ladies that prove their lineage that are just waiting for approval so the exact number is a little iffy. Of all the active members we have, I have been in the longest. Several members came in two or three years after I did, and we have others that joined different chapters in the state that have moved here and transferred their memberships."

"We are part of the state and national organization. I have been a member of the Dripping Springs chapter for 45 years."

Rhonda Van Zandt, parliamentarian



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Rhonda Van Zandt, in hat and gloves, speaks of the many exciting things the Dripping Springs chapter of the DAR has done throughout the years.

According to the DAR, its objectives are historic preservation, education and patriotism and its motto is "God, Home, and Country."

We promote patriotism, service to our community and to our country and the conservation of the beautiful land in which we as Americans live. We help educate our students and recognize the special accomplishments of young people. We work to preserve our history and historical sites. We welcome our new citizens and introduce them to life in America and help care for our veterans and their families. Our Alabama Society has more than 4,000 members in more than 70 chapters. (http://dripping-springs.alabamadar.com/)

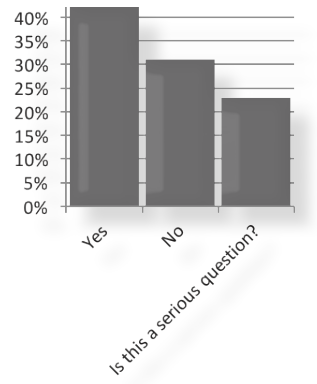
Citizens interested in learning more about the DAR can contact registrar Athelia Gibbs at 256-482-4495 or gibbs@centurytel.net. To contact a membership representative at the DAR national headquarters, call 202-879-3224.

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Poll

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



This Week's Poll

What do you put on top of your Christmas tree?

Vote Today at CullmanSense.com/Poll

ON INSTAGRAM







Vinemont High School Baseball Chili Dinner

Fundraiser



$7

Chili, desert & drink. Eat in or carryout!

December 15th 5pm – 8pm @ VHS Lunchroom

Thank you for your support!!

LOCAL COMPANY AND ORGANIZATION GIVE BACK TO AREA UNITED WAY



STEPHANIE WOOD

Stephanie Wood and Michele Dingler accept a check on behalf of the United Way from Lora Kent, secretary and treasurer of CSHRM.



Stephanie Wood and Michele Dingler accept a check on behalf of the United Way from Lora Kent, secretary and treasurer of CSHRM.

Will Hogue
will@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Last week, the United Way of Cullman County received a $5,000 donation from Belk. Manager Cathy Anderson presented the check on behalf of the Cullman Belk store.

According to Stephanie Wood, marketing and communications coordinator at Cullman's United Way, along with the donation received from Belk, the non-profit was also given a donation of $2,000 from the Cullman Area Society of Human Resource Management (CSHRM).

That check, according to Wood, was donated from the proceeds of a recent workshop that the CSHRM hosted.

Each of the donations goes toward the United Way's goal of $425,000 for 2015-2016.

The United Way of Cullman County is the independent local branch of the national United Way organization.

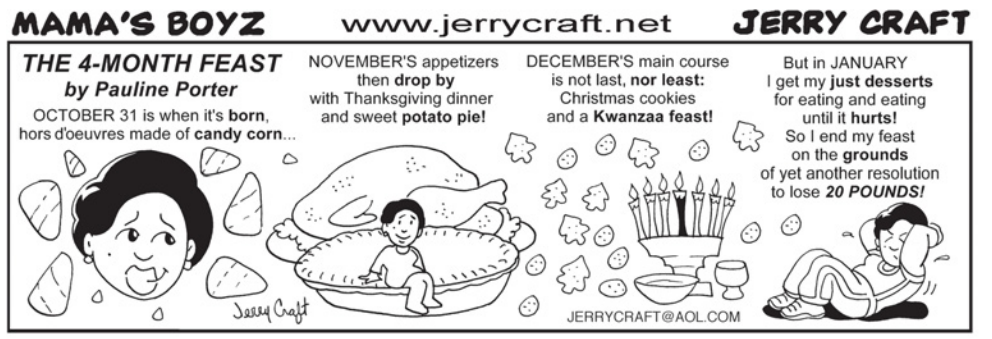
It facilitates the raising of funds for many local agencies, ranging from animal shelters to organizations assisting homeless or special needs members of the community.

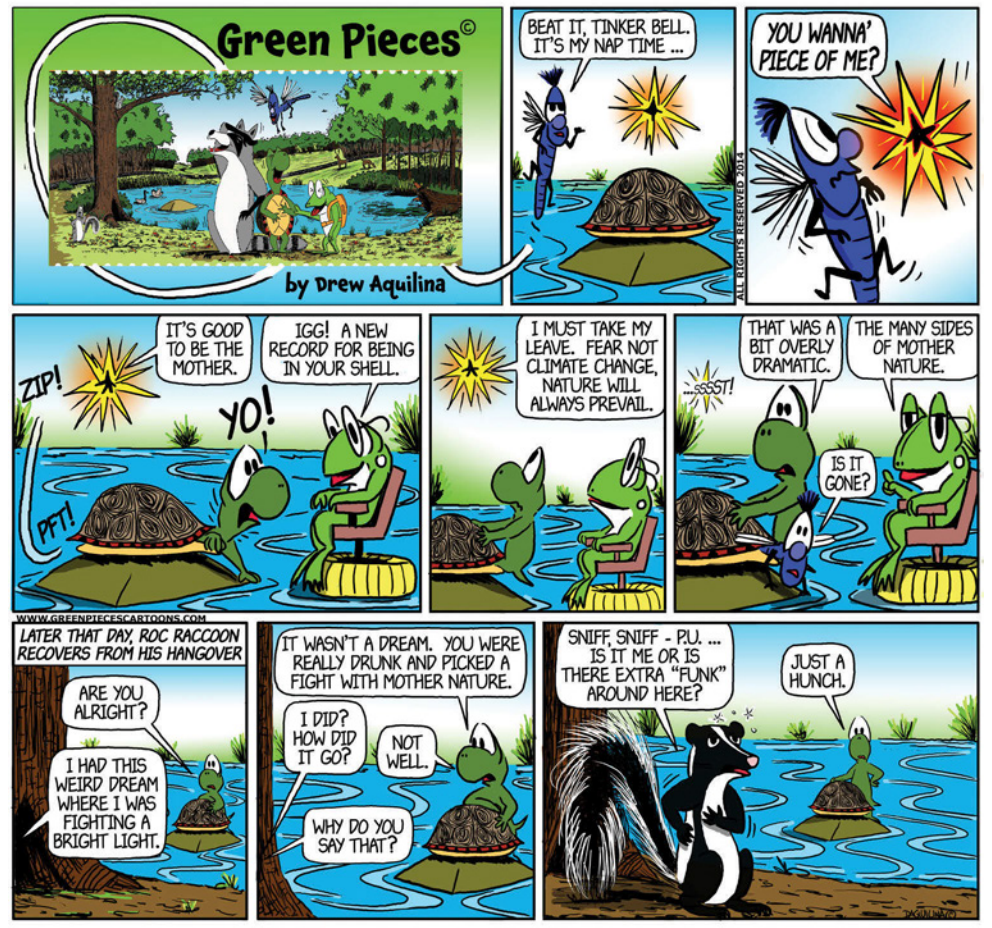
Find out more about what the United Way is doing for the local community, explore volunteer opportunities or donate to this year's campaign fund here by visiting www.uwaycc.org.

COMICS

WHITE & BLACK • "Never Too Late" • st.edo@cullmansense.com







OBITUARY ANNOUNCEMENTS

DECEMBER 7 - DECEMBER 13

SPONSORED BY CULLMAN FUNERAL HOME

Roberta Lucille Williams
Shirley Mae Smith Coleman
Julian Terry Cofer
Mable Agnes Hunt
Michael Hogan
Shirley Jo Trimble
John W. Gober
Evelyn Alice Burmester
Donnie Mills
Milton White
Euvonne M. Nichols
Jean Britton
Lois Mae Hegerle
Melissa Irene Carnes
Lavara Jo Dial McGriff
Joyce Ann Corbin
Charles Milton Moore
Mary Anne Guest
Isabell Margaret
"Dolly" Hudson
David Carl Dahlke
Doretha Iza Tidwell
Larry Joe Swindoll

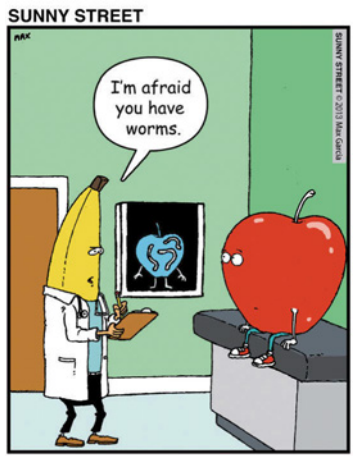
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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

REMEMBER THE CHILDREN OF CHILDHAVEN

Dr. Jim Wright
Executive Director, Childhaven

We are in the midst of the Christmas season, filled with the usual hectic schedules of the season! Many of us are thinking about family during this time of the year, and at Childhaven we are thinking about those who will not be able to be with family over the Holidays. Some of are thinking about those we have lost, and have minds filled with memories of past Christmases with those who are no longer here. It is a time of giving gifts, and focusing on the birth of Jesus Christ. Churches across our community are presenting Christmas sermons, and programs!

Admittedly, many of us are struggling to keep the true meaning of Christmas in mind!

In the midst of the season's frenzied spending on gifts and goods, let me encourage you to take the time to think of others, and of those who are in need.

Our community is blessed to have a large number of non – profits who are serving our children, our needy, our homeless, our addicted friends and neighbors, and our hungry. Cullman is truly a serving and giving community!

Let me encourage you to remember your favorite non-profit during the Holiday season. As the Executive Director at Childhaven, (perhaps the oldest and largest non-profit in Cullman,) I can tell you that this time of year is incredibly important.

This is often a very painful time for the children and families we serve.

Serving them with love, respect, compassion, and dignity is so very important. It is also a critical time financially, as year – end giving often determines how many clients can be serve the next year. Add one of us to your gift list!

Many of us accept donations through our secure web sites. Do it today!

As you buy your gifts, and are trying to find the perfect present, consider making a gift to your favorite cause or charity in memory or in honor of a loved one. Having buried my parents and all my siblings, this is one time during the year that they are constantly in my thoughts.

I will memorialize them this Holiday Season, by giving to Childhaven in their memory. One of our donors makes a gift in honor of his grandchildren each year, then visits with them about helping others on Christmas morning. What a legacy he is leaving!

On behalf of Cullman's non – profit community, we wish each of you a Merry Christmas and wish you a happy 2016!

OPINION

PLEDGING TO RESIST FEAR AND HATRED

Rivera Sun
PeaceVoice

At this time, it has become imperative for citizens to speak up and stand up against the rise of Islamophobia, xenophobia, racism, and the politics of hatred. When this pledge from Showing Up For Racial Justice came to my attention, I did not hesitate to sign it.

I want to be known as a human being courageous enough to speak truth to power and meet unwarranted hatred with organized love. Our shared humanity calls us to this. I want to know about and assist the efforts of my fellow American citizens who reject the politics of hate and the practices of fear.

These are not times for passivity or silence. Donald Trump has publicly called for a registry of Muslims akin to the registry of Jews that presaged the yellow stars and concentration camps. We know how this story goes.

Already, in Texas, the politics of hate and the propaganda of fear have caused the KKK and other armed vigilante hate groups to threaten, intimidate, and demonstrate with guns outside of mosques and Islamic Centers.

Christians and citizens of conscience are rising in peaceful, nonviolent counter-demonstrations to stop this.

These are not times to merely speak hollow words with no commitment to action behind them.

We who believe in peace must organize tangible resistance to the misinformation and bigotry that give rise to violence and war.

Already, our nation is engaged in military actions that promise only further cycles of violence, terrorism, and endless war.

By taking this pledge, I am committing to being a part of a movement that has had its parallel in every chapter of human history. In the era of Nazi Germany, this pledge would be signed by Sophie Scholl and the members of the White Rose, the Rosenstrausse women of Berlin who demanded the release of their Jewish husbands, the Danes who saved 7,220 Jews from death, André and Magda Trocmé and the citizens of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon who saved 3,500 Jews during the occupation of France.

These are times to search your soul and look for courage. This pledge is one way to demonstrate that you have found both.

Sign the Pledge to Resist Fear and Hatred at: showingupforracialjustice.org/pledge.

OPINION

SADLY, CONGRESS SEEMS OKAY WITH BEING WEAK

Lee H. Hamilton
Contributor

Not many people outside of Capitol Hill paid attention last month when the congressional leadership released next year's legislative schedule. Its headline feature is a strikingly long summer recess: half of July and all of August, along with a few spotty weeks of work before the November election. In all, the House will be in session for less than one-third of the year, and the Senate only a bit longer.

This schedule reveals a serious issue: it suggests that Congress, or at least its leadership, is unconcerned about how ineffective and even irrelevant the institution has become when it comes to policy making. Wherever you turn, Congress has lost ground as an institution.

The contrast with the presidency is especially stark. Every President in recent memory has expanded the power of his office, especially on two fronts where Congress ought to be resolute.

One is the budget — the blueprint for the government — which is now largely the President's responsibility. Congress cannot even produce a real budget any more; every year, it kicks the serious fiscal questions down the road.

Its deference to the President is even more striking when it comes to committing U.S. forces overseas.

On some of the most important questions the government faces — whether, how, where, and when to intervene using military force — they defer utterly to the White House.

They do the same with the regulatory agencies, failing repeatedly to do the kind of routine, painstaking oversight of federal agencies that would help eliminate wasted resources and bureaucratic overreach.

And because Congress has essentially given up on trying to shape fiscal policy, it has put the Federal Reserve in charge of keeping the economy growing.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court has become the principal way our country deals with a host of tough issues like abortion and affirmative action.

Congress these days is far from being the co-equal branch our Founders envisioned. And many of its members agree.

They don't believe the institution they serve is doing its job — they'd point, for instance, to immigration reform, which Speaker Paul Ryan recently announced the House would not even touch next year.

Which may be the most distressing part of it all. Instead of being concerned enough about Congress's weakness and inactivity to take action, its leaders, at least, appear to believe that many of the toughest issues on the national agenda are beyond their capability to resolve.

CULLMAN CITY SCHOOLS' BAND PROGRAM PRESENTS 32ND ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – On Thursday, Dec.10, the students and directors of Cullman City Schools' band programs presented their 32nd annual Christmas concert in the Cullman High School auditorium. The Beginner Band, Middle School Band, combined CHS Symphonic and Concert Bands and the CHS Jazz Band performed.

"We have really been looking forward to our 32nd annual Christmas concert," said Christopher Smith, director of bands.

"It's one of my favorite events because it is the only time that all of our bands (sixth-grade beginner band through the high school band) perform together in the same concert. It gives the audience the opportunity to see all aspects of our concert program and the musical journey that these students take throughout their time in the Cullman band (program).

"Hopefully, we were able to help get everyone excited about the holidays with this special evening of music," he smiled.

The Beginner Band started off the night by playing "Jingle Bells" and "Jolly Old St. Nicholas." The Cullman Middle School's Advanced Band was next, with "Winter Wonderland," "You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch" and "Ukrainian Bell Carol."

The combined CHS Symphonic and Concert Bands followed, performing "Symphonic Prelude on Adeste Fidelis," "Away in a Manger" and "Sleigh Ride." The performance also included a Christmas "pop" sing-a-long, led by Eryn Rainwater, CHS Jazz Band vocalist.

The CHS Jazz Band closed out the night, entertaining the crowd with "Children of Sanchez," "White Christmas," "I Watched Her Walk Away" and "When I Fall in Love."

The Jazz Band brought the night to a close with"This Little Light of Mine."

"My son David is in (the) percussion section, he's a 10th-grader," said Stacey Johnston-Parmer.

"The concert was fantastic! I was so impressed with the talent of the kids," she smiled. "I got to hear my favorite Christmas songs, plus it was my birthday," she giggled.

"The jazz band was so fun and a total blast to see and hear.



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

Cullman City Schools' bands performed a vast array of Christmas music for an eager audience Thursday night.

"The Cullman High School band program is second to none, and something our community should take great pride in," she added. "The Christmas concert is always my favorite event of the school year."

The audience seemed to truly enjoy their night. In the end, Smith thanked everyone for coming and said a few words about some of the band's biggest supporters.

"The directors, Linda Bean, Doug Teuscher and myself, along with all the students of the Cullman band program would like to thank the following people for their continued support throughout the year," said Smith. "Superintendent Dr. Susan Patterson and the Board of Education, CHS Principal Dr. Elton Bouldin, CMS Principal Lane Hill, East Elementary Principal David Wiggins, West Elementary Principal Dr. Jay Page and the outstanding Cullman Band Boosters Club."

For more information about the Cullman City Schools band program, visit www.cullmanband.com.

