SERIES 6 • ISSUE 10 • MARCH 7, 2016
CULLMANSENSE
COMMUNITY MATTERS


SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

CULLMAN LIONS CLUB HOSTS ANNUAL FISH & HAM DINNER P6


SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

MOTHERS HELPING MOTHERS 2016 EXPO: A DAY OF FUN AND FRIENDSHIP FOR MOTHERS OF ALL AGES P7

WASHED OVER, NOT WASHED AWAY

Larkwood Bridge reopened Friday following Christmas Day flood


NOAH GALILEE/CULLMANSENSE

Larkwood Bridge, left, has reopened following the Christmas Day Flood of 2015. The roadway leading up the eastern side of Larkwood Drive, right, remains closed until FEMA has an opportunity to fully inspect the area.

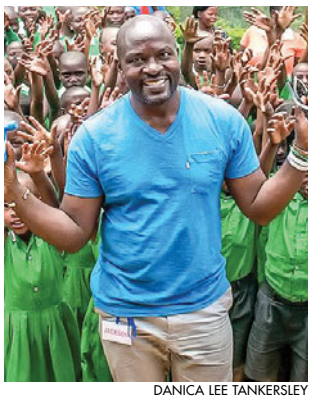
Noah Galilee
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CULLMAN – The Larkwood Bridge, located at the intersection of Larkwood Drive and Convent Road Northeast, has been hit with many floods over the years; however, the 100-year flood on Dec. 25, 2015 tested not just the bridge, but the roadways as well.

The road washed away, taking more than 80 feet of the roadway, but the bridge stood strong, despite being topped by more than 5-feet of water. After many months, P3

CCBOE SUPERINTENDENT POSITION SEARCH NARROWS TO FOUR APPLICANTS P2

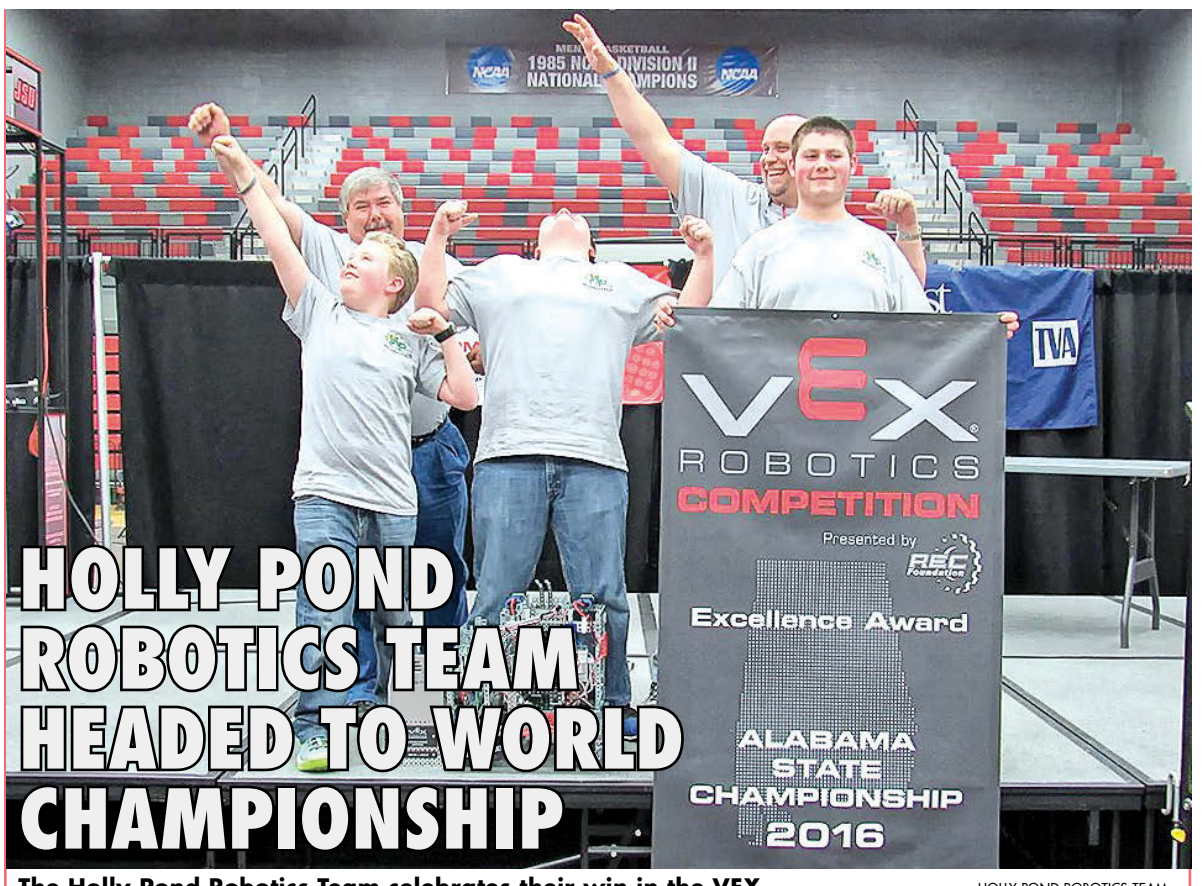
EAST AND WEST ELEMENTARY JOIN FORCES FOR ART SHOW MARCH 10 P9


DANICA LEE TANKERSLEY

PROFILES IN FAITH

THE NYAKA AIDS ORPHANS PROJECT'S TWESIGWE JACKSON KAGURI P5

WSCC LADY LIONS' POSTSEASON SURGE ENDS IN ACCC/REGION 22 TITLE GAME P4



HOLLY POND ROBOTICS TEAM HEADED TO WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

HOLLY POND ROBOTICS TEAM

The Holly Pond Robotics Team celebrates their win in the VEX Robotics Alabama State Championship on Saturday, March 5 at Jacksonville State University; now they're headed to the VEX Robotics World Championship. Pictured (L-R): Howard Cole (mentor), Rylan Griffin, Zachary Ayers, Shawn Johnson (mentor), Dexton Jones. P10

MONTHLY CULLMAN COUNTY REPUBLICAN BREAKFAST FEATURES ALA. ATTORNEY GENERAL LUTHER STRANGE

Amy Leonard
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CULLMAN – Well over 50 members of the Cullman County Republican Party gathered Saturday morning for the group's monthly breakfast meeting at the Cullman Elks Club. Attended by many local movers and shakers, the meeting featured speaker Luther Strange, Attorney General of Alabama.

The meeting was opened by Cullman GOP Chairman, Kelly Duke, then the floor was given to the two gentlemen who will be meeting in the Cullman County Commission Chairman runoff, Darrell Hicks and incumbent Kenneth Walker.

Both men thanked their respective voters and encouraged everyone to show up again at the polls in April. Cullman County Probate Judge Tammy Brown reminded everyone that the runoff election will take place on April 12.

Commissioner Garry Marchman, whose cancer is in remission, graciously thanked his party members for their thoughts and prayers during his battle.

Introduced by Sen. Paul Bussman, R-Cullman, who met Strange years ago at a church retreat, Strange joked that he was "happy to be here when there's no issues in the Republican party."

Strange, originally from Homewood, covered P5

Beloved Educator Dr. Fred Halstead Retiring from WSCC


CONNIE BRIEHN

Wes Rakestraw, colleague, and Dr. Halstead.

Amy Leonard
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HANCEVILLE – Wallace State Community College's Biology department will continue to educate eager, and even the not so eager, students next year. Its rooms will be filled with trepidatious nursing, dental hygiene and sonography students trying to fulfill their anatomy and physiology, microbiology and other science course requirements.

Outwardly, it will most likely appear as though it's business as usual. Parking will be a nightmare. The hallways and common areas will be filled with chatter and young faces. In the afternoons, students and staff will await their much needed caffeine jolt at the Café in the new nursing building.

However, downstairs in room 106 will be an office space whose tenant will be gone, and his absence will be felt by all who know him. P6

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CCBOE SUPERINTENDENT POSITION SEARCH NARROWS TO FOUR APPLICANTS; BRANDON PAYNE TO STEP DOWN

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CULLMAN – On Thursday, March 3, the Cullman County Board of Education announced the names of the finalists for the position of superintendent.

Of the twelve original applicants, four were chosen to move on to the next phase, the interview.

They are as follows:

1. Shane Barnette, principal of West Point Intermediate in the Cullman County School District

2. Dr. Rick Carter, director of virtual programs for the Athens City School District

3. Dr. Donald Snow, principal of Austin High School in the Decatur City School District

4. Dr. Elizabeth Swinford, superintendent of Tuscaloosa County Schools

The finalists now move on to interviews, which will be held on March 15 at 5 p.m., 6 p.m., 7 p.m. and 8 p.m. in the CCBOE's central office boardroom.

Each candidate will receive a copy of the 10 inter-view questions and one conclusion question that the CCBOE has selected prior to the interviews.

The new superintendent will be announced during a special CCBOE meeting on March 29.

"I would like to encourage as many of you that can- administrators, teachers and community folks, to come and listen to each applicant and feel free to voice your opinions to each and every one of us as well," said Wendy Crider, CCBOE member.

CCBOE's Interim Superintendent, Dr. Brandon Payne, will be leaving his role after the new superintendent comes on board.

Payne, who was previously CCBOE's assistant superintendent under Dr. Craig Ross and also was a long-time principal of Vinemont High School, has accepted a position with LEAN Frog in Huntsville.

CHAMBER'S 73RD ANNUAL MEETING & GALA HONORS CHANEY, SMITH

Wendy Sack
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CULLMAN – Last night's Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce shindig at Stonebridge Farm was a party with a purpose. The 73rd Annual Meeting & Gala, "Great Leaders Serve," had a "Downton Ab-bey" theme and saw many attendees decked out in 1920s attire. It also honored two leaders who have dedicated their lives to public service and the Cullman community- Cullman Economic Devel-opment Agency Director Peggy Smith and Cullman County District Judge Kim Chaney.

The Lucille Galin Public Service Award was presented by Cullman Mayor Max A. Townson to Smith, who spoke admiringly of Galin and said humbly, "I never thought I would receive this award in her name."

Smith went on to thank the many mentors in her life and her family for their support of her career. "I am so humbled," she said.

Smith also acknowledged that this has been a great week, referencing the Cullman EDA's news on Wednesday that Cullman was named the No. 2 Micropolitan Area in the country based on corporate facility investment.

Chaney was honored with the Emma Marie Eddleman Citizenship Award, presented by incoming chamber chair Sammie Danford, who praised the judge for his years of work on the behalf of children in our community.

Chaney spoke of his family's working-class beginnings and said any success he has had is a reflection of his upbringing.

He also thanked his fellow judges and his wife, whom he said was more de-serving of the award that he.

"I will always try to make Cullman a safe place to live, work and raise a family," said Chaney.

Both Smith and Chaney received standing ovations from the crowd.

The meeting kicked off earlier in the evening after a welcome from Chamber President Leah Bolin and a lively video presentation, after which guest speaker Peter Good, a veteran of the hospitality industry, spoke to the quality of service that great leaders provide and how one's service to their community and brand combine together to create the reputation of their business.

Outgoing Chamber Chair Jason Grimmett, of Drinkard Development, passed the gavel to incoming Chair Danford of the United Way of Cullman County.

The Chamber's Total Resource Campaign (TRC) Chair Dr. James Thomas, of Alabama Specialty Care, also passed the gavel to his successor, Shirley Quattlebaum of State Farm Insurance.

"Our Chamber Board faced many challenges this year," said Grimmett. "These challenges were met with confidence and the enthusiasm to 'work forward' and continue the vision of our Chamber that was set out more than 70 years ago. The foundation that has been built over all these years has made our Chamber what it is today, and that is the envy of every other Chamber of Commerce in the state of Alabama."

Additional award recipients were Stephanie Wood, who was named Chamber Ambassador of the Year, and Cullman Eye Specialists, who took home Small Business of the Year honors.

The crowd, which included many community leaders, business owners and elected officials, enjoyed and after party to wrap up the evening.

WSCC HEALTH PROGRAMS WELCOME NEW PROGRAM CHAIRS

Amy Leonard
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HANCEVILLE – Two healthcare programs at Wallace State Community College welcomed new department chairs to campus for their first full semester of classes. Melanie Bradford and Allen Patterson joined the Wallace State family as the fall 2015 semester was winding down. Bradford takes over as chair of the Clinical Laboratory Technician (CLT) program, while Patterson takes over the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) program.

Neither Bradford nor Patterson are new to the area, with both having ties to the college or the community. Both also feel lucky to have picked careers that have provided years of growth and fulfillment.

Bradford, of Arab, is a 1998 graduate of Wallace State's CLT program. She said she picked the program out of the catalog and never regretted her decision. "I worked in the lab field for 18 years and I've loved every day of it, so it was a great choice," she said.

When the position opened at Wallace State, Bradford said she was ready to give back to the program that helped her establish a successful career.

"I wanted to come back as an instructor because of the education that I received when I was here," she said. "The instructors that I had really put me on the right path to a career that I love and I wanted to come back and give that back to the students."

When she started the program as a student in 1996, her oldest son was about five months from celebrating his first birthday. "That was the reason I needed to work, and I needed a job quick," she said. Her son was 2-years-old when she graduated and she immediately went to work at Marshall Medical Center North in Guntersville, where she stayed for 18 years.

Coming back to Wallace State as an instructor, Bradford said she thinks her experience as a student will help her identify with her students and help them succeed. "I think it will me prepare them for what issues they'll face when they get into the clinical lab," she said. "Having been there and having been through that, I think that experience will help me help them."

One of her goals with the program is offer more hybrid options where possible to give the students more flexibility in their studies and help them.

"I'm just looking forward to learning new things and being able to interact with the students and staff," she said. "I just want to continue to building on what's here."

Patterson's decision to study to become a paramedic was somewhat similar to Bradford's. When he decided to go to college at the University of South Alabama (USA) that was the program he chose to enter. "I really don't know why and how, nobody in my family's in the medical field, I just ended up in it one day," he said.

That decision lead to a 30-year career in emergency medical services for Patterson, who was born in Decatur and raised in Guntersville. He worked for an E-911 service in Mobile, for the Guntersville Fire Department, as a director of an EMS service in Georgia and as a flight paramedic, sometimes taking on two jobs at once. In 2010, he returned to USA to further his education and taught a Chattahoochee Valley Community College before taking over the WSCC EMS program.

As the head of the program, Patterson said he wants to grow the program and make it "the go-to program" for anyone interested in the field.

"There's no reason for anyone locally to drive an hour or two away to go to another school when we can give them what they need right here," Patterson said.

Patterson said he will focus on teaching the students all the knowledge they will need to pass their certification exams, and provide the hands-on experience they will need in the field. Along with that, he hopes to provide the students with a dose of reality by sharing with them what they can expect once they enter the field.

"It's not a job that's for everybody," he admitted. "I've seen people come and go. I've seen people spend a couple of years getting their paramedic certification and they last a month. They don't like the situations they're put in, dealing with people who are really sick or really hurt." The secret to his longevity in the career, he said, was his ability to focus on each call individually, to work on the issue at hand and then go on to the next. That objectivity, he said, is what helped him succeed in his career.

The Clinical Laboratory Technician program is a five-semester program that offers an Associate in Applied Science. Applications for the program are accepted through April 15 for the summer semester and June 1 for the fall semester. For more information about the program, contact Bradford at 256-352-8347.

The Emergency Medical Services program offers certificates in EMT, Advanced EMT and Paramedic, as well as an Associate in Applied Science degree. The EMT and Advanced EMT certificates can be obtained in one semester, the paramedic certificate in three semesters and the Associate in Applied Science in five semesters. For more information about the EMS program, call Patterson at 256-352-8335.

Visit http://www.wallacestate.edu to get more information about these and any other WSCC programs.

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ALA. SUPREME COURT DISMISSES LAWSUITS CHALLENGING MARRIAGE EQUALITY

Ianthe Metzger
Human Rights Campaign Ala.

MONTGOMERY – On Friday, March 4, Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Alabama responded to the news the same morning, that the Alabama Supreme Court dismissed lawsuits filed by the Alabama Citizens Action Program (ALCAP), the Alabama Policy Institute (API) and Elmore County Probate Judge John Enslen regarding the Supreme Court of the Unites States' ruling in favor of marriage equality last June.

"Love won last June, and it's time for anti-LGBT activists to come to terms with the fact that marriage equality is here to stay," said Ben Needham, director of HRC's Project One America. "No one is above the Supreme Court of the United States, and no government officials should be standing in the way of same-sex couples and their constitutional right to marry the person they love."

In the petition, initially filed in March 2015, the plaintiffs contended that the Obergefell v. Hodges ruling did not apply to the state of Alabama, and that there was precedence for discarding a ruling by the Supreme Court that was believed to be unlawful.

On Friday, the nine justices of the Alabama Supreme Court dismissed the suit with a one-page order and 170-page opinion, in which Chief Justice Roy Moore, a long standing opponent of marriage equality, maintained his opposition to marriage equality, despite the dismissal of the lawsuit.

In January, HRC Alabama strongly condemned Moore's shameful order saying that the state's probate judges "have a ministerial duty" not to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples regardless of the Supreme Court's decision.

In light of the order, he recused himself from voting earlier this week, but in his opinion today said he no longer believed that was necessary. Moore wrote, "In joining this case to consider the effect of Obergefell, I am not sitting in review of my administrative order, nor have I made any public statement on the effect of Obergefell on this Court's opinion and order of March 3, 2015. My expressed views on the issue of same-sex marriage are also not disqualifying. Because it is a judge's duty to decide cases, a judge may participate in a case after initially not sitting if the issues that prompted that abstention have changed."

In 2014, HRC launched Project One America, an initiative to advance social, institutional and legal equality in Mississippi, Alabama and Arkansas.

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

The Human Rights Campaign is America's largest civil rights organization working to achieve lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender equality. HRC envisions a world where LGBT people are embraced as full members of society at home, at work and in every community.



Bridge (from Front)

the bridge is now reopened.

"We had to do some minor repairs such as new concrete on the deck of the bridge and some new guardrails, but the bridge held strong during the flood," said Tom Charney, director risk management, City of Cullman.

The roadway is a whole different situation. Charney explained, "FEMA is expected to come in to finish assessments, but currently we are looking at an 80-20 split, with the City of Cullman being re-sponsible for 20 percent of the cost while FEMA will cover the other 80 percent.

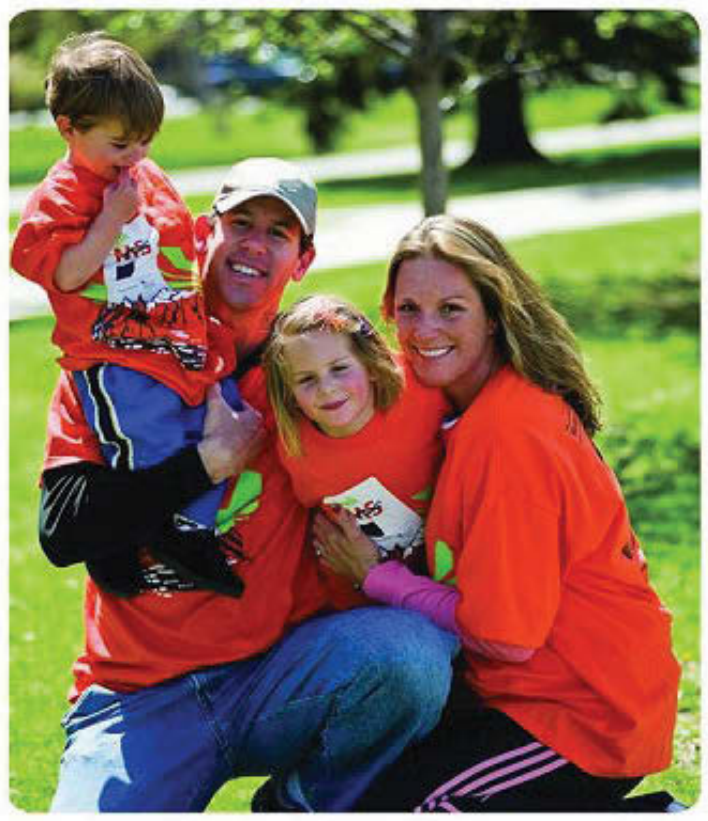
"The current cost for fixing the roadways in the Larkwood community will cost roughly $1.3 million," he added.

If the current cost stays at $1.3 million, the city will be responsible $260,000, exactly 20 percent of the aforementioned cost.

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WSCC LADY LIONS' POSTSEASON SURGE ENDS IN ACCC/REGION 22 TITLE GAME

Russell Moore
WSCC

HANCEVILLE – Wallace State's women's basketball postseason surge ended in the Alabama Com-munity College Conference (ACCC)/Region 22 title game on Friday, falling to top-seeded Shelton State 88-41 at Tom Drake Coliseum.

Shelton State, which is the 5th-ranked team in the nation, won its 18th straight game behind 19 points from tournament MVP Coco Knight and three others in double figures.

Wallace State, the North Division's sixth seed, pulled three consecutive tournament upsets over the last week to earn a spot in Friday's title game, marking their fourth trip to the finals in five seasons under coach Ron Burdette.

The Lady Lions didn't have enough firepower or experience to upset the Lady Bucs, who won their ninth conference title since 2006.

Shelton State averaged 98.7 points in three tournament games at Wallace State, including posting 111 against Wallace-Selma on Thursday.

Shelton State (31-1) jumped out to 13-6 after the first quarter and led 39-17 at the half.

The Lady Bucs extended their cushion to 88-41 after the third.

Wallace State (14-20) was led by Hannah Vest's 11 points.

Vest, the team's lone sophomore from North Sand Mountain, was named to the all-tournament team and a part of 42 wins in two seasons with the Lady Lions, including being a member of last season's NJCAA Division I national tourna-ment team.

Wallace State's Kelsey Houston and Velencia Johnson were also named to the all-tournament team. Johnson finished with six points in the loss.

Morgan Higgins and D'Andrea Smith each scored five points for the Wallace State Lady Lions.

LaTangellia Walker had 13 points for Shelton State and Nadia Stewart and Madison Pierce scored 10 apiece.

Shelton State advances to the NJCAA Division I national championships in Lubbock, Texas, later this month.

For more information about Wallace State athletics, visit http://athletics.wallacestate.edu.



Wallace State's Kelsey Houston (24) dribbles around a Shelton State defender in their game Friday. WSCC

Breakfast (from Front)

topics ranging from the BP oil spill settlement to immigration laws during his time at the podium noting "federal government overreach" as one of the prime issues of concern within the Republican party currently.

Cautioning that "we live in times when our whole system is under attack," Strange assured the gatherers that the attorneys general throughout the nation are "the last line of defense" in upholding constitutional law.

Strange stressed the importance of a strong Congress as the most important branch of government and expressed his high hopes in Paul Ryan, R-Wisconsin, current speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, exerting his leadership role.

Strange keeps a full workload working on Second Amendment rights, voting rights and the myriad of other issues that come through his office.

For more information on the Cullman County Republican Party's upcoming events, visit http://www.cullmangop.com.

COUNTY SPORTS SCHEDULE

WEEK OF MARCH 7

MONDAY
Soccer
West Point vs. Danville 5:30 p.m. 7:00 p.m

TUESDAY
Baseball
Cullman vs. Decatur 6:3 p.m.

Softball
Cullman @ Hayden 4:30 p.m.
West Point @ Brewer 4:30 p.m.
Good Hope @ Cordova 4:30 p.m.
Vinemont @ Decatur Heritage 4:30 p.m.

Soccer
West Point vs. Brewer 5:30 p.m. 7:00 p.m.
Fairview vs. Danville 5:30 p.m. 7:00 p.m.
Cullman vs. Lee (Huntsville)
5:30 p.m. 7:00 p.m.

THURSDAY
Baseball
Cullman @ Decatur 6:30 p.m.

Softball
Cullman @ Smith's Christian 4:30 p.m.

ALL GAMES AT GOOD HOPE
West Point vs. Vinemont 5:20 p.m.
West Point vs. Meek 6:30 p.m.
West Point vs. Hayden 7:40 p.m.

Good Hope vs. Addison 4:00 p.m.
Good Hope vs. Hanceville 7:30 p.m.

Holly Pond vs. Hanceville 5:10 p.m.
Holly Pond vs. Cold Springs 6:20 p.m.

Fairview vs. Hayden 4:00 p.m.
Fairview vs. Falkville 5:10 p.m.

Vinemont vs. Cold Springs 4:00 p.m.

Cold Springs vs. Meek 7:40 p.m.

Soccer
Cullman vs. Thompson 5:30 p.m. 7:00 p.m.

FRIDAY
Soccer
West Point vs. Haleyville 5:30 p.m. 7:00 p.m.

Compiled by Josh McBrayer



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PROFILES IN FAITH

THE NYAKA AIDS ORPHANS PROJECT'S TWESIGWE JACKSON KAGURI



Twesigye Jackson Kaguri with some of the students in Uganda.

TWESIGYE JACKSON KAGURI

Amy Leonard
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CULLMAN – On Friday evening, March 4, Rachel Dawsey, director of the North Alabama Agriplex, hosted a very special guest. Twesigwe Jackson Kaguri, founder and director of the Nyaka AIDS Or-phans Project in Uganda and globally-acclaimed humanitarian, visited Cullman to share his story and speak about the success of Nyaka schools and his projects. Over the weekend, Kaguri also spoke at the Cullman Rotary Club and at First United Methodist Church Cullman.

The Nyaka AIDS Orphans Project's mission is to work for the HIV/AIDS orphans in rural Uganda to end the cycle of poverty and hunger by providing education, healthcare and community assistance.

Over 1.1 million HIV/AIDS orphans have been left behind after their parents lost their battles with the virus. In rural Uganda an entire generation of men and women are gone and their children left with the hopes of aunts or uncles to care for them. All too often, those distant relatives are gone, too. Grandmothers or elderly women in their villages are able to care for some of the orphans. For many of the children, no one comes to care for them.

This is where the Nyaka Project comes in. An estimated 43,000 HIV/AIDS orphans currently receive services through the organization. Their services include free education and nutritional aid for the children. Currently, Nyaka operates two primary schools for the orphans with its first having opened in 2003 in the small village of Nyakagyezi. At the primary schools, 463 students are receiving a free education this year. Typically, Ugandan schools require steep fees for attendance, but the Nyaka schools pro-vide "textbooks, uniforms, shoes, two meals every school day, medicine and scholastic materials for free."

A Nyaka student's education does not end there, as "they are guaranteed an education until they achieve their academic goal," whether that be attending university or vocational school. Both forms of higher education offer endless possibilities to end poverty, and Nyaka is committed to helping their students achieve whatever goals they seek.

The Nyaka Aids Orphans Project provides counseling and medical care in addition to its educational guidance.

The continuing education is stressed as "without a secondary and high school education, girls are more likely to marry while young, run away to the city to get a low wage job or become sex workers. Boys also end up working low paying jobs and never escape the cycle of poverty. An important part of our mission is to ensure that our students go to secondary and high school. A strong education is our greatest hope for our students to begin envisioning a life beyond the HIV/AIDS pandemic."

Common in Ugandan culture is for the younger generation to care for its parents. With no one to care for the elders who have lost their children to the AIDS crisis and with many of those elders now being tasked with raising their orphaned grandchildren, Nyaka's Grandmother Programs empower the women with their 92 self-formed Granny Groups which serve 7,004 grandmothers in the rural communities.

The grandmothers, while given guidance and support by the Nyaka staff, are the deci-sion makers who "determine who among them receives donated items, attends training, micro-finance funds, homes, pit latrines and smokeless kitchens." The collaborative effort of the grandmothers builds a support system whose help cannot be quantified.

Nyaka also provides many community projects including its Desire Farm, clean water facilities, healthcare clinics and libraries.

The Nyaka AIDS Orphans Project's founder and director, Twesigwe Jackson Kaguri, escaped the crippling poverty of Uganda after being born and raised in it. As a student at Columbia University in the 1990s, Kaguri studied Human Rights Advocacy, having traveled far from the devastating destitu-tion of his home village of Nyakagyezi.

He married, and, with his wife, was saving money for a down payment on their first home. Yet, in 2001, Kaguri left America and returned to his native land. What brought him back was the same thing he escaped.

Kaguri's parents expressed a strong desire for their children to receive an education for as long as he can remember. Their desire was two-fold. His parents, who had never attended school themselves, wished for their children to break the cycle of poverty that was common in their area. Additionally, his parents knew they would be rewarded in their investment by being cared for in their later years.

"We were not going to school for ourselves. We were going to school for our mom and for our dad. For our community and for our grandparents."

However, in Kaguri's home village in Uganda, an education for just one child was a difficult goal to attain due to the steep fees levied by the schools. Against all odds, his parents' dream was for all five of the children to go to school.

Sacrifices were made to ensure their education. The family went without the nourishment of meat as their animals were sold to meet the financial burden of the schooling. In their village, as with most in Africa, education was not free and came at a hefty cost. The medical needs of Kaguri's parents were often not met to help finance their children's schooling. Scarcity became normal as his father would purchase one pencil which he would break into fifths so that each of the five children would have a writing utensil for school.

After years of walking fifteen miles to school each day, Kaguri was afforded the opportunity to study at Makerere University in Kampala. There he was first introduced to the concept of basic human rights. When his instructor spoke of every human being having the right to an education, Kaguri ex-pressed his puzzlement. Human rights were a very foreign concept which contradicted the realities of life in Nyakagyezi.

He explained, "It was at my university that I first read this statement. 'Every human being has a right to education.' My hand went up quickly and I asked, 'Every human being?' and my professor answered, 'Yes, every human being.' Then, my people are not human beings if everyone has these rights and my people do not."

He continued, "It was then that the childhood memories (came) of how unjust my community was. How unjust that my mom had suffered, abused and beaten by my own father, and she still cooked for him. How unjust that we had no food and walked fifteen miles to school on an empty stomach. All of that injustice came to me."

In learning of these basic human rights, including education, health care, food, shelter, respect and love, and seeing the lack of them in his own community, Kaguri found his passion.

From Africa, Kaguri traveled to the United States to study at Columbia University. While there, his eldest brother died of the AIDS virus in 1996, leaving behind three children for his youngest brother to raise. The loss was a devastating blow to the entire family, emotionally and financially. His brother, 14 years his senior, was a second father to Kaguri and was mourned deeply after his death.

"I saw him taking care of people. I saw him mentoring others. He was like a dad to me."

Less than a year later, his eldest sister lost her battle to the virus. Her son, born with the AIDS virus, would need cared for as well.

"Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffer-ing can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired and success achieved." – Helen Keller

Through his grief, Kaguri found vision.

"It was then that I packed my bags at Columbia University, left my job opportunity at the United Na-tions and went back to Uganda so that my nieces and nephews would get an opportunity to go to school and have a place to sleep. I went back to be with my nephew who was born with HIV and I still wanted to give him a childhood, a chance to enjoy his childhood for the few years he would be living."

In 2001, he founded The Nyaka AIDS Orphans Project. His nieces and nephews were not the only orphans devastated by the effects of AIDS. His homeland was riddled with these children with no hope and no future. Kaguri returned home, and with the money he and his wife had saved for their future, he built the first Nyaka school. The first school changed the face of the village it served. It changed the lives of the orphaned children and the orphaned grandmothers.

Kaguri tells the story of a young girl attending a Nyaka school who delighted in her education.

Eager to learn, she took great pride in her school uniform, painstakingly keeping it as clean and pristine as possible. The young girl, born with AIDS, grew sick from the virus, and nearing her death, she plead-ed to be buried in her beloved school uniform. Her grandmother explained that she would be buried in a lovely dress and not the uniform.

But the girl insisted, explaining she wanted to meet Jesus wearing what she wore when she was happiest in this life. Her happiest days, she said, were spent in her Nyaka school where she was taught, loved and respected. The young girl died. She was buried in her school uniform.

Kaguri was awarded the 2015 Waislitz Global Citizen Award, has spoken before the United Nations and was named a 2012 CNN Hero for his tireless efforts on behalf of HIV/AIDS orphans. He is also an author, writing of his journey to bring his vision to fruition in "A School for my Village" and "The Price of Stones." He shares his stories in two children's books as well.

Kaguri notes that the children in his schools are no different than the children in our Cullman com-munity. They are all children of God. They all have the basic human rights to be loved and respect-ed, to be educated, to have nourishment and to have shelter.

To help provide those basic human rights to the orphans and to learn more, visit www.nyakaschool.org.

CULLMAN LIONS CLUB HOSTS ANNUAL FISH & HAM DINNER

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – On Saturday, March 5, the Cullman Lions Club held their Annual Fish & Ham Dinner fundraiser in the Cullman Middle School cafeteria. People from all over Cullman County came out and enjoyed a delicious meal and visit with local Lions Club members.

"The Lions Club does lots of things, but everything we do to raise money here goes to the better-ment of the community," said Frank Odell, Lions Club member. "We've been doing the Fish & Ham Dinner for well over 40 years now. We have always held it in the Cullman Middle School cafeteria. "We serve Mississippi catfish that we've breaded up ourselves out back," he said while pointing to-wards the cafeteria door. "We bread the fish, cook it and bring it in the back door," he grinned. "We make our own slaw and our own hushpuppies. We even make our own tartar sauce, too. It works out really well because most of the Lions have done the same thing for nearly forty-something years.

"Our Lions Club members work really well together," he continued. "We get along good and have a lot of fun. Today we've done everything by breaking down into committees. For example, Mr. Fred Osborn is the Chair of the Drink Committee, and has been for 45 years. Every year he gets with Co-ca-Cola and makes sure the product gets here. At the dinner, he takes care of the drinks for us.

"Jerry and Richard," he pointed at two Lions Club members, "are over the Table Committee. I never realized it until I sat down and ate a meal, but they stay busy cleaning off the tables while they visit with everybody that came to eat. You see, this is a social hour for anyone who wants to come in and eat in," he grinned.

"For take-out dinners we have Mr. Charlie Powell. He has been in charge of the drive-thru for 20 years. He and his crew use radios to tell the kitchen how many dinners they need for each car so the meals are packed up, delivered and everything keeps moving."

The Lions Club is one of the world's largest service club organizations. Their members do whatever is needed to help their local communities.

The friendly Lions are a talkative bunch and really enjoy get-ting to know their neighbors. From children who need eyeglasses to seniors who don't have enough to eat, the Lions are quick to jump in help those in need.

"The Fish & Ham Dinner goes back to about 1971, but it didn't start out with catfish. I don't remem-ber exactly what we originally served, but some people didn't like it, so we changed the menu," chuckled Jim Grier, longtime Lions Club member.

"The money we make here today will go to fund community projects," said Jerry Bonner, Lions Club treasurer. "The Fish & Ham Dinner and the Cullman County Fair are our main fundraisers, but during Rock the South we run a couple of the parking lots, which has become a pretty good project. All the money we get from there goes to Cullman Caring for Kids." On average, the Fish & Ham Dinners serve around 1,800 people each year and the Lions will profit $10,000 to $12,000, which is money that will go directly to the betterment of the community. The 2016 Fish & Ham Dinner is now a thing of the past, but they Lions will continue to host the event, like clockwork, each year.

For more information about the Lions Club, visit www.cullmanlions.com.

Halstead (from Front)

"I remember him saying that his class was a foundational course if we were going into nursing and that we would be glad we took it. He presented a lot of information and it was a challenging class, but I am glad I had him. I learned a ton and use it every day," Kim Starnes, assistant director of Nursing at the Warrior campus of Bradford Health Services, shared.

After teaching for over 27 years at WSCC, with 17 of those years spent as the head of the biology department, Dr. Fred Halstead will be retiring soon. His retirement is incomprehensible to his former students and colleagues. "Filling the void left as Doc retires will be like trying to replace Bear Bryant," expressed biology department instructor and colleague Wes Rakestraw.

Halstead is a teacher who leaves a lasting impact on his students no matter how many years have passed. Current and former students all have funny Dr. Halstead stories shared with laugher and respect.

Registered nurse Jason Hicks, of Cullman, was a student of Halstead's over 10 years ago yet keenly recalls, "With his unique background, Dr. Halstead was able to bring an interesting perspective to his anatomy classes that only someone with hands-on experience can. Between that and his ability to enthusiastically lecture while slinking around the classroom like an escaped white tiger, (he) made learning about mundane osteoclasts and osteoblasts a memorable experience! He was an asset to the program as well as someone who touched the lives and careers of more people than he will ever know."

Halstead, also known as "Doc" by his colleagues, obtained that hands-on experience through his years as a dentist working in practices in both his native Michigan and here in Alabama. Graduating in the late 1960s with a degree in Biology, he continued his education and received his Doctor of Dental Surgery degree while still in Michigan. His dental career began in 1973 and continued for almost 25 years until 1997.

Halstead and his high school sweetheart wife, Jan, relocated to Alabama in the early 1980s to be nearer his in-laws.

Soon after the move, he came to WSCC on a whim to see if they needed any help in their dental assistant program. Luckily for all, they did.

Initially teaching part-time while maintaining his dental practice, Doc was offered a full-time position in the biology department within a few years.

Soon after, he became chair of the department, using his knowledge and guidance to inspire fellow teachers.

"Being the head of a department that has such success and wide respect is what I'm proud of. The biology department has such a great reputation, but that's not just me. That's all of us working together," said Halstead.

Those in his department cite his leadership and exemplary example of what a teacher should be as his greatest assets. They refer to him not just as their leader, but as a father figure and trusted friend.

"Dr. Halstead's commitment and dedication to teaching and learning, coupled with his great passion and extensive knowledge have been a powerful force in the lives of countless students. His daily example of servant leadership and his heart for students have inspired us all to be better at what we try to do," shared Rakestraw, who has worked alongside his mentor for over 20 years. "One may consider themselves fortunate to work in a profession that they love and that is as rewarding as ours. It is to be twice-blessed to work with and for someone that you hold in such high regard, and in whom you find joy for having gotten the chance to be a part of their lives."

When asked how he will spend his time after his retirement, Halstead considered, "I don't know. We'll be visiting our family in Georgia more often and staying longer. Then again, we have to take care of our dog, so I just don't know. Dogs really interrupt your life," he laughed before admitting that he's found a "good dog spa place in Riverchase where the dog gets treated like a king!"

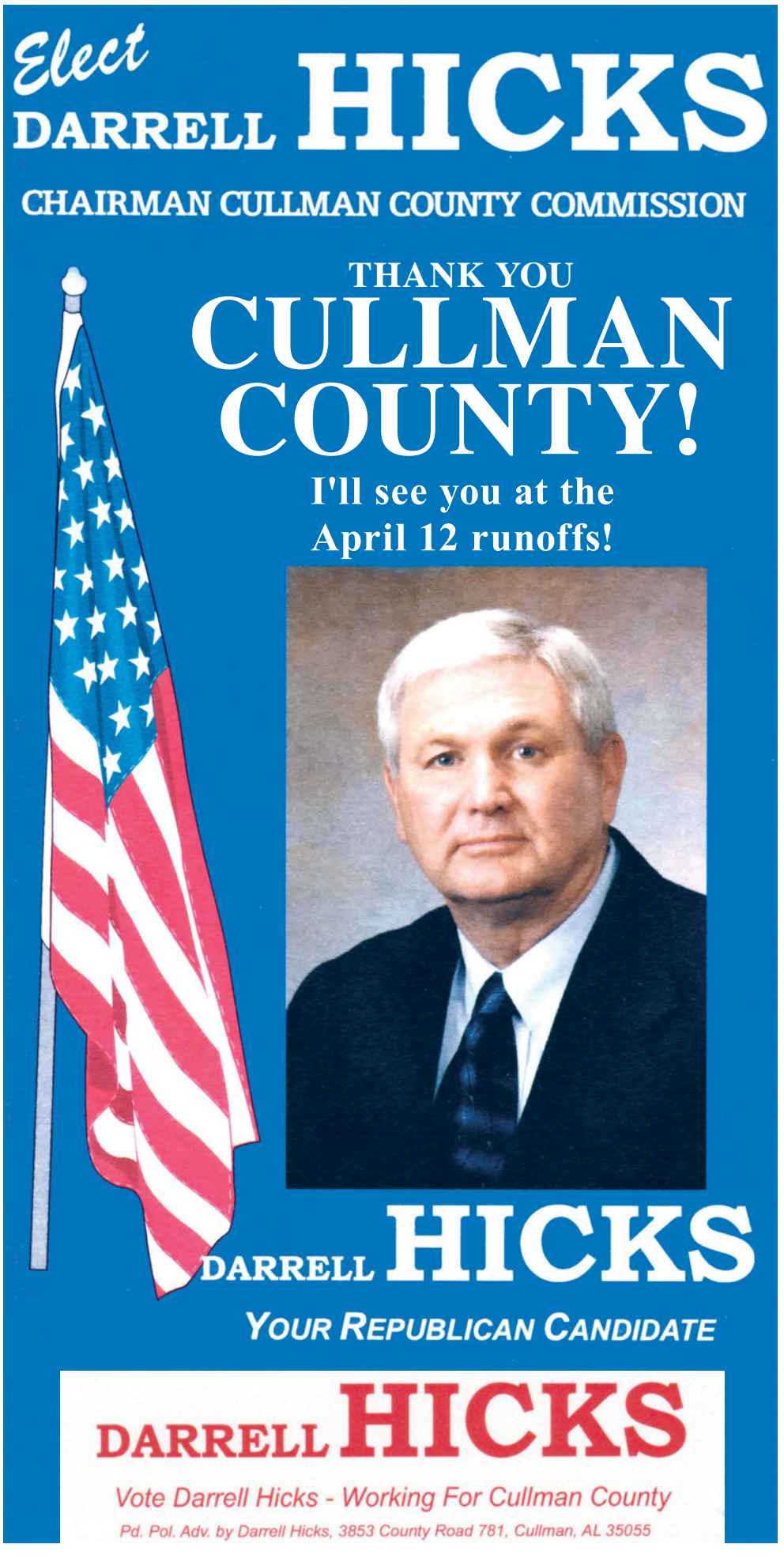
His plans aren't surprising as his greatest source of pride is his family. "I've got great kids. I've got great grandkids. They are what I cherish the most and focus on the most."

He tells of the Finley Award given by the Hoover City Schools, where his grandchildren either attended or currently attend.

The character award is given to students who have high standards, lead with humility, exhibit a strong work ethic and act as examples to others. Four of Halstead's five grandchildren have won the award, with the odds for the youngest grandson looking good.

One doesn't have to look far to understand where these kids learned these lessons. It is evident in his love of teaching and genuine compassion for his students.

Having built a teaching environment that operates as an extended family, Halstead's legacy and passion are destined to continue long after he leaves.



MOTHERS HELPING MOTHERS 2016 EXPO: A DAY OF FUN AND FRIENDSHIP FOR MOTHERS OF ALL AGES

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - On Saturday, March 5, Mothers Helping Mothers held their 2016 Expo at the old Abun-dant Grace Church. The event was free to the public and had more than 40 vendors whose booths had a little bit of everything from crafts to snacks to free massages and door prizes. No matter how old the guests were, there was a little something for everyone to enjoy.

Mothers Helping Mothers is a faith-based group that offers encouragement to ALL moms of ALL walks of life. They offer hope and love to the hopeless and to those who feel they're alone in their walk of motherhood. They hope to help equip women with helpful resources and ideas so they no longer have to go through motherhood on their own.

"This is our third annual event, and it's also the biggest event we've had," said Tiffiney Crawford, MHM founder. "We've been so blessed to have parents from our community involved with the Expo; we even have one vendor who drove all the way from Florida to be here today," she giggled. "Stuff like that just makes you want to pinch yourself to make sure it is real.

"There has been a steady stream of people walk through ever since we opened the doors at 10 a.m. this morning," she continued. "Last year we had about 400 people, so this year we hope to have a lot more than that. At first we were worried about the location because it's not on the same road, but that has not hindered us at all," she beamed.

"We've been doing a lot of prayers and God continues to show out. It gives me goose bumps just thinking about it; it's a huge blessing because we've almost doubled the amount of vendors from what we've had the last two years," she said happily.

"There were some that were worried that the venue was too small, but it's not; it's just perfect. We've put a lot of time, tears and sweat into this and it's just been incredible to watch everything unfold. We cannot do all of this without giving God the praise."



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

The Third Annual MHM Expo was a huge success with crowds of people and a variety of vendors on hand.

The group is all about unity and helping each other out. Friendships are made, and in the three years since the group's beginning, it has grown by leaps and bounds.

"MHM started out as a breastfeeding support group for people here in Cullman and it has blossomed into so much more," said Valerie Shields.

"We now have 5,700 members, not only in Cullman, but all over the United States and in two other countries," she smiled. "We have teen mothers as well as grandmothers in the group; there's no age limit. You can come in as a new mom for advice or as an experienced mom who would like to give your advice. It is for everybody.

"MHM is basically a support group; we're an online community," she added. "It's a private group where moms can get support and advice privately through Facebook. We also have monthly Mom's Night Outs and play dates when the weather gets warmer. We try to do things for the community and things for moms to kind of help get everyone together."

The 2016 Expo was a tremendous success and lots of happy moms came together to enjoy the day.

For more information about Mothers Helping Mothers, visit www.facebook.com/groups/momshelpingmomsal or email them at momshelpingmoms@gmail.com.

CPC Cullman Primary Care
Multi-Specialty Group



CULLMAN PRIMARY CARE
LUNG NODULE CLINIC

1800 Ala. Highway 157
POB 3 - Suite 100
Cullman, Alabama 35055
Open Monday – Thursday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

CPC WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME
DR. SCHROEDER TO THE FAMILY!

Call 256-255-1161 to schedule an appointment
REFERRALS FROM YOUR PRIMAY CARE PHYSICIAN ARE REQUIRED

Dr. Schroeder
treats a variety
of pulmonary
conditions including:

√ ARDS (acute respiratory distress syndrome)
√ Asthma
√ Bronchitis
√ Chronic Cough
√ COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease)
√ Cystic Fibrosis
√ Emphysema
√ Hemoptysis
√ Lung Cancer
√ Pleural Effusion
√ Sarcoidosis
√ Solitary Pulmonary Nodule
√ Tuberculosis



CULLMAN PRIMARY CARE WELCOMES
DR. SCHROEDER

Dr. Schroeder has a special interest in helping catch lung-cancer early and save lives. He is proud to bring the first Lung Nodule Clinic to Cullman.

The Lung nodule clinic can biopsy small nodules found in the lung as an outpatient procedure.

Benefits of the procedure are early detection of lung cancer and to save patients from unnecessary surgery.

Monday

Holly Pond Town Council Meeting
7 p.m. at Holly Pond Town Hall

Cullman City Planning Commission Meeting
5:30 p.m. at Cullman City Hall

Baileyton Town Council Meeting
6 p.m. Baileyton Town Hall

Storytime at the Library
Storytime at the library every Monday and Tuesday at 10 a.m. Join us for fun! Listen to stories, learn songs and make crafts. Contact 256-734-1068 for more information.

Little Lambs Preschool Registration
St. John's Evangelical Protestant School is accepting registration for Little Lambs Preschool beginning March 7. For ages 18 months through 4 years. Abel curriculum is used. Church is located at 512 2nd Ave. SE. For more information, contact Gyzelle Warren at gyzellew@sjepc.com or text 256-595-2755 or visit www.sjepc.com.

Cullman Caring for Kids- United Way Food Bank
The food bank is open every Monday, Tuesday and Friday from 9 a.m. - noon and 1 - 3 p.m. and Thursdays from 9 a.m. - noon for eligible families. Located at 402 Arnold St. NE Ste. W-1. For more information, or to make a donation, call 256-739-1111. www.cullmancaringforkids.com

Cullman Senior Center Bingo
Play Bingo at the Cullman Senior Center every Monday and Wednesday. Activities from 8 a.m. - noon. 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 NW.

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. NE to learn more.

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 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.

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. SE) Childcare is available. Call 256-775-2600 for more information. Crisis Line: 256-734-6100.

AA Meeting
The Cullman Downtown Alcoholics Anonymous will meet at 1519 St. Joseph St. NW. Every day at noon will be an open discussion meeting, Sunday at 7 p.m. is an open discussion and speaker meeting, Tuesday at 7 p.m. is an open discussion meeting (with meal at 6:30 p.m.), Wednesday at 7 p.m.; Thursday at 10:30 a.m. is women's big book study; and Friday at 7 p.m. is a closed discussion meeting (no card signed). All meetings are non-smoking. The last Tuesday of each month is open speaker meeting/ birthday night. For more information, contact the AA coordinator at 256-736-6000.

Free English Classes
The Link of Cullman County hosts classes, 10 a.m. on Mondays and 6 p.m. on Tuesdays. Beginner and Advanced classes available. Call 256-775-0028 for information.

Tuesday

South Vinemont Town Council Meeting
6 p.m. South Vinemont Town Hall

Colony Town Council Meeting
6 p.m. Colony Town Hall

Storytime at the Library
Storytime at the library every Monday and Tuesday at 10 a.m. Join us for fun! Listen to stories, learn songs and make crafts. Contact 256-734-1068 for more information.

Cullman County Commission Meeting
The Cullman County Commission meets every second and fourth Tuesday, except in cases where the meeting date falls on a holiday, in which case the meeting is moved to the following day. Meetings are scheduled for 10 a.m. in the Commission office conference room, first floor, Cullman County Courthouse, unless otherwise specified.

Dodge City Senior Citizen Luncheon
Every Tuesday at 9:30 a.m. Come enjoy fun, food and games at Dodge City Town Hall.

Cullman Caring for Kids- United Way Food Bank
The food bank is open every Monday, Tuesday and Friday from 9 a.m. - noon and 1 - 3 p.m. and Thursdays from 9 a.m. - noon for eligible families. Located at 402 Arnold St. NE Ste. W-1. For more information, or to make a donation, call 256-739-1111. www.cullmancaringforkids.com

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.

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. NE to learn more.

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, every Tuesday from 6-8 p.m. at the Cullman Bowling Center. Please RSVP before 12 noon the days of the events. The charge is $3 per person. For more information, contact Rhonda at 256-962-2208.

AA Meeting
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Celebrate Recovery
Meets at Holly Pond Methodist Church on Tuesday nights. Free meal at 6 p.m. Program starts at 6:30 p.m. Two court stamps available. Open to everyone with a Hurt, Habit or Hang-up. 37851 AL Highway 91 in Holly Pond.

Addiction Recovery
The Link of Cullman County hosting Christ-centered, 12-Step Addiction Recovery meetings on Tuesdays and Thursdays at noon. 1101 Third Ave. SE in Cullman. Call 256-775-0028 for more information.

Free English Classes
The Link of Cullman County hosts classes, 10 a.m. on Mondays and 6 p.m. on Tuesdays. Beginner and Advanced classes available. Call 256-775-0028 for information.

Wednesday

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.

Good Hope Senior Center Meeting
Seniors meet every Wednesday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Pot Luck Lunch at 11 a.m., games, crafts, special speakers and more Contact Gene Bradford at 256-636-2100 or Jackie Gentry at 256-739-0403.

Cullman Senior Center Bingo
Play Bingo at the Cullman Senior Center every Monday and Wednesday. Activities from 8 a.m. - noon. 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 NW.

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. NE to learn more.

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.

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.

AA Meeting
The Cullman Downtown Alcoholics Anonymous will meet at 1519 St. Joseph St. NW. Every day at noon will be an open discussion meeting, Sunday at 7 p.m. is an open discussion and speaker meeting, Tuesday at 7 p.m. is an open discussion meeting (with meal at 6:30 p.m.), Wednesday at 7 p.m.; Thursday at 10:30 a.m. is women's big book study; and Friday at 7 p.m. is a closed discussion meeting (no card signed). All meetings are non-smoking. The last Tuesday of each month is open speaker meeting/ birthday night. For more information, contact the AA coordinator at 256-736-6000.

Divorce Care Support Group
The Link of Cullman County, 6 p.m. Call Denise at 256-590-3719 for more information.

Thursday

Hanceville City Council Meeting
7 p.m. at Hanceville City Hall

Dodge City Town Council Meeting
6 p.m. at Dodge City Town Hall

Fairy Tales, Fables, Tall Tales & Legends Art Show
The annual art show for East and West Elementary will be held on March 10 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Cullman Civic Center. This year's theme is Fairy Tales, Fables, Tall Tales and Legends. Admission is FREE! Be sure to mark your calendars for this event that showcases the creative talent of our elementary students.

"American Made" Screening at WSCC
On Thursday, March 10 at 6 p.m. at the Evelyn Burrow Museum on the Campus of Wallace State Community College, film director Vincent Vittorio will be present a screening of his film "American Made." The screening a part of the Southern Circuit Tour of Independent Filmmakers. "American Made" is a documentary about the outsourcing of American labor and the resurgence of an appreciation of locally made goods and produce. The film looks back on the glory days of manufacturing in the United States, when there was a more balanced relationship between the goods produced and consumed, and illustrates how technology and globalization have changed the competitive landscape for companies doing business in America and overseas. The event is free to attend.

"The Importance of Being Earnest" at WSCC
The Wallace State Theatre Department will present Oscar Wilde's satire, "The Importance of Being Earnest" March 10-13 at the Betty Leeth Haynes Theatre on the campus of Wallace State Community College. The shows will be held March 10-12 at 7 p.m., and March 13 at 2 p.m. Admission is $10 for adults and $5 for students. Reserve tickets by calling 256-352-8277. Tickets can also be purchased at the door.

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

Cullman Caring for Kids- United Way Food Bank
The food bank is open every Monday, Tuesday and Friday from 9 a.m. - noon and 1 - 3 p.m. and Thursdays from 9 a.m. - noon for eligible families. Located at 402 Arnold St. NE Ste. W-1. For more information, or to make a donation, call 256-739-1111. www.cullmancaringforkids.com

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. NE to learn more.

Overeaters Anonymous
Overeaters Anonymous will be meeting at 1:30 p.m. in the Carriage House, located behind Grace Episcopal Church. For more information, contact 724-376-2124 or 256-352-1143.

Cullman Senior Center Live Band and Karaoke
The Cullman Senior Center will have a live band or karaoke every Thursday from 8 a.m. - noon. For more information, call 256-734-0145. The Cullman Senior Center is located at 1539 Sportsman Lake Road NW

AA Meeting
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Addiction Recovery
The Link of Cullman County hosting Christ-centered, 12-Step Addiction Recovery meetings on Tuesdays and Thursdays at noon. 1101 Third Ave. SE in Cullman. Call 256-775-0028 for more information.

Friday

Cullman Senior Center: Roundtrip Train Ride from Chattanooga, TN to Chickamauga, GA
Saturday, May 14. REGISTER BY MARCH 11. Trip is for those age 50 and over. Come and join us as we turn back time on a six-hour train ride! We will depart from Chattanooga, TN and travel to Chickamauga, GA. There will be a 1 1/2-hour layover in historic Civil War Chickamauga. Cost per person is $85. Trip includes motor coach transportation, roundtrip train ride and lunch on the train. For more information or to register, contact the Cullman Senior Center at 256-734-0145, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-1 p.m.

Movie Night at the North Alabama Agriplex
"Dirt! The Movie" (Jamie Lee Curtis narrates this one), March 11 at 7 p.m. The movie brings to life the environmental, economic, social and political impact that the soil has. It shares the stories of experts from all over the world who study and are able to harness the beauty and power of a respectful and mutually beneficial relationship with soil. Free refreshments will be provided.

"The Importance of Being Earnest" at WSCC
The Wallace State Theatre Department will present Oscar Wilde's satire, "The Importance of Being Earnest" March 10-13 at the Betty Leeth Haynes Theatre on the campus of Wallace State Community College. The shows will be held March 10-12 at 7 p.m., and March 13 at 2 p.m. Admission is $10 for adults and $5 for students. Reserve tickets by calling 256-352-8277. Tickets can also be purchased at the door.

St. Bernard Preparatory School Open House
Friday, March 11 at 8 a.m. Families will have an opportunity to see a day of instruction in progress and experience the life at St. Bernard Prep. St. Bernard is a coed college prep Catholic boarding and day school for students in grades 7-12. To register, call 256-739-6682.

Southern Rock Racing Series
On Friday and Saturday, March 11-12, the first race in the Southern Rock Racing Series will be held at Cullman's Stony Lonesome OHV Park. The SRRS will hold its event at Stony Lonesome for the first time, in what will be called the Southern Points Race. According to the SRRS, the sport of recreational rock crawling and hill climbing has evolved quickly in the southeast into what is being called "rock bouncing." High-horsepower buggies are built to launch up insane climbs, and fast. The event will kick off on Friday, March 11 at about 3 p.m. For more info, visit http://qrne.ws/ohv.

2016 Fairview High School Fair Queen Pageant
Friday, March 11, 2016 at 6 p.m. in the FHS auditorium. Admission is $5 at the door. The pageant is sponsored by Fairview High School FCCLA and all proceeds will go towards club projects and activities.

Lenten Fish Fry Supper
Cullman Knights of Columbus will sponsor Lenten Fish Fry Suppers each Friday leading up to Easter. To be held in the Sacred Heart of Jesus Family Life Center, the supper, either eat-in or take-out, will run from 5-6:45 p.m., leading up to weekly Stations of the Cross at 7 p.m. in the church. Meals are $8 a plate or a family can eat for $25. Baked or fried fish with traditional accompaniments will be served, with all proceeds used for the Knights of Columbus church and community projects. All are welcome to attend the dinners. For more information, call Barbara G. Ragsdale at 256-347-3471.

Cullman Caring for Kids- United Way Food Bank
The food bank is open every Monday, Tuesday and Friday from 9 a.m. - noon and 1 - 3 p.m. and Thursdays from 9 a.m. - noon for eligible families. Located at 402 Arnold St. NE Ste. W-1. For more information, or to make a donation, call 256-739-1111. www.cullmancaringforkids.com

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 NW.

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.

AA Meeting
The Cullman Downtown Alcoholics Anonymous will meet at 1519 St. Joseph St. NW. Every day at noon will be an open discussion meeting, Sunday at 7 p.m. is an open discussion and speaker meeting, Tuesday at 7 p.m. is an open discussion meeting (with meal at 6:30 p.m.), Wednesday at 7 p.m.; Thursday at 10:30 a.m. is women's big book study; and Friday at 7 p.m. is a closed discussion meeting (no card signed). All meetings are non-smoking. The last Tuesday of each month is open speaker meeting/ birthday night. For more information, contact the AA coordinator at 256-736-6000.

Saturday

Hanceville QB Club Turkey Shoot
March 12 and 19. Highway 31 South next to Domino's Pizza. $5 meat and money shots.

Vinemont Eagles Baseball 2nd Annual Pancake Breakfast and Silent Auction
Saturday, March 12. 8 a.m.-noon in the school's cafeteria. $7 per plate, includes 3-4 pancakes, sausage, syrup, butter and coffee. Soft drinks can be purchased for $.50 extra. Breakfast served until 11 a.m. Auction ends at noon; Auction items need to be picked up by 1 p.m.

"The Importance of Being Earnest" at WSCC
The Wallace State Theatre Department will present Oscar Wilde's satire, "The Importance of Being Earnest" March 10-13 at the Betty Leeth Haynes Theatre on the campus of Wallace State Community College. The shows will be held March 10-12 at 7 p.m., and March 13 at 2 p.m. Admission is $10 for adults and $5 for students. Reserve tickets by calling 256-352-8277. Tickets can also be purchased at the door.

Southern Rock Racing Series
On Friday and Saturday, March 11-12, the first race in the Southern Rock Racing Series will be held at Cullman's Stony Lonesome OHV Park. The SRRS will hold its event at Stony Lonesome for the first time, in what will be called the Southern Points Race. According to the SRRS, the sport of recreational rock crawling and hill climbing has evolved quickly in the southeast into what is being called "rock bouncing." High-horsepower buggies are built to launch up insane climbs, and fast. The event will kick off on Friday, March 11 at about 3 p.m. For more info, visit http://qrne.ws/ohv.

Food Assistance
Every second Saturday at Harmony Word of Life Church. NEW HOURS: 1 - 3 p.m. Take Highway 157 to Battleground, turn right onto County Road 1212, go half mile to County Road 1204, turn left and drive a half mile. 256-739-2956.

War Recovery
From 1-2 p.m. at Redemption Assembly of God. 516 Shaeffel Rd. Cullman. We have court refer. in Cullman Co. Call Susan, 256-620-6966 for more info.

Saving Forgotten Warriors
Organization helps area disabled Marine and Vietnam veteran Cpl. Kenneth Beasley and other area veterans in need. Clean-up days for Cpl. Beasley are each Saturday from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at Beasley's home at 185 Co. Road 823. Volunteers are needed and donations are accepted. See Facebook page "Saving Forgotten Warriors" for more info or call Jeremy (352-440-4076), Tammy (256-286-3136) or Josh (256-615-5263).

Saving Forgotten Veterans Boston Butt Sale
We're selling 100 mouthwatering, 6-8 pound, smoked Boston Butts to help Saving Forgotten Warriors raise money to help fund important veteran projects. Price is $40 for one (1) or two (2) for $65.There're only 100 so please pre-order to reserve yours!!! Pre-pay at 1720 Co. Rd. 838 Cullman, Al 35057. Pre-orders will begin on March 1. Credit card orders can be processed over the phone at 352- 440-4076. They should be ready around 4 p.m. on March 12.

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!

AA Meeting
The Cullman Downtown Alcoholics Anonymous will meet at 1519 St. Joseph St. NW. Every day at noon will be an open discussion meeting, Sunday at 7 p.m. is an open discussion and speaker meeting, Tuesday at 7 p.m. is an open discussion meeting (with meal at 6:30 p.m.), Wednesday at 7 p.m.; Thursday at 10:30 a.m. is women's big book study; and Friday at 7 p.m. is a closed discussion meeting (no card signed). All meetings are non-smoking. The last Tuesday of each month is open speaker meeting/ birthday night. For more information, contact the AA coordinator at 256-736-6000.

Sunday

"The Importance of Being Earnest" at WSCC
The Wallace State Theatre Department will present Oscar Wilde's satire, "The Importance of Being Earnest" March 10-13 at the Betty Leeth Haynes Theatre on the campus of Wallace State Community College. The shows will be held March 10-12 at 7 p.m., and March 13 at 2 p.m. Admission is $10 for adults and $5 for students. Reserve tickets by calling 256-352-8277. Tickets can also be purchased at the door.

Camp Seale Harris Cullman Spring Family Fun Day
An event for children with diabetes and their families, Camp Seale Harris Cullman Spring Family Fun Day will be held on March 13 from 1:30-5:30 p.m. at the Cullman Wellness & Aquatic Center. The event is sponsored by the Cullman Community Lions Club and is FREE. Register by March 10. Contact info@southeasterndiabetes.org.

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. NE 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.

AA Meeting
The Cullman Downtown Alcoholics Anonymous will meet at 1519 St. Joseph St. NW. Every day at noon will be an open discussion meeting, Sunday at 7 p.m. is an open discussion and speaker meeting, Tuesday at 7 p.m. is an open discussion meeting (with meal at 6:30 p.m.), Wednesday at 7 p.m.; Thursday at 10:30 a.m. is women's big book study; and Friday at 7 p.m. is a closed discussion meeting (no card signed). All meetings are non-smoking. The last Tuesday of each month is open speaker meeting/ birthday night. For more information, contact the AA coordinator at 256-736-6000.

Announcements and Upcoming Events

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 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

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.

Cullman Senior Center Creating Cookbook
Cookbook will be created this summer. The center is asking for seniors age 60 and older to submit their favorite recipes. You can also submit a recipe in memory of a loved one. Mail recipes to: Cullman Senior Center, 1539 Sportsman Lake Road NW, Cullman, AL 35055. Please include your name and phone number.

Food Assistance
Every second Saturday at Harmony Word of Life Church. NEW HOURS: 1 - 3 p.m. Take Highway 157 to Battleground, turn right onto County Road 1212, go half mile to County Road 1204, turn left and drive a half mile. 256-739-2956.

Cullman Parks & Rec Community Classes at the Cullman Civic Center
Yoga- Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.; Ballroom, Latin and Swing Dancing - Thursdays, $10 per class; Oil Painting and Acrylics - Mondays from 6:30 - 9 p.m.; Nia Dance Fitness / Ageless Grace - Tuesdays at 9 a.m.; Rock Climbing (at Hurricane Creek Park) - Saturdays at 10 a.m., $25, call to register at 256-734-2125; Wilderness Survival Course - Sundays with reservation, call to register at 256-734-2125. For more information, contact Waid Harbison at 256-734-9157.

Free GED Classes
Sponsored by Wallace State Community College Adult Education Program. Call 256-352-8077 or 1-866-352-WSCC for more information.

Clothes Closet
Addington Chapel UMC in Bremen has clothes available free to those in need. No qualifications or paperwork needed. Call 256-287-1791 or 256-287-1828

Renew Our Rivers Lake Cleanup
Friday, March 25, 8 a.m. - noon; Smith Lake, sites to be determined. Contact Eddie Hand at 256- 287-1545.

YPCullman (Young Professionals Cullman)
March 17, Karma's Coffee House at 6 p.m. YPCullman is an outlet for the next generation of leaders to channel their energy and enhance their leadership potential. This new program is designed for young professionals, ages 22-39. Over time, we envision YPCullman members to take strides in several facets of the Cullman area, including but not limited to: community awareness and concern, committee involvement, entrepreneurial roundtables, and eventually leadership roles. Employers please send this to your employees ages 22-39! If you would like to sign up, email mbartlett@cullmanchamber.org.

Masonics of Cullman County Meetings
Held at 7 p.m. at the following locations: Baileyton 472 (first and third Thursday, call 256-796-6611); Cullman 421 (Mondays, call 256-734-1231); Logan 500 (second and fourth Tuesday, call 256-747-4243 or 256-747-2908); Simcoe 854 (second and fourth Thursday, call 256-796-5794 or 256-796-5018); Vinemont 562 (first and third Thursday, call 256-796-7244).

Cullman County Commission Meetings
The Cullman County Commission meets every second and fourth Tuesday, except in cases where the meeting date falls on a holiday, in which case the meeting is moved to the following day. Meetings are scheduled for 10 a.m. in the Commission office conference room, first floor, Cullman County Courthouse, unless otherwise specified.

Cullman County Community Development Commission Meeting
The Cullman County Community Development Commission (CCCDC) will meet on April 7 at 6 p.m. at the North Alabama Agriplex,1714 Tally Ho Street SW.

2016 Strawberry Festival
May 6-7, 2016, at the Festhalle Farmer's Market and Depot Park, a host of local farmers will offer strawberries to purchase both days of the event. Strawberry-themed foods, ice cream, drinks and more will also be a part of the festival. Huge lineup of music to be announced on April 1, free kids' games and rides, dozens of craft vendors and a car show. Food trucks will also be on-site both days. The event will kick off during the day Friday with Senior Day from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.; the festival will run from 4-10 p.m. on Friday, and 8 a.m.-10 p.m. on Saturday. For more information on CP&R's 2016 Strawberry Festival, visit www.cullmanrecreation.org or call 256-734-9157.

Military Order of the Purple Heart
Chapter 2212 meets the third Thursday of each month at Ryan's Restaurant in Cullman. Dinner at 6 p.m., meeting to follow. Contact Joey D'Andrea for more info. 256-734-4733

Cullman Pilot Club Spring 2016 Charity Fundraiser
The Pilot Club of Cullman will host its spring 2016 charity fundraiser, Professional Women's Fashion Show and Luncheon: "Dancing in the Street," on Wednesday, April 27 at the Cullman Civic Center. The event will be "a way of celebrating Administrative Professional's Day." Doors will open at 11 a.m. so attendees can shop the booths set up by area businesses. Boxed lunches provided by Sweet Peppers Deli will be served at 11:30 a.m., with a fashion show beginning soon thereafter. Door prizes will be given away during the show. Tickets for the event are $20 and can be purchased at the Cullman County Museum or the Cullman Civic Center.

The Link of Cullman County's GROW 2016
The Link of Cullman County's annual event and auction, GROW 2016, will take place on Tuesday, March 15 at 6 p.m. at Loft 212, located at 212 Fourth St. SW. Doors will open and the silent auction will begin at 5 p.m., with dinner following at 6 p.m. Shane Quick, of Premier Productions and founder of Rock the South, will be the night's guest speaker. Tickets are $25 per person. Tickets can be purchased online at https://goo.gl/Lgb9iY. For more information about the event, call 256-775-0028 or email info@linkingcullman.org.

Walk MS: Cullman
March 19 at 9 a.m. at Heritage Park. Walk MS: Cullman: Ending multiple sclerosis for good will take all of us. It's why Walk MS matters so much. And it's why you matter so much. Walk MS helps us team up with friends, loved ones and co-workers to change the world for everyone affected by MS. Together, we become a powerful force. And with every step we take, every dollar we raise...we're that much closer. Together, we will end MS forever. http://qrne.ws/ms. A variety of volunteer opportunities are available for all ages:
• Site set up
• Coffee station
• Pre-registration & Walker registration
• Volunteer check-in table
• T-shirt distribution
• Rest area/handing out fruit & water to walkers
• Food Service area
• Entertainment area (kids bounce house, corn hole, MS Experience)
• Site breakdown
For more information:256-457-5618

Colors of Cancer Day
April 2; We will start off the day with a 5K at the Fairgrounds. Registration is at 7 a.m., 5K run will start at 8 a.m., and awards will be handed out at 9 a.m. The parade will begin at 10 a.m. in the North Shopping Center and be lead up Highway 31 by Cindy, the pink firetruck, to the Fairgrounds. The Fairgrounds will host a Drum Line Competition between area high schools at noon. Vendor Booths, Food and a Bounce House will be available during the afternoon. There will be a Balloon Release at 2 p.m. to end the day. More info: Amanda Rogers at amanda.rogers@crmchospital.com or Becky Richardson at brichardson1957@yahoo.com.

Color Me Cullman 5K
April 9 at 8 a.m. at Sportsman Lake Park; The Color Me Cullman 5K is a colorful experience where we promote healthiness and happiness. Our event is all about people of all different speeds, ages, shapes, and sizes ready to get COLORFUL! Come on out to Sportsman Lake wearing a white T-shirt as your blank canvas and get ready to become a piece of artwork!

2016 Bloomin' Festival Arts & Crafts Fair
Saturday and Sunday, April 16-17, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. The 32nd Annual Bloomin' Festival Arts and Crafts Fair to be held on Saturday and Sunday, April 16-17, 2016. St. Bernard has been recognized by the Southeast Tourism Society consistently in the past nine years as a "Top Twenty Event in the Southeast."

"Arts in April Celebration" 2016 at WSCC
Wallace State Community College is seeking artists to participate in an exhibition of local community artworks Monday, April 4 - Saturday, April 30 as part of the annual 2016 Arts in April Celebration. In conjunction with WSCC's Earth Week Celebration, participants for this year's Arts in April Community Exhibition "Spring Upcycle" are invited to create artworks based on general themes of nature, its beauty and its conservation. More specifically this year participants are encouraged to use repurposed, recycled and found materials to create "upcycled" artworks which will become creative, imaginative, and lasting reminders of our everyday roles as recyclers and partners in conservation. The deadline for submitting is March 18. All entries should be ready and suitable for display when submitted. Contact Adrian Scott at 245-352-8145 or adrian.scott@wallacestate.edu for complete rules and guidelines or the Burrow Center for the Fine and Performing Arts front desk at 256-352-8277.

March Events at the North Alabama Agriplex
We have some great programs coming up in March! We have another Movie Night on March 11 titled "Dirt! The Movie" (Jamie Lee Curtis narrates this one). Then on March 15 is our next book club on Nick Trout's NY Times Bestseller "Tell Me Where It Hurts". The following week is a Living Landscape class on apple trees by Linda Steele of Steele Orchard on March 22. The last week of March, on March 29, we have a Heritage Skills class on natural body care taught by our own VISTA Nicole. You can register on our website at agriplex.org under the registration tab. Please register and share!

Alzheimer's Support Group Meeting
Find meaningful advice and support from a community of fellow Alzheimer's Caregivers. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 15 at 5:30 p.m. at Westminster Assisted Living, located at the intersection of Main Avenue and Olive Street. For more information or to RSVP, contact group coordinator Jane Burchfield at (256)737-2033 or jane.burchfield@crmchospital.com. For a complete list of upcoming support groups and events at Cullman Regional Medical Center visit the online Calendar of Events at www.crmchospital.com.

Bosom Buddies Support Group
The Bosom Buddies Support Group offers support to individuals affected by breast cancer. The group will hold its next meeting on Monday, March 21 from 6-8 p.m. in Cullman Regional Medical Center's Ave Maria Room in the Community Education Center located in Professional Office Building 2. Donna Shanklin will be speaking about nutrition. For a complete list of upcoming support groups and events at Cullman Regional Medical Center visit the online Calendar of Events at www.crmchospital.com.

Free Seminar on the Adjustable Lap-Band System Procedure
Dr. Mac Cottingham, Horizon Surgical, is offering a free informational seminar on the Adjustable Lap-Band System procedure at Cullman Regional Medical Center on Monday, March 14 from 6-8 p.m. in CRMC's Ave Maria Room located in Professional Office Building II. The seminar will include an explanation of the Lap-Band System procedure, information on nutrition and other lifestyle changes required for success with the system, a chance to ask questions about the procedure and information on insurance and financing options. As part of the Horizon Surgical's commitment to patient care and good clinical outcomes, we require all patients considering gastric band surgery to attend a free one-hour informational seminar prior to a consult for surgery. For additional information, or to register for this seminar, please call 256-736-BAND. For a complete list of upcoming support groups and events at Cullman Regional Medical Center visit the online Calendar of Events at www.crmchospital.com.

"Althea" at WSCC
The Evelyn Burrow Museum at Wallace State Community College presents "Althea" as part of the South Arts Southern Circuit Tour of Independent Filmmakers at the Burrow Center for the Fine and Performing Arts on Thursday, April 14 at 9:30 a.m. Following a screening of the film, the filmmaker will engage the audience in a discussion about the film and their work as filmmakers. Admission is free and the event is open to the public.

Berlin Community Easter Egg Hunt
The annual Berlin Community Easter Egg Hunt, sponsored by the Berlin Sunshine Club, will be held on Saturday, March 19 starting at 2 p.m. at the Berlin Community Center (3309 Highway 278 E., Cullman, Alabama 35055). Participants must be members of the Berlin Community and children must be age 0 to 12 to participate in the egg hunt! The Easter Bunny will be available for pictures (please bring your own digital camera or cell phone). Easter-themed games and light refreshments will be provided.

Cullman Senior Center: Roundtrip Train Ride from Chattanooga, TN to Chickamauga, GA
Saturday, May 14. REGISTER BY MARCH 11. Trip is for those age 50 and over. Come and join us as we turn back time on a six-hour train ride! We will depart from Chattanooga, TN and travel to Chickamauga, GA. There will be a 1 1/2-hour layover in historic Civil War Chickamauga. Cost per person is $85. Trip includes motor coach transportation, roundtrip train ride and lunch on the train. For more information or to register, contact the Cullman Senior Center at 256-734-0145, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-1 p.m.

Living Stations of the Cross
All are warmly invited to join us on Friday, March 18 at 7 p.m. for a live performance of the Living Stations of the Cross. The Stations will be performed by the Cenacolo Community (www.hopereborn.org) in the piazza of the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament in Hanceville, AL. This powerful event is open to people of all faiths and ages. For more information on this free event, call: 205-795-5717, http://olamshrine.org/event/living-stations-of-the-cross/.

Dancing for a Cause
April 2 at 6 p.m. in the Cullman High School auditorium. Join us for the inaugural Dancing for a Cause charity event hosted by The Factory Dance Productions! Set up like a local version of Dancing with the Stars, Cullman County and City favorites will compete to raise money for various charities. Each set of contestants will represent the charity of their choice. Out of town judges will score the contestants on overall entertainment value, not dance technique. The winners will receive a large donation towards the charity of their choice! The runner-up and our "People's Choice" winners as voted on by the audience will get donations towards their charities as well! Remaining money will be distributed amongst our Company dancers to help pay for regional and national traveling expenses! Please check our website for a list of sponsors and contestants! www.thefactorydance.com

"Beauty and the Beast" Presented by Cullman High School
On Friday and Saturday, April 8-9, the Cullman High School drama and choral departments will present their rendition of Disney's Broadway musical "Beauty and the Beast." CHS Theater Director Wayne Cook and CHS Choir Director Sarah Driskell will lead the production. Opening night is Friday, April 8, at 7 p.m. Saturday, April 9, showtimes are 12:30 p.m., 3:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. Tickets are priced at $10 for adults and $5 for children under the age of 12. Senior citizens and children under the age of 12 will receive $3 tickets at Saturday's 12:30 p.m. show. For any more information, call 256- 734-3923 or visit http://chs.cullmancats.net/.

Men's League Softball
Registration open at Heritage Park through March 15. For ages 15 and up. $425 per team of 10 or more. Call 256-734-9157 or email heritagepark@cullmanrecreation.org for more info.

Cullman City Head Start
Now accepting applications for the 2016-17 school year. Must live in city limits and be 3-4 years-old on or before Sep. 2 and meet qualifications. Call 256-734-0234 for more info.

Hanceville QB Club Turkey Shoot
March 12 and 19. Highway 31 South next to Domino's Pizza. $5 meat and money shots.

Rock the South
June 3-4 at Heritage Park. Check out www.rockthesouth.com for more details.

4D Farm Spring Celebration
Visit the farm on March 25-26 for a fun-filled day of egg hunts, visiting with the Easter bunny and enjoy all the exciting farm activities that we have to offer. You can zoom down our 80-ft slide, take a ride on our 250-ft zipline and jump on our HUGE jumping pillow! We will also open April 2. Easter bunny and egg hunts will only be taking place the weekend of Easter, but we will have all other spring farm favorites on April 2 as well! See you on the farm!! 7182 County Road 703, Cullman, Alabama 35055

Senior Spirit

A program sponsored by the City of Cullman Parks and Recreation Department that focuses on recreational, social and leisure opportunities for individuals 50 & over. There is no membership fee and programs are offered at the Donald E. Green Senior Center.

Exercise Area
An exercise area with several types of equipment is available for seniors to use provided they have a release form signed by their physician.
Date: Mon., Tues., Wed., and Fri.
Time: 8 a.m.- 5 p.m.

Fitness for Life
Walking and light cardio stretching classes that help boost your energy.
Date: Year-round
Monday, Wednesday, and Friday
Time: 8-9:15 a.m.
Instructor: Catherine Hasenbein

Line Dancing
Date: Year-round
Monday, Wednesday, and Friday
Beginners: 9:15-10 a.m.
Adv. / Kickers: 10 a.m. - noon
Instructor: Sherry Boatright
Cost: FREE

Senior Spirit Singers
Join this group that sings old time Gospel Hymns. The group is available for Special Events, Revivals, Assisted Living facilities and Nursing Homes throughout the Community.
Date: Mondays
Time: 10 a.m.
Instructor: Helen Orr
Cost: FREE

Sacred Harp Singing
(Fa-So-La)
Learn this old style of traditional singing that took root in the Southern region of the United States as a part of the larger tradition of shape note music.
Date: 1st & 3rd Wed. of each month Time: 9-11 a.m.

Monday Jam Session
Come together with other seniors to listen to pickers as they play old time country music or try your talent at picking and singing with them.
Date: Every Monday
Time: 1- 4 p.m.
Group Leader: Barbara Whitehead

Fun & Games
Bring a friend or make new ones with a fun filled day of fellowship, card playing or dominos.
Date: Tuesdays
Time: 9 a.m.-until

Bingo
Date: Tuesdays
Time: 1 p.m.
Play a minimum of 12 games

Art Classes
Art classes in oils, acrylics and other venues. This is a relaxing and rewarding activity. Seniors are responsible for furnishing their own supplies.
Date: The 1st Tues. of each month
Time: 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Instructor: Nance DiPiero
Cost: $10 per class

Bunco
A parlor game played in teams with three dice.
Date: 1st Wednesday of each Month
Time: 1 p.m.

Yoga
Health benefits associated with Yoga are improved flexibility, more strength, improved posture, and relaxation. Classes can be done from a mat or in a chair.
Date: Tues. 9:30-10:30 a.m.
Thurs. 4-5 p.m.
Instructor: Fabian Holland
Cost: Free

Dulcimer Classes
Take lessons to learn the Appalachian dulcimer, generally regarded as one of the easiest string instruments to learn. The traditional way to play the instrument is to lay it flat on the lap and pluck or strum the strings with the right hand, while fretting with the left.
Date: Every Friday
Time: 1 p.m.
Instructor: Craig Mann
Cost: $10 for 1 hour

Pool Table
Pool table is available for play from 8 a.m. -5 p.m. Mon., Tues., Wed., & Fri.

WII Bowling
Date: Wednesday & Friday
Time: 1 p.m.
WII bowling is also available when the room is not being used for other activities.

EAST AND WEST ELEMENTARY JOIN FORCES FOR ART SHOW MARCH 10

Will Hogue
will@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – On Thursday, March 10, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Cullman Civic Center, classes from both East and West Elementary will have artwork on display for the fifth year.

The annual one-night installation is a product of the efforts of the art teacher for the two schools, Judith McBrayer.

"Five years ago, I thought this would be a great way to display art for the schools and show how talented the students were at both schools," McBrayer said.

McBrayer travels between the two schools to teach art to the students, and says that each year the event is held it is not difficult to coordinate the event because of the administrative assistance and support from other teachers.

"Both principals are very supportive; the teachers are very supportive, and it is a thrill for the students to see what the other school is doing in art," McBrayer said.

According to McBrayer, admission to the show is free, but there will be a donation box for anyone who would like to contribute to the art programs at East and West Elementary Schools.

As far as what to expect out of the artwork crafted by the students, McBrayer says each year the students work within a theme.

Past themes have been "The Art of Asia," "Art of Mexico" and "America the Beautiful." This year the theme is "Fairy Tales, Fables, Tall Tales and Legends."

According to McBrayer, each grade works on a different project together, using a variety of art media.

"Some sixth- and fifth-grade classes have (from both schools) made papier mache. I also have classes that have printed using tiles and printing ink," she said.

"Collages by second and third, just a variety of media. Second- and third-grade themes are mostly the fairy tales, 'Three Little Pigs,' 'The Frog Prince,' 'The Princess and the Pea,' (and) 'Hansel and Gretel,' just to name a few. Some third and fourth (graders) will be creating works from fables, such as 'The Ant and the Grasshopper,' 'The Heron,' 'The Wise Old Owl,' plus others.

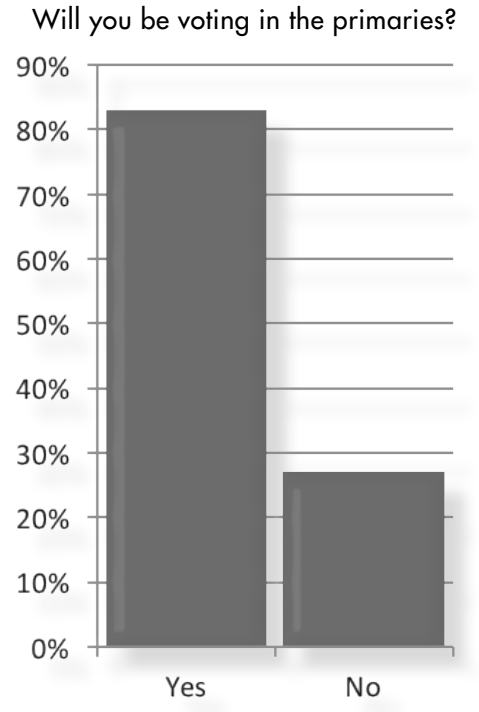
"Some fourth and fifth (graders) are working on tall tales, like 'Pecos Bill,' 'Paul Bunyan,' 'Babe the Blue Ox,' plus others," she continued. "Then fifth and sixth (graders) are working on legends: 'King Arthur,' 'Robin Hood,' 'St. George and the Dragon' and more."

In all, McBrayer said that there will be about 55 different exhibits displayed on Thursday.

"My students ask all the time who will win. I explain to them, 'this is not a competition.' To me, all of them are winners. I explain this is just an exhibit of their artwork to show how well they do in art. I am so very proud and honored to be their art teacher."

Find the event on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/events/664887433653776.

Poll



This Week's Poll
Who do you think will be the Democratic presidential nominee?
Vote Today at CullmanSense.com/Poll

GARDEN CITY LIBRARY GETTING A FACELIFT

Amy Leonard
amy@cullmansense.com



AMY LEONARD/CULLMANSENSE

GARDEN CITY – The Garden City Library, located in the Garden City Municipal Building, is in the final leg of a renovation which started in early January.

Mary Griffin, librarian at the branch for the past eleven years, said, "We have to get the computers hooked back up and then the library board will decide when to reopen."

With its upgraded ceiling, new flooring and freshly painted walls, the small library appears eager to welcome its patrons with the grand reopening coming in the near future.

The community library originally opened in the 1970s and has been a part of the Cullman County Public Library System since then.

Although the library's location has changed over the years, the community's love of reading has con-tinued to grow.

The Summer Reading Program sees between 10-12 participants each year at the Garden City branch. Beginning in early June, Griffin will lead her young readers through a literary adventure which they're sure to remember.

The library's remodel was financed by the Garden City's capital improvement funds.

The library, which serves the community of almost 500 residents, will be open Monday - Thursday from noon-5 p.m. It is located at 501 First Avenue S in Garden City.

For more information, call 256-352-4552.

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Light a Candle, Spread HOPE

RELAY FOR LIFE
American Cancer Society

Join your community in the fight against cancer! At Relay For Life, teams take turns walking or running around the track. Teams consist of people representing companies, churches, clubs, organizations and families. During Relay For Life, team members enjoy games, food, music and camaraderie while camping out on the surrounding grounds.

Participants also share in a special luminaria ceremony to remember those individuals who have been affected by cancer. Candles are lit in honor or memory of those touched by cancer and placed around the track. You are invited to support this effort by making a luminaria donation and having a candle lit in honor of a loved one who has been touched by cancer. Simply fill out the back of this form and return to a team member, team captain or mail your order to the address listed on the reverse side.

Thank you for your support. For more information, call 1-800-227-2345 or visit cancer.org.

Luminaria Order Form

Minimum donation: $10.00 each

Yes, I would like to make a luminaria donation in honor of or in memory of the following:

In Memory/Honor of: (*circle one*)
_____

In Memory/Honor of: (*circle one*)
_____

In Memory/Honor of: (*circle one*)
_____

Total amount enclosed: $_____
Payment method: Check ____ Cash ____

Thank you for your donation. Please make checks payable to the **American Cancer Society**. Return to:

Attn: Tess Kimbrough
1024 County Road 730
Cullman, Al 35055

Championship (from Front)

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

JACKSONVILLE – On Saturday, March 5, the Holly Pond Robotics Team traveled to Jacksonville State University to compete in the VEX Robotics Alabama State Championship, where they took top honors. Now, they're headed to the World Championship in Louisville, Kentucky next month.

The team consists of three students- Dexton Jones (sophomore), Zachary Ayers (freshman) and Rylan Griffin (seventh grade)- and two mentors- Shawn Johnson and Howard Cole.

Holly Pond's team competes in VEX EDR robotics. Find out more at http://qrne.ws/vexedr.

VEX Robotics Competitions are presented by the Robotics Education & Competition Foundation. They are considered to be the ultimate STEM activity for middle school and high school students ages 11-18.

Each year the students are given an engineering challenge which is presented to them in the form of a game.

Students, with guidance from their teachers and mentors, use the VEX Robotics Design System to build innovative robots designed to score the most points possible in qualification matches, elimination matches and skills challenges.

"The winning team from each qualifier match throughout the season gets invited to the state tournament," said Johnson.

"The winners at State then get invited to the VEX World Tournament in Louisville, Kentucky in April.

"We are a rookie team this year and have won two tournaments, the Calhoun County VRC Qualifier and the Oxford Middle School State Qualifier," Johnson said before Saturday's win. "Each tournament usually starts with 30-40 teams. After four qualifying matches, the top eight teams are team captains. The captains choose alliances of three robotics teams, and the tournament is played with those alliances. Two robots per alliance compete at a time, with a total of four on the playing field. The object is to pick up 4-inch foam balls and shoot them into a scoring basket.

"Our team shows class and a high level of integrity in everything they do," he smiled. "They have been recognized for it three times now by winning the Excellence Award, which is the highest honor of each competition. They have represented Holly Pond well and we have a lot to be proud of!"

Saturday's competition was a little bumpy at the start, but the team rallied.

"We had a rough day in the beginning," said Johnson. "We had a few mishaps in qualifying and only qualified 24th. During the alliance selections, the No. 2 seed Hazel Green Trojans selected Holly Pond Robotics as their first selection based on our performance throughout the year. We managed to win the quarterfinals, but came up short in the semifinals due to an equipment malfunction on our robot.

"We did receive the Excellence Award, which is the highest honor at the State Competition," he added proudly. "This achievement earns us a spot in the World Championship Tournament in Louisville, Kentucky, which is held April 20-23."

According to VEX, the Excellence Award is the highest award presented at the VEX Robotics Competition. This award is presented to a team that exemplifies overall excellence in creating a high-quality VEX robotics program. This team is a strong contender in numerous award categories. Excellence winners must have an engineering notebook.

Key criteria:

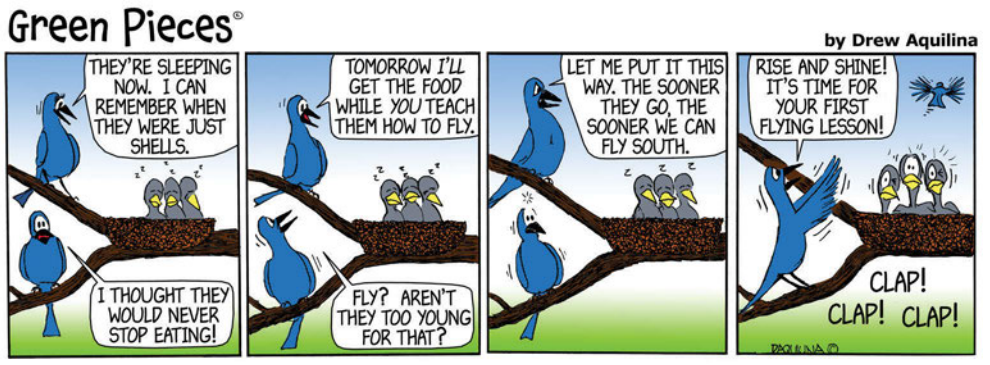
- Tournament Qualification Round ranking
- Programming Skills Challenge ranking
- Robot Skills Challenge ranking
- Design Award ranking
- Other Judged Award ranking
- High-quality VEX robotics program

If community members would like to make donations towards Holly Pond Robotics Team's trip to Louisville for the World Championship, donations can be made at Holly Pond High School.

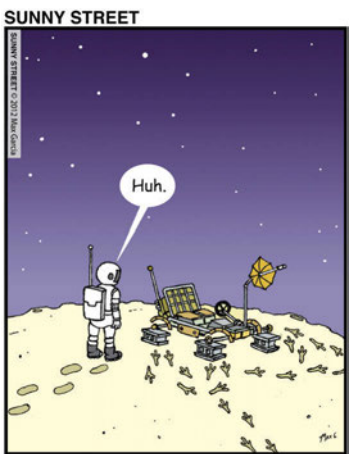
Keep up with the Holly Pond's team on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/HollyPondRobotics2015.

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COMICS









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SOUTHEASTERN DIABETES EDUCATION SERVICES



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CAMP SEALE HARRIS
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For Children with Diabetes and Their Families

Snacks and activities provided by
Cullman Community Lions Club

Cullman Wellness and Aquatics Center*
Sunday, March 13, 2016
1:30 pm - 5:30 pm
1:00 PM—On-site Registration
No cost for families living with diabetes

Activities include swimming, games, diabetes education, and lots of fun!

Bring comfortable shoes, swim suit, towel, a change of clothes, and a great attitude!

*1636 Field of Miracles Drive, Cullman, AL 35055

Please register in advance by March 10, 2016
Email info@southeasterndiabetes.org
or call 205-402-0415

Camp Seale Harris teaches children and families how to live well.

OBITUARY ANNOUNCEMENTS

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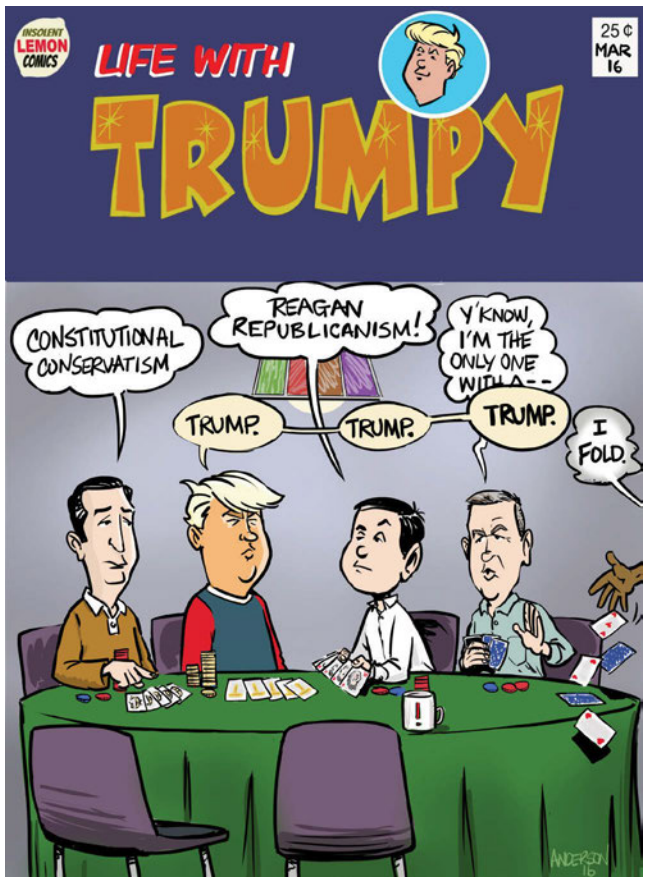
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CORRECTION

In last week's Monday, Feb. 29 print edition, in our "Profiles in Faith" story, we attributed a quote to wrong individual. The quote should read as follows: Sisterhood member (Saige) Smith reported, "The Sisterhood is the door that opened me up to my walk with Christ. It was the door that got me there. I would not be here without my small group. I know it was God's plan to give me this beginning."

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OPINION

WAR, PEACE, AND BERNIE SANDERS

Robert C. Koehler
PeaceVoice

We've had our first big vote, and I'm doing my best to dig Tulsi Gabbard's endorsement of Bernie Sanders out from beneath the pile of Super Tuesday numbers and media declarations of winners and losers.

As a Boston Globe headline put it: "Clinton and Trump are now the presumptive nominees. Get used to it."

But something besides winning and losing still matters, more than ever, in the 2016 presidential race. War and peace and a fundamental questioning of who we are as a nation are actually on the line in this race, or could be — for the first time since 1972 when George McGovern was the Democratic presidential nominee.

Embrace what matters deeply and there's no such thing as losing.

Gabbard, an Iraq war vet, a congresswoman from Hawaii, and "rising star" in the Democratic establishment, stepped down as vice-chair of the Democratic National Committee in order to endorse Sanders — because he's the only candidate who is not financially and psychologically tied to the military-industrial complex.

"As a veteran of two Middle East deployments, I know firsthand the cost of war," she said, cracking the mainstream silence on U.S. militarism. "As a vice chair of the DNC, I am required to stay neutral in democratic primaries, but I cannot remain neutral any longer. The stakes are just too high."

Because of Gabbard — only because of Gabbard — the multi-trillion-dollar monstrosity of U.S. militarism is getting a little mainstream media attention amid the reality-TV histrionics of this year's presidential race, the Donald Trump phenomenon and the spectacle of Republican insult-flinging.

As the results of Super Tuesday started coming in on Tuesday night, Gabbard was given a few minutes to talk on MSNBC. While Rachel Maddow wanted to discuss the risk her Sanders endorsement might have on her career; Gabbard insisted on addressing the slightly larger matter of our unchecked, resource-hemorrhaging military adventurism across the globe.

"War is a very real thing," she said. "If the Syrian war continues, we won't have the resources to fund important social programs. This isn't a question of the past — it's a question of today. Regime-change wars do nothing to strengthen our national security, but they do strengthen our enemies."

Fine. We'll return after these messages . . .

A short while later, the MSNBC analysts' attention snapped back to the Trump phenomenon. Someone opined: "The vast majority of Trump supporters are enamored of winning" far more than they care about the goofball issues Trump is supposedly running on, like the wall across the Mexican border and the ban on Muslims entering the country.

Maybe it's true, and maybe it's not, but I sense the mainstream media is a lot more comfortable with an issue-free presidential race, which is what the powers that be want, of course. The presidential election is supposed to be a distraction, not some kind of public accountability process.

The Sanders phenomenon, while as shocking and unexpected as the success of the Trump campaign, is far too substantive to garner a similar amount of media attention, let alone serious consideration of the issues he's bringing up. Yet remarkably, his call for social change — for the transformation of a "rigged economy" — has not receded to the margins, either.

So what happens next? Tulsi Gabbard's endorsement is the key. As Dave Lindorff recently wrote: "Sanders, who has been avoiding talking about the country's military budget and its imperialist foreign policy, should use the opportunity of Gabbard's defection from the DNC to announce that if elected he would immediately slash military spending by 25 percent, that he would begin pulling U.S. forces back from most of the 800 or more bases they occupy around the world, and that he would end a decades-long foreign policy of overthrowing elected leaders around the globe."

The shock waves generated by such a stance, from a candidate who already has 386 delegates, would be enormous. Conventional wisdom cries no, no, that's too much. No matter how much harm our wars have caused in the last decade, no matter how absurd a slice that war preparation — including nuclear weapons development — gouges from the national budget, the U.S. military, the planet's biggest polluter and most prolific terrorist, remains untouchable. The public has no say in these matters. The president has no say in these matters.

This delusion goes back to the Vietnam War and McGovern's loss to Richard Nixon. Since then, the Democrats have attempted to purge themselves of antiwar — or what perhaps should be called trans-military — thinking. In doing so, they've tied themselves to their own, and the country's, inevitable collapse.

The other option is transformation. This is the year it could begin.

Robert Koehler, syndicated by PeaceVoice, is a Chicago award-winning journalist and editor.

OPINION

TO FIND HOPE, LOOK AROUND YOU

Lee Hamilton
Contributor

These are very unhappy times in Washington. Relations between the executive and legislative branches are not just sour, but corrosive. Partisan paralysis and game-playing on Capitol Hill have become a hallmark of these times, as has the evident distaste our nation's leaders feel for one another.

It would be understandable to give in to despair, and a lot of Americans have done so. I have not, and for a simple reason: in our system there is always hope. Why? Because our representative democracy rests finally not on what politicians in Washington or in our state capitals do, but on what our citizens do.

The bedrock assumption of representative government is that Americans will make discriminating judgments about politicians and policies, and shoulder their responsibility as citizens to improve their corner of the world. The remarkable thing is, they often do.

More than anything else, what you see when ordinary Americans decide to get involved in a public issue is their common sense and good judgment, their fundamental decency, and their remarkable sense of fairness.

They recognize there are differences of opinion and that they have to be sorted through. They make decisions by and large based on hope, not fear or despair.

The sense that comes through when you watch Americans at work on public issues is their overwhelming desire to improve their community. Often this is reflected in concrete projects — a new bridge, a better school, a badly needed sewer system. But you can also see it in many people's cry for candidates who will set narrow interests and excessive partisanship aside, and work to improve the quality of life for all Americans.

We often think of representative government as a process in which the elected official educates constituents, but the reverse is usually even more the case. Americans understand the need for deal-making, compromise, and negotiation — and that to achieve change, they have to work through the system we have, which means educating and pushing political leaders.

This is why I have an underlying confidence in representative government. Americans are pragmatic. They recognize the complexity of the challenges we face, understand there are no simple answers to complex problems, and do not expect to get everything they want. My confidence in the system is built on citizens exercising their right to make this a stronger, fairer country.



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