The Cullman Tribune

VOLUME 144 • NUMBER 7 • FEBRUARY 16, 2017

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Alabama turns 200

Bicentennial kickoff set for March 3

Loretta Gillespie
Tribune Correspondent

CULLMAN – Plans for the upcoming Alabama 200, three-year bicentennial celebration are taking shape.

The statewide kickoff for the event is March 3, 2017, when towns and cities all over the state will initiate the event in various ways.

Cullman's event will be held at 2 p.m. at the old railroad depot, catty-corner from the Cullman County Museum. According to Bicentennial Celebration Chairman for Cullman County, Drew Green, Col. Cullmann will be the master of ceremonies for the event, sharing the spotlight with Mayor Woody Jacobs and Cullman County Commission Chairman Kenneth Walker.

"This is a celebration for the whole county," said Green, "The Wallace

P16

Cullman Middle School's Jadon Li wins Cullman County Spelling Bee



W.C. MANN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

P11

CCBOE staffers talk about mental health resources

W.C. Mann
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CULLMAN – Continuing our series on the suicide crisis in Cullman County, the Tribune sat down with the Cullman County Board of Education's (CCBOE) Learning Support Specialist Karen Pinion, Secondary Curriculum Coordinator Dr. Susan Patrick, and Instructional Programs Director Dr. Anita Kilpatrick, and asked them to explain the mental health resources available to students in the county system.

Jason Flatt Act

The Jason Flatt Act is a federal law that requires teacher in-service training to include youth suicide awareness and prevention.

Pinion explained, "This year, we have fully implemented the Jason Flatt Law, as required by law, from Kindergarten through 12th grade, every single

P10

'A short-term solution to a long-term problem'

Sheriff Gentry weighs in on mental health issues

W.C. Mann
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CULLMAN – In our continuing series on suicide and mental health, the Tribune sat down with Cullman County Sheriff Matt Gentry to get his perspective.

Sheriff Gentry began by noting the differences between true mental illness and temporary conditions brought on by substance abuse. The outcome for law enforcement, though, is pretty much the same in any case, he says.

Gentry explained, "The problem that we run into in law enforcement is that we respond to those calls to try and help the families, but the thing we're getting blocked at the most is there's nowhere to get people help. They cut all the funding to mental health, the state government did, and so there's nowhere to get people long-term treatment for their mental illness. So, in turn, you see them at home, not getting treatment, and they commit suicide.

"It's something that we face in law enforcement: it's calls that we see every day. Our main goal is to get people help, but there's not as many resources as there once was, because of the funding cuts. Until you get those avenues to get people help, then it's something we'll face.

"The main thing is, there's just nowhere to get people long-term treatment. There's avenues for short-term treatment, but not for long-term treatment. And if people have mental illness, they need long-term treatment. There's no money, resources or facilities to do that."

When deputies pick up someone who is mentally ill, what happens?

P14

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Inmate trash detail cleaning up county roads

Bradley Williams
CCSO

CULLMAN – Pretty weather and warm temperatures are back in the forecast and the Cullman County Inmate Trash Detail, being supervised by a Cullman County Sheriff's Deputy, has begun picking trash and litter up on Cullman County roads.

In just three days, the inmates have picked up more than a ton of trash including bottles, paper, tires, tarps, plastic and much more from County Road 1742.

"This program helps keep Cullman County beautiful; it also gives non-violent inmates something productive to do for their community besides just sitting in jail," said Cullman County Sheriff Matt Gentry.

"I also hope that if someone is driving down the road and thinking drugs or a life of crime is something they want to do, then if they see those inmates picking up trash they just might have second thoughts."

The sheriff's office already has a list of several roads where inmates will be working, but they've also set up an email where citizens can report roads that need attention: trash@cullmansheriff.org.

Walk MS: Cullman slated for March 18

Debra Bower
Contributed

CULLMAN – The annual Walk MS: Cullman event will take place on Saturday, March 18 at Heritage Park. Walk MS is an opportunity for people living with MS and those who care about them to connect, be inspired and raise critical funds for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society.

At Walk MS: Cullman, friends, loved ones and co-workers will team up to change the world for everyone affected by MS. Participants can choose from fully-accessible routes. After the walk, there will be live music and activities for the whole family.

Walk MS is the rallying point for the MS Movement, a time and a place for our communities to come together to raise funds and celebrate hope for the future. Funds raised during the walk support programs and services that directly benefit more than 7,000 families living with MS in Alabama and Mississippi.

"Walk MS: N. Alabama allows us to stand together against a disease that affects so much of our community," said Andrew Bell, chapter president.

"It is truly a privilege to be able to raise awareness and contribute to research efforts that are so dedicated to finding a cure. Plus, it really is a fun event. Whether you have a personal connection to MS or not, it's a great way to spend the day with your family. Because of the committed efforts of this community, there is hope for a future free of MS."

In 2016 alone, more than 315,000 people in nearly 550 locations across the country walked to create a world free of MS, raising nearly $50 million. Since 1988, Walk MS has raised more than $920 million to fund critical research and life-changing services to help people with MS live their best lives.

WHEN: March 18, 2017
WHERE: Heritage Park, Cullman
PARTICIPATION/VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION: Visit www.walkMS.org, call 256-457-5618 or email debra.bower@nmss.org.
WHY: Proceeds raised will support cutting-edge MS research and life-changing services to help people living with MS live their best lives.

About Multiple Sclerosis
Multiple sclerosis is an unpredictable, often disabling disease of the central nervous system that disrupts the flow of information within the brain, and between the brain and body.

Symptoms range from numbness and tingling to blindness and paralysis. The progress, severity and specific symptoms of MS in any one person cannot yet be predicted, but advances in research and treatment are leading to better understanding and moving us closer to a world free of MS.

Most people with MS are diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 50, with at least two to three times more women than men being diagnosed with the disease. MS affects more than 2.3 million worldwide.

About the National MS Society
The Society mobilizes people and resources so that everyone affected by multiple sclerosis can live their best lives as we stop MS in its tracks, restore what has been lost and end MS forever.

To fulfill this mission, the Society funds cutting-edge research, drives change through advocacy, facilitates professional education, collaborates with MS organizations around the world, and provides services designed to help people with MS and their families move their lives forward.

Last year alone, through our comprehensive nationwide network, the Society devoted $122.2 million to help more than one million individuals connect to the people, information and resources they need. To move closer to a world free of MS, the Society also invested $54 million to support new and ongoing research projects around the world.

Colony to host National Weather Service storm spotter class

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COLONY – On Thursday, March 2, the Town of Colony will host a storm spotter class presented by the Huntsville office of the National Weather Service (NWS) and sponsored by the Cullman County Emergency Management Agency (CEMA). The event will take place at the Colony Educational Complex, 151 Byars Rd, beginning at 6 p.m. NWS storm spotter training is free, and no pre-registration is required.

The NWS storm spotter program is known as SKYWARN, and is defined on the Huntsville office's website as:

"...the NWS program of trained volunteer weather spotters. SKYWARN spotters coordinate with local emergency management officials and send reports of weather based phenomena to the NWS.

"In addition to serving as a community's first line of defense against dangerous storms, spotters provide important information to warning forecasters who make critical warning decisions.

"SKYWARN storm spotters play a critical role of giving the NWS vital ground truth data, which helps the NWS perform our primary mission, to save lives and property."

SKYWARN training classes take approximately two hours, and cover the following topics:
• Basics of thunderstorm development
• Fundamentals of storm structure
• Identifying potential severe weather features
• Information to report
• How to report information
• Basic severe weather safety

Storm spotters are not "storm chasers." Storm spotters are not expected to drive into the paths of dangerous storms, rather, they observe and report information back to the CEMA and/or NWS when needed.

For more information, contact CEMA at 256-739-5410, or visit the NWS Huntsville SKYWARN site http://www.weather.gov/hun/skywarn.

Colony to host Black History Month celebration

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COLONY – The town of Colony will celebrate Black History Month at a special event at the Colony Community Center, on Friday, Feb. 24, beginning at 5 p.m.

Colony is a historically African-American town, settled by former slaves during the Reconstruction Era (1865-73). Today, around 270 people call the town home; approximately 90 percent are African-American. Originally a farming community, the town now sees its single largest block of workers commute to manufacturing jobs.

Educators, healthcare workers and social service workers also make up a substantial group. While students now commute to Hanceville, the town did at one time have its own school.

According to Black History Chairperson Ethel Alexander, the entire history of Colony will be on display at the Community Center.

She explained, "Participants will consist of the youngest child to the oldest senior. We will celebrate the many aspects of the community, from past to present. We will celebrate school teachers, mayors, servicemen, midwives, farmers, professionals of all walks of life, along with memorabilia. We are inviting everyone that would like to learn something new or just help celebrate with us this great event."

The event is open to the public, and all visitors are welcome. The Colony Community Center is located at 538 Colony Road, Hanceville.

The Cullman Tribune
Cullman County's Oldest Business, Serving the area since 1874
Publication Number USPS-139-700
Telephone: 256-739-1351 Fax: 1-256-739-4422
Humble Roots, LLC
Published Weekly at 219 2nd Avenue SE, Cullman, Alabama 35055
Entered as periodical material at the Cullman Post Office
Periodical postage paid at Cullman, Alabama 35055

POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGE TO:
The Cullman Tribune
219 Second Avenue SE
Cullman, Alabama 35055
Email Address: news@culltrib.com

ANNUALLY BASED RATES
Cullman.....$40.00
Outside Cullman.....$50.00
Local Senior Citizens.....$37.00
Outside Cullman County Senior Rates.....$46.00

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City revenue up, expenses down; cuts to 2 big projects

Andrew Cryer
Tribune Correspondent

CULLMAN – Sales tax revenue was up by .5 percent, while expenses were down 7.5 percent in the city of Cullman for the last quarter of 2016, as compared to the same time in 2015.

Council member Jenny Folsom, who delivered the financial report at this week's Cullman City Council meeting, thanked Mayor Woody Jacobs, as well as the city department heads for tightening the budget. Folsom says she didn't expect expenses to fall; in fact, she expected them to be up with the recent raises that the City has given to employees; however, not only is city revenue rising, but so are requests for business licenses and building permits. Folsom reported revenue from business licenses has jumped by more than 324 percent and building permit revenue by almost 262 percent.

"It's a sign that people are building and that things are happening in Cullman," stated Folsom.

Also reported was that unemployment has fallen to 4.9 percent in the city of Cullman, which is the third lowest unemployment rate in the state of Alabama.

The other big items of the night were the cutbacks on two big projects.

Fire Station No. 3- Two change orders were approved, reducing the cost by almost half a million dollars- $412,179.11.

The new station will be located on Alabama Highway 157 next to Merchants Bank. Eidson & Sons is handling the project. Eidson originally bid just more than $5.2 million. The new amount is now just more than $4.8 million.

Street Department Facility - Three change orders were approved, reducing the original bid from Building Construction Associates, Inc. by $239,800 and adding $332,500 for an extra storage building to be built to store building equipment and materials.

Police Chief Kenny Culpepper was given approval to competitively bid for an SUV, which will be used by the Cullman City Police Department, for the estimated amount of $32,184.

A request from Ben Petty of Scout Marketing for a special permit to shoot a video in downtown Cullman to raise awareness of narcolepsy was approved.

The video will be shot on Saturday, Feb. 17 from 11 a.m-9 p.m.

The council also granted the request of Stephen Gannon, a representative of 412 Public House LLC, for a restaurant alcohol license. The request received a favorable recommendation from the City of Cullman Alcohol Review Committee. The Public House, name subject to change, will be located at 412 Second Ave SE.

Other resolutions

A bid for a bucket truck from Cullman Leasing, LLC, was approved in the budgeted amount of $37,000.

A 15-passenger vehicle will be purchased from Eckenrod Ford in the budgeted amount of $33,069.

Jacobs was authorized to purchase property adjacent to Heritage Park and the Cullman Wellness and Aquatic Center.

This will cost the city $1.54 million, and the property will be managed by the Cullman City Parks and Recreation Department (CP&R).

Jacobs was also authorized to enter into a master planning agreement, representing the City of Cullman, with Renta Urban Land Design, LLC. This master plan entails a green space plan as well as the creation of new parks to encourage walking. CP&R will spearhead this project and further developments thereof.

Lastly, Jacobs was given the authority to negotiate the purchase of property for public purposes. Council member Johnny Cook abstained from the vote that otherwise passed unanimously.

Bartlett hopeful Doss Bridge will re-open next week; Good Hope discusses finances

Heather Mann
Tribune Correspondent

GOOD HOPE – The Good Hope City Council spent their first February meeting focusing on finances. After and invocation from John Harris and the approval of the last meeting's minutes, questions were raised about the January financial report. Councilman Harris, in charge of finances, was concerned about an issue regarding excise taxes from the Pilot gas station; specifically, Harris said they have not gotten any for a few months. City Clerk Christie Chamblee explained that, due to an address misunderstanding, the taxes had been going to the City of Cullman rather than Good Hope. She said that the problem was being fixed, and the financial report was approved.

Individual council member reports came next. Harris simply stated that all numbers were up, that they had generated about $10,000 from the hard liquor tax, and that his only concern was the excise tax issue.

Maxie Jones, Roads, stated that work on Doss Bridge on Beech Grove Road is still underway and that an inspector would come by to examine the bridge soon.

"They're supposed to get the first two layers of concrete done tomorrow," said Mayor Jerry Bartlett, who is hopeful that, weather-permitting, the last layer will then be able to be completed, along with sod and finishing touches. Bartlett anticipates the bridge to be re-opened sometime next week.

The Utilities report made the council aware of several elevated manhole covers in need of repairs due to eroded grout.

Price estimates for the repair work are being gathered. Also pointed out was the need to find a camera to examine a sewer line around Lindsay Road, which has no manholes nearby, because of a high amount of water flowing through (approx. 50 gallons per minute). The water is clean water rather than sewage, so its source is unknown.

The Community report had nothing new to offer, so the reports moved lastly to Taft Dillashaw of Parks. He stated that spring ball sign-ups would be going on for another week and that even though numbers were a bit low, there was no need to worry at the moment.

If numbers are still low after the week, Dillashaw will extend the deadline. He also brought out pictures of a proposed new field dressing machine and gave a $7,500 price estimate. The council was satisfied with the proposal and approved a motion to purchase it for the fields.

After the reports, Bartlett introduced Resolution No. 004-2017, which concerned an agreement with SmartFox Solutions. For a set-up fee of $400 and a $200 monthly fee that covers any services performed, SmartFox will provide IT support, perform daily file backups and monitor virus protection, among other services. Chamblee told all present about an Alabama municipality that had fallen prey to ransomware and chosen to lose all their files rather than pay $33,000 to get them back.

She said she worried about what would happen if Good Hope were to suffer the same thing and felt that the SmartFox offer came at a great time. The resolution passed unanimously.

Good Hope Fire & Rescue requested funding for new jackets and pants, and a motion passed to donate $10,000 from the City's alcohol tax fund to the fire department.

Bartlett then showed the council a short video about the Mower Max boom mower and asked the council to consider purchasing a new one.

Bartlett said the Mower Max will have increased stability and maneuverability compared to the City's old mower, and stated it will be necessary in the summer months when bushes begin growing out next to the roads and impairing the side-vision of drivers trying to pull out. The estimated cost for a new Mower Max is $150,000, and councilwoman Susan Eller raised concerns over how to pay for it. The budget originally allowed around $50,000 for a used boom mower, but it was argued that a new one will likely require less maintenance. Bartlett proposed using alcohol funds, but Eller said she didn't want to put such a large dent in the fund. After some deliberating, Eller made a motion to take $75,000 from the alcohol fund and the same amount from the general fund to pay for it, and the motion passed.

The last few minutes of the meeting were spent in short consideration over the issue of new roads and possible effects on nearby property, although further discussion was tabled until a later date.

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Lady Eagles close out home schedule in style; drop Altamont 87-42 to punch ticket to Wallace

Josh McBrayer
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BREMEN – It was the last time Emme Willoughby stepped foot on the Cold Springs floor as a Lady Eagle, and she made the most of it, dropping in 25 in an 87-42 drumming of the Altamont Lady Knights and assuring her team a spot in the Northwest Regional at Wallace State Community College that tips off Thursday.

Willoughby scored the first of her 25 with an easy basket mere seconds into the game to give the Lady Eagles a quick lead. Altamont responded with a bucket and the score went back and forth for the first half of the quarter. With less than four minutes left in the first, Elizabeth Hill drilled a three to put the Lady Eagles up 11-8, and they did not relinquish the lead again.

Willoughby closed the quarter with six straight, only interrupted by a three from Lauren Perry. At the end of one, the Lady Eagles led 17-13.

In the second, Aubry Negron got Cold Springs on the board first to extend the lead to six. Neely Ellison followed with two of her own as the Lady Eagles started to pull away.

Six different Lady Eagles scored in the quarter, pushing the lead into the teens to take a 41-28 lead to the half.

The second half was a mirror of the first with Cold Springs playing an oppressive defense and hitting their open shots.

With no hot clock in post-season play, the Lady Eagles flirted with 100 for the second straight game and defeated the Lady Knights by 45.

Willoughby led all scorers with 25. Hill followed with 19.

Camryn Crider was also in double digits with 10. Prisca McAnnally added eight, Ellison seven, Negron six, Zoe Strawbridge six, Sadie Terry four and Kinley Campbell two.

Cold Springs will play Red Bay Thursday at 6 p.m. at Wallace State.

Leyton Seal's basket sends Good Hope Lady Raiders to Northwest Regional

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GOOD HOPE – Good Hope forward Leyton Seal converted a missed 3-pointer by Savanna Derrick into a game winner for the Lady Raiders, pulling out a thrilling 40-38 victory over Winfield in the Northwest Sub-Regional playoff game Monday night.

Winfield tied the game at 38-38 with 35 seconds left on a pair of free throws by Victoria Fetter.

Good Hope patiently worked the ball into frontcourt and set up for a game-winning play.

Derrick, the freshman floor leader, shot a three from the right wing with seven seconds to go.

Seal, a junior forward, along with junior center Kate Kent, got on the left side near the basket for a possible rebound if Derrick missed.

Seal got inside position on a Winfield defender, got the rebound and had a fine pick from Kent to free her toward the basket.

Seal banked the shot off the glass with 1.7 seconds left.

Winfield did not call a timeout and was unable to get the ball downcourt to try and tie the game.

March Madness ensued on the floor at Good Hope Gymnasium with a postgame celebration, featuring players, coaches, cheerleaders and the Good Hope student body.

Seal described the game winner as being in the right place at the right time. "The ball came off the rim to me and Kate (Kent) set a pick for me. I was thinking of shooting it off the glass, which I did. I have never done something like this before. It feels great."

The finish by the Lady Raiders capped off an evening in which Good Hope jumped on the runner-up from 4A, Area 11 early.

By the end of the first period, Good Hope was ahead 14-4 as Kent closed out the quarter scoring on a putback as the buzzer sounded.

Not a lot of offense came from the Lady Raiders in the second. But back-to-back baskets by Alex Stansell proved invaluable, with the Lady Raiders getting into foul trouble.

Sadie Abbott had two fouls before the first ended, with Ericka Woodall and Seal getting their second before the half closed out.

The Good Hope defense kept Winfield from scoring from the field for the final 5:00 of the second quarter and carried a 20-13 lead into the locker room for halftime.

Woodall ripped a three to start the third, giving Good Hope a 23-13 advantage. But Winfield answered on a 10-2 run and closed the margin to 25-23 with 3:55 to play in the stanza.

It was time for a Good Hope run and the offense responded with an 11-2 margin and led 36-25, entering the fourth.

Kent hit four from the line in the run while Seal scored on a right wing three, Woodall scored on a steal and layup and Amber Sterling hit a baseline jumper from the left side.

But the fourth quarter was a game of survival for the Lady Raiders. A free throw from Derrick made it 37-29 Good Hope with 4:12 to play.

The Lady Raiders failed to score from the perimeter for more than 4:00, along with missing a couple of free throws.

Winfield rallied with three field goals in crunch time, one from long range by Andrea Harbin and the game-tying free throws from Fetter with 35 seconds to play.

Winfield's offense never touched the ball the rest of the way, with Good Hope showing poise, despite being under a lot of pressure attacking the Lady Pirate defense.

Seal worked her way to the opposite side of the ball, and the rest is now history for Good Hope, with 13 wins and a berth to the Northwest Regional.

Seal had a superb outing with 17 points, while Kent scored 10, Stansell and Abbott added four each, Woodall and Sterling two each and one by Derrick.

Winfield ends the season at 20-10. Leading the Lady Pirates was Harbin with 15 and C'era Beck with 10.

Good Hope plays Saturday at 9 a.m. vs. the winner of the West Limestone-Wilson game in the Northwest Regional at Wallace State.

Road to state title goes through Holly Pond: Broncos destroy Carbon Hill, 123-46

Josh McBrayer
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HOLLY POND – It was a banner night for the Holly Pond Broncos as seniors Dawson Foust, Matt Cahoon, Drew Jones, Tanner Duke, Jacob Jones, Andrew Shaw, Michael Lambert and Bailey Smith took the floor at the Pond for the last time as Broncos, and did they ever make the most if it, taking out the Carbon Hill Bulldogs by a score of 123-46.

"Seven of these guys have been in our program since seventh grade, Andrew Shaw moved in," Holly Pond head coach Mitch Morris said about his special group of seniors.

"This is the most seniors I have had in a team and they are all special. It has been a great joy being with them the last four years, seeing them develop and seeing them mesh together. They get along and they love each other so much. They care for each other and they want each other to be successful. It has been just a joy to watch."

With it being the last time the Broncos seniors would suit up in their home gym, the cheerleaders and fans lined the court with a spirit line to welcome the Broncos to the floor.

After the pre-game festivities, it was business as usual for the green and white.

After Cahoon won the tip for the Broncos for the 31st straight time this season, Foust hit an easy lay-up open the game. The Carbon Hill Bulldogs answered with an easy basket from Hunter Nesmith. Drew Jones glided through the lane on the next Bronco possession, kissing it off the glass to put Holly Pond back on top.

The Broncos cleared the boards on the other end of the floor, leading to an alley-oop from Smith to Cahoon, who threw it down two-handed to make the score 6-2. This was as close as Carbon Hill got for the rest of the game. With points by Griffin Morris, Caleb Jones, Smith and Shaw, the Broncos went on a tear, going up 34-11 after one. It got a bit chippy in the second, with some hard hits and some frustration as 37 fouls were called in the first half, but the Broncos stayed the course and owned it. They put up a staggering 72 points in the first half, shattering the old Bronco record for most points in a half. Holly Pond 72, Carbon Hill 31 at the half.

Holly Pond opened the third on a 12-2 run. The points continued to pour in for the Broncos and at the 2:02 mark, Duke hit a jumper to roll the scoreboard over to 100 for the third straight game. Caleb Jones closed out the quarter with four straight to give the Broncos a 104-37 lead going to the fourth.

With 1:20 left to play in the fourth quarter, Morris drained a pair of free throws to move the score to 119-44, breaking the all-time Broncos single-game scoring record for the second time in three games. The Broncos went on to finish the game by a final of 123-46.

"That's a great feeling," Morris said of getting past the sub-regional round, where the Bronco season has ended the last two years. "Coming into (tonight's game), I was thinking back to the last two years where we have been in this same spot and for some reason we didn't win those ballgames, so I was nervous all day. I felt confident about our team but I was nervous. When we jumped out to the early lead like we did in the first quarter, it started to ease up a little bit," Morris said with a smile.

Holly Pond hits the hardwood again Saturday at 4:30 p.m. at Wallace State Community College versus Lauderdale County in the 3A Northwest Regional.

Northwest sub-regional scores and Northwest regional schedule

Johnny Thornton
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CULLMAN COUNTY – The Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) Northwest Regional tournament begins on Thursday, Feb. 16 at Wallace State Community College's Tom Drake Coliseum.

MONDAY SUB-REGIONAL SCORES

- 1A Girls: Holy Spirit 78, Addison 54
- 2A Girls: Cold Springs 87, Altamont 42
- 4A Girls: Good Hope 40, Winfield 38
- 5A Girls: Fairview 55, Pleasant Grove 48
- 5A Girls: Wenonah 83, West Point 54

TUESDAY SUB-REGIONAL SCORES

- 2A Boys: Cleveland 66, Cold Springs 50
- 3A Boys: Holly Pond 123, Carbon Hill 50
- 3A Boys: Locust Fork 68, Hanceville 64 (OT)
- 5A Boys: Fairfield 51, West Point 37
- 5A Boys: Wenonah 67, Fairview 41

NORTHWEST REGIONAL GIRLS' SCHEDULE

- Cold Springs vs. Red Bay on Thursday, Feb. 16 at 6 p.m.
- Good Hope vs. West Limestone on Saturday, Feb. 18 at 9 a.m.
- Fairview vs. Lawrence County on Monday, Feb. 20 at noon

NORTHWEST REGIONAL BOYS' SCHEDULE

- Holly Pond (30-1) vs. Lauderdale County on Saturday, Feb. 18 at 4:30 p.m.

Upsets common in prep playoffs

Johnny Thornton
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CULLMAN – Upsets are a regular occurrence in post-season Alabama High School Athletic Association basketball play. Through the first segment of this year's play-off format, 15 of them have occurred in hotly contested area tournament games.

The Tribune was on hand to report on a pair of them in girls' area championship bouts.

On Wednesday, the Good Hope Lady Raiders played with poise in the fourth quarter and stole the 4A, Area 10 title from the grasp of the Dora Lady Bulldogs 49-46.

Another upset came on Friday evening when the Decatur Lady Raiders started strong and turned back the Hartselle Lady Tigers on their floor 49-41 in the 6A, Area 15 championship.

Thirteen of the 15 upsets were in the finals of area tournaments, with teams trying to qualify for the Northwest Regional.

It's an even status with eight taking place in the varsity division and seven coming from girls' games.

Those who suffered a loss were hosting area tournament competition. Most of the teams that had the opportunity to be the area tournament site, did it in the regular season for finishing first without a loss.

There was one exception. Dora and Good Hope split in the regular season, so a coin toss was needed to determine the host. Good Hope lost the toss, but proved they could go down to Walker County and return home area champs.

Decatur's Lady Red Raiders had their biggest victory of the season on Friday.

A team that split six area games with two losses to Hartselle coming by a margin around 10 points, they proved they had everything to gain and nothing to lose.

Jumping out ahead was vital for Decatur, especially facing a large crowd from the Hartselle student section and the Hartselle side having better than a 2-1 advantage in attendance.

Decatur played good enough to take home the area title and Hartselle was never able to get into rhythm.

Hartselle relied on Morgan County Tournament MVP Moriah Taylor in the scoring category. She had 14 points by halftime, the rest of her team delivered just three.

Two other players with scoring potential, Lindsay Berry and Anna Mathis, struggled all night trying to get consistent on the offensive side. Berry managed two in the game with Mathis hitting nine, scoring once in the opening half.

Despite the sluggish offense, Hartselle was able to reduce a 30-17 halftime deficit to 41-37 with 4:16 remaining in the game when Mathis drove to the basket and scored on a patented left handed shot.

That was the last field goal the Lady Tigers converted. They had another dry spell, and Decatur scored three baskets in a span of 2:00 to open the lead to 47-37 with some Hartselle fans starting to head toward the exits.

Hartselle was trying to return to the Northwest Region and defend its 6A title. The Lady Tigers qualified last year by winning a sub-regional on the road in Birmingham, then upsetting a highly-ranked Austin squad in the championship at Wallace State.

Berry was the hero for the Lady Tigers in 2016, hitting the game winner in a huge upset on the floor of Tom Drake Coliseum.

The winner of this area was trying to avoid a sub-regional meeting with No. 1 ranked Hazel Green. Hazel Green won the Area 16 title, defeating No. 4 ranked Athens 69-53 Friday night.

Decatur will host Athens in the sub-regional while Hartselle now has to travel to Hazel Green Monday in order to extend its season for at least one more game after the next segment of the playoffs.

Winning an area championship allows the girls' and varsity teams to have one more game on campus when the sub regionals are played Monday night for girls and Tuesday for varsity.

The administrations at Good Hope and Decatur now have work to do during this weekend to get things ready to host a sub-regional, when many expected these two programs to be on the road.

It's the old cliché of "the thrill of victory" and the "agony of defeat," when these moments become real when many don't think it's possible.

For the 15 teams to go on the road and win in area tournament play, one victory can salvage a season and create hope that there are still plenty of wins to be captured.

March Madness is on full display in the month of February for basketball in the AHSAA. More will be expected this coming week from the sub-regionals and the Northwest Regional. All we can do is sit back and watch it happen.

Fairview advances to regionals for 3rd straight year

Sammy Confer
Tribune Correspondent

FAIRVIEW – Fairview looked to punch their ticket to the Northwest Regionals for the third consecutive season, but it was not an easy road to get there as they took on the Pleasant Grove Lady Spartans Monday night. It was not the prettiest of performances for the Lady Aggies, but they got hot at the right time and hit just enough free throws to win, 55-48, to clinch a spot at Wallace State.

McKinna Yearwood got the scoring started for Fairview with a 3-pointer. Aylliah Curry hit a layup to get Pleasant Grove on the scoreboard. Yearwood nailed another three to give Fairview an early 6-2 lead, but Curry hit a three and Destiny Garrett hit a layup to give the Lady Spartans a 7-6 lead. Behind a three by Jada Golden, and layups by Abby Schnittker and Taylor Yeager, Fairview finished the quarter on a 7-2 run to take a 13-9 lead after one.

A Raven Hand three cut the deficit to 13-12 to start off the second quarter, but each team turned it over on their next possessions. After that, Fairview pounded the ball inside to Abbi Taylor, who scored the next seven points for the Lady Aggies, the first on a free throw, during a 7-2 run, to increase the lead to 20-14. The Lady Spartans countered with a mini 5-0 run to cut the lead back to one. Curry gave Pleasant Grove a 21-20 run with a layup, but Maci Yeager nailed a jumper before the buzzer sounded to give Fairview a 22-21 lead at the half.

After Taylor increased the lead to 29-25 on a layup with 4:49 remaining in the third quarter, Fairview widened it to 34-27 on a Golden short jumper and a Taylor Yeager three from the right wing off a Lady Spartan turnover and widened it to nine on a pair of Taylor free throws. Pleasant Grove answered with a 6-2 run of their own as Takia Bradberry got a loose ball and laid it up and in before the buzzer sounded to cut the deficit to 38-33 entering the final quarter.

Yearwood nailed another three to widen the lead to 41-35 with 6:37 remaining in the game. Garrett scored the next four points for Pleasant Grove to cut the lead to 41-39. Fairview answered on another Taylor layup and another Taylor Yeager three to increase the lead to 46-39. Garrett and Curry helped lead a 6-0 Lady Spartan run to cut the deficit to one. But they were not able to grab the lead as Taylor added another layup and Fairview hit seven free throws at the end to hold on and advance to Wallace on Monday afternoon at noon to play Lawrence County, who squeezed by Lee tonight, 51-50.

Taylor had 15 points, 14 rebounds and three steals for Fairview. Yearwood also finished with 15 points, three rebounds and two assists. Taylor Yeager ended up with 11 points, four rebounds and two assists. Golden finished with eight points and six rebounds. They improve to 27-6 on the season.

"I thought Taylor, Abbi and McKinna hit huge shots during the game," Fairview coach Mary Lauren Hartline said. "These girls have worked really hard, and I am glad to see them get this experience."

But she was not happy with her team's performance at the free-throw line. They shot 9-of-20 from there.

She added, "I am really disappointed with our free-throw performance. We normally shoot better than this."

Garrett finished with 14 points, six rebounds and six steals for Pleasant Grove, who ends the season with a 24-8 record. Curry had 13 points, seven rebounds and two steals. Bradberry ended up with eight points and six rebounds.

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News from the Pond

Jimmie Dean Carnell
Tribune Contributor



Good morning Tribune readers and families. Welcome to another week of unsettled weather in the Heart of Dixie. On one day, we reach almost seventy degrees and at night we are down to twenty-six degrees. I am not at all surprised that teachers and pupils alike are missing days in school, due to colds, viruses, the flu and other illnesses. Hope that everyone's ills become better when springtime arrives.

In this past week, there was a red-letter day for the Prime-Time singers on Thursday. We were part of the East Cullman Baptist Association Senior Valentine's party at the Duck River Baptist Church.

We presented our program on "Love." It turned out to be very good, with good food, good fellowship and a great speaker on the new Duck River Dam.

With this event under our belt, so to speak - now we begin to work on the next program which will be at the New Hope North Baptist Church.

Speaking of this past week - can you remember a small-town country basketball varsity boys team scoring over 100 points in two games in a season?

I can't remember any team in the county being this together in the way they are playing.

Three of the five starters on the Holly Pond High School varsity basketball team plus the head coach are regular attendees at our local church, First Baptist Church in Holly Pond. It is very unusual for any of them to miss attending a service here. They don't brag during the morning services, but you can see smiles on their faces almost anytime. They are very mature and dignified, humble young men.

I can also understand why Coach Morris didn't have a lot to say after last Friday night's 101-49 victory over the Locust Fork team from Blount County - they just don't brag.

It has also become a tradition for our team to win their area title due to the dedication of the coaches and fine young men. From an innocent bystander, the Bronco pride has become the main topic in our community. Keep up the good work, Broncos!

We are all so very proud of you and looking forward to your winning ways as you climb the next rung on the ladder to the state championship.

If, like me, you are a basketball junkie, the time is growing near for all the upcoming tournaments on the college level.

There have been several outstanding games on television lately.

The Holly Pond Civitans are beginning to work on their upcoming pastor appreciation event. This is a yearly event with pastors and associate pastors attending and being honored by the local Civitan Club. More on this event will be published later. A sure sign that springtime is now too far away is the blooming of the daffodils, and other flowers and shrubs. Time is going by fast and Wallace State Lions have already started playing their baseball games. Good luck to all teams as they begin baseball season.

Until next week, be safe and keep well and warm.

Tribune Files from Yesteryear

From The Files Of 1957

Cold Springs Boy Makes Record With Corn Crop

Jack Rice, President of Cold Springs F.F.A. Chapter, proved that corn can be economically grown in this section. Last year, he raised 135 bushels of corn on three acres, at the cost of 22 ¼ cents per bushel. The cost included: rent, $2.00 per acre, man labor, 10 cents an hour, horse labor at 5 cents per hour and seed and tools at cost. He used no fertilizer under his corn, but side-dressed with nitrate of soda.

He also made 2 ½ bales of cotton on three acres. His improvement projects were: one to two acre of crimson clover and home improvement.

Hanceville Happenings

Miss Ruth Glasscock has recently received a scholarship at Alabama College, Montevallo. She will leave soon to begin her studies for the second semester.

C.H. Gray spent Monday in Birmingham.

Mr. and Mrs. Felix Harris and children and Mrs. J.D. Harris, of Birmingham, were the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Herman Thomas on Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Frankwood, of Cleveland and Miss Audie Compton, of Oneonta, spent the weekend with Mr. and Mrs. W.K. Compton.

James B. Kelly left Sunday for a business trip to Evansville, Indiana.

Mrs. Janie Harris and daughter, Lorene, visited relatives in Cullman, on Sunday.

Mrs. J.S. Harmon returned to her home at Elmore on Monday, after a visit to Mr. and Mrs. W.M. Gantt. She was accompanied home by Miss Nina Gantt, who will be her guest this week.

Mr. and Mrs. Albert Thomas spent the weekend at Hayden with the latter's mother, Mrs. Henry Ratliff.

James Wood, of Montevallo, spent the weekend with relatives.

From The Files Of 1939

John W. Mitchell, one of the county's beloved pioneer citizens, was claimed by death on Monday noon, February 6th, following several weeks of illness. Mr. Mitchell was nearly 75 years of age, at the time his passing.

The deceased was born at New Prospect, near Arkadelphia. His principal occupation was farming. Over ten years ago, he moved to Cullman and for several years was employed by Mr. R.E. Lee.

The remaining years have been spent in retirement.

Funeral services were conducted by Reverend J.E. Marion, assisted by Reverend S.J. Calvert, from the residence of Judge Homer F. Mitchell, at 2:00 p.m., on Wednesday afternoon.

Interment followed in the Protestant Cemetery, with Moss-Scheuing in charge. Pallbearers were: G.W. Ponder, Jack Tucker, Mayor J.A. Dunlap, Doctor T.A. Robinson, R.E. Lee and L.L. Thompson.

Mount Pisgah News

Mr. and Mrs. Russell Hale and Mr. and Mrs. Milton Brown called on Mr. and Mrs. Grady Jackson on Sunday afternoon. Miss Wanda Dye spent the night with Mr. and Mrs. Hoyt Grimes, on Friday night.

Mr. and Mrs. Grady Dye, Mrs. Jim Farley and Mrs. Earl Farley called on Mr. and Mrs. Bud Huddleston on Sunday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Waldrop were the Sunday dinner guests of Mr. and Mrs. John Ivey.

Miss Alma Benefield was the Sunday dinner guest of Miss Ozell Talley.

Elmer Farley, Winifred Guess, Ernest Farley, Wanda Dye, Hershell Talley, Pauline Huddleston, Eloise Talley, Truman Cook and Iris Hanes motored to Guntersville Dam on Sunday afternoon.

Misses Pauline and Elsie Huddleston spent the night with Mr. and Mrs. Henry Huddleston on Saturday night.

BILLY BOB'S STORIES AND STUFF

To buy or not to buy, that is not the question

Bill King
Tribune Contributor



This one is for the guys. That's because Valentine's Day is coming and I'm afraid some of you guys out there are headed for big trouble. First, you need to understand that this holiday was created for ladies, not guys. What man wants a dozen cut roses or needs a box of chocolates? Another reason this column is for the guys, is because this may well be the only thing you get for Valentine's Day.

Valentine's Day may be the day of love but it may also be the day of misunderstandings and hurt feelings. When your wife, sweetheart, girlfriend, or whatever she is, says, "Oh, you don't have to buy me anything," what you don't want to buy is that line. She does not actually mean that and guys you better be astute enough to understand that or you could end up paying for more than you bargained.

Now in case you are one who says, "Well, she knows that I love her so what else could she possibly want?" Flowers, candy, cards, or a new red Mercedes Benz convertible! As the Bard once said, "To buy or not to buy, that is the question." Okay, maybe he said something similar and this was what the Bill said.

To buy or not to buy, is not the question. The question is what to buy. Did you read the part earlier about misunderstandings and hurt feelings? You had better buy something and you had better not buy just anything. No, money will not do for this holiday.

By the way guys, you think you are so smart buying that big box of candy for her every year.

You had better believe that she knows you only buy that thing so you can eat most of it and yes she knows exactly how many pieces she has eaten and that you ate the rest.

We've talked in years past about buying things like a new set of tires, or worse yet a new transmission for your truck and trying to pass them off as her Valentine's present.

I have only four words here: misunderstanding and hurt feelings. Move over Rover!

Here are a few other bad gift ideas for you. Back at Christmas I wrote about The Star Registry, where you can pay to have a star named after your loved one. I've decided to open my own service called,

The Sand Registry. For one low price, in two payments, I will name a grain of sand down at Gulf Shores after your sweetheart. So far I haven't had any business, but I think it simply hasn't caught on yet. You can also have a manatee named after her, but I'm not sure how she might tell which manatee is hers. I heard the other day that The Bronx Zoo lets you name a Madagascar hissing cockroach in honor of your sweetie.

They will send them a digital certificate with the roach's name and a special Valentine's Day message, all for only ten dollars!

Now if that's not a bargain, I don't know what is! By the way, I do know a good marriage counselor if you need one.

If you love somebody, you want to give them something that says so. Do you know that God loves you? God loves you so much that, according to John 3:16, he gave his only begotten son for you.

That my friends, is a whole lot of love! In comparison, a dozen roses sound like a pretty good deal. I probably would not suggest the hissing cock roaches.

Bill King can be reached at bkpreach@yahoo.com or 334-745-0588 (office) or 334-728-5514 (cell).

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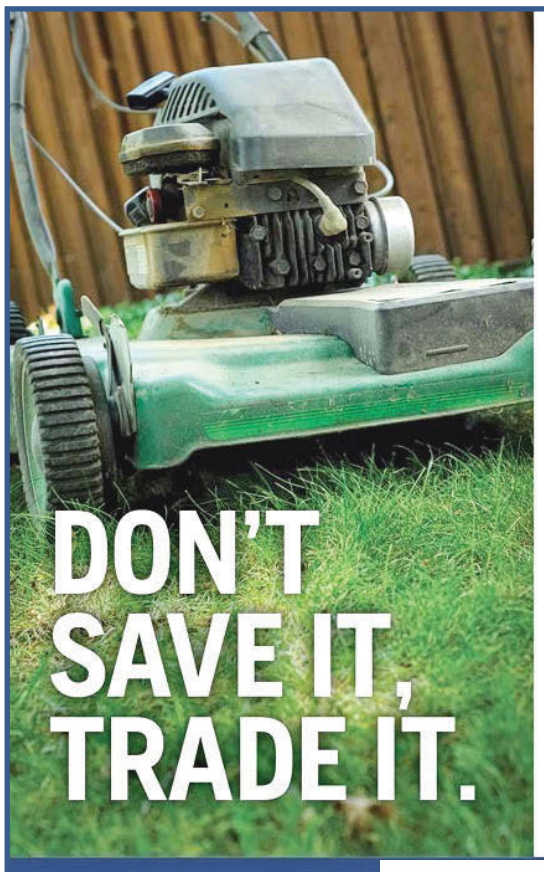
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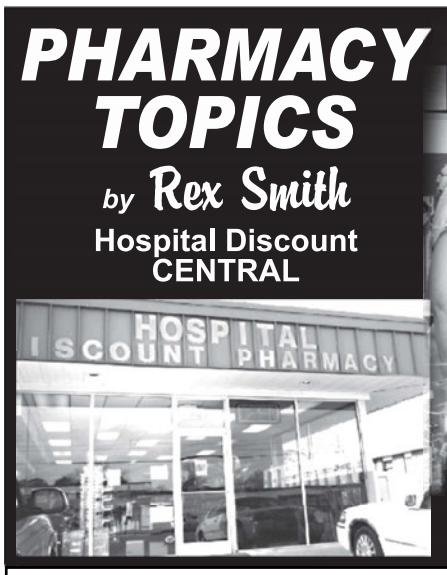
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PHARMACY TOPICS

by Rex Smith

Hospital Discount CENTRAL





Pictured L-R: Vanessa Patton, Becky Cook, Becky Burks and Rex Smith, RPh

Schizophrenia is a common cause of incapacity and is ranked as the third-most-disabling illness subsequent to dementia and quadriplegia. Nearly 75 percent of persons with schizophrenia have continuing problems with recurrent psychotic episodes. Antipsychotics are effective in both the acute and chronic (maintenance) treatment of schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders. They differ in their pharmacology, kinetics, overall efficacy/effectiveness and tolerability, but perhaps more importantly, response and tolerability differs between patients. This variability of individual response means that there is no clear first line antipsychotic suitable for all patients. While there is increasing proof that most atypical antipsychotics offer benefits over typical antipsychotics, few long-term trials have openly matched second-generation antipsychotic drugs (SGAs). Since, in comparison with older atypical antipsychotics, like olanzapine and risperidone, aripiprazole and quetiapine are among the newest and safest SGAs, therefore in the present assessment the safety and efficacy of them had been compared with each other in a non-western patient population. Based on the outcomes of the current study, no significant difference was evident between aripiprazole and quetiapine regarding improvement of positive and negative symptoms of schizophrenia. For example, while both aripiprazole and quetiapine demonstrated some efficacy in alleviation of positive symptoms, their efficacy was not so pronounced with respect to negative symptoms. General psychopathology and insight, too, revealed significant improvement with aripiprazole and quetiapine in comparison to other drugs.

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THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE
February 16, 2017

Inside Cullman's mental health system

W.C. Mann
craig@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – For our last planned story on mental health and the frightening 2017 suicide surge, the Tribune spoke with Chris Van Dyke, executive director of the Cullman Mental Health Authority/Mental Healthcare of Cullman (CMHA) about how the mental healthcare system works here and around north Alabama.

In response to the recent rash of suicides, Van Dyke was open about the confusion. He explained how suicide is a multifaceted problem with no simple explanation.

"It's tragic," he began. "I really don't know what's going on. I don't remember ever having anything like this. We're all looking for answers, and there's not really one clear answer; which is what research shows.

"Suicide is very complex; so many factors go into it. We haven't been able to point to anything specifically that's happening."

The first article in this series presented a list of risk factors and warning signs of impending danger. Of these factors, Van Dyke pointed out that people cannot often simply point to one to define a victim's problem.

"A lot of times, it's a combination of factors," he explained. "One thing that we see very commonly: somebody has an addiction problem; and you mix that together with a job loss or a relationship problem- fighting in the household, boyfriend-girlfriend, or parent-child- put those two things together and sometimes the likelihood of a suicide goes way up. It's usually a combination of factors, for sure."

Van Dyke took a moment to make some general observations about suicide trends in the area around Cullman County (No specific cases were discussed; privacy laws limit a healthcare provider's ability to talk, and the Tribune will not ask.), not necessarily just this year.

He stated, "We don't have a lot of insight into what happened with most of these cases. What I can say is this: the overwhelming majority of suicides in Cullman County are people who are not receiving treatment. That tells me that getting treatment does help."

Van Dyke did not attempt to claim that treatment is a guaranteed solution for all patients, but that it does help many who seek it out.

Psychology: art vs. science

According to Van Dyke, "Mental healthcare is different from the rest of healthcare. We don't have a blood test that says 'This is what your diagnosis is.' A lot of what we are able to do is based on what the person tells us. That's definitely a weakness.

"If somebody is intent on not telling us something, there's sometimes no way for us to know. But we do try to pick up on all the signs available.

"Let me say this: talking, actually verbalizing thoughts of suicide is, in my opinion, the most important step for somebody to take. Whether it's to a mental health person or not, telling somebody, 'I'm feeling like killing myself' takes it outside of just being inside your head, and makes it much easier to deal with, and to see in a realistic way, to see other options.

"It's when people keep it inside their heads and make plans that nobody knows, that things are really dangerous.

"That happens more often than you think, especially with men. Men have a much higher rate of completion of suicide; women have a higher rate of feeling suicidal, but they're more likely to talk about it and less likely to act on it. Men are more likely to plan and not tell a soul."

When CMHA gets a call from a person contemplating suicide

Van Dyke offered a detailed explanation: "There's several options. If this is during the daytime to the Access to Care line, then they can walk in that day, or they can go to the hospital. You'd be surprised, but sometimes people call and say they're feeling suicidal, yet they want to schedule an appointment; they don't want to come today. So, we do that, if that's what they want to do. But we do see people as walk-ins.

"If it's after hours, we're going to talk them through, try to learn more about the situation: who's with them, are there weapons present, that sort of thing, go through the risk factors.

"A lot of times, if somebody is really sounding suicidal, we're going to ask them to go to the emergency room."

When CMHA gets a call from a family member or friend

"We're going to talk to them about the commitment process," shared Van Dyke. "If you want to have somebody involuntarily evaluated, what you do is come here (CMHA) during the day and file a report called a Report of Concern. That report lays out what you're seeing.

"Then one of our master's level staff is going to sit down with them and go over that report, and talk through it, try to figure out all the things that are going on and how we might best be able to intervene.

"We don't want to involuntarily intervene if there's any other way. Just the fact of sending the police to somebody's house and having them brought in in the back of a car, that's traumatic and it ties up the hospital every time you do that.

"So, we walk through the options. If there doesn't seem to be an option to get them treatment voluntarily, then we send that report of concern to the probate court and they turn it into an official petition for commitment.

"Once there's a petition, the sheriff's deputies pick that person up and take them to the emergency room, and we evaluate them there."

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As to the span of time involved in this procedure, Van Dyke stated that CMHA tries to get everything done the same day.

"The only time it can get too late is if they say the person's not home today," he explained. "We try to time it so we can actually get them soon."

Once a patient is in the system

According to Van Dyke, "We always start off with an evaluation. In the hospital, it's more about ruling out any medical conditions; then we talk through the current situation, the crisis at hand, to try to determine: do they need to be held involuntarily? Do they meet that criteria?

"We also try to talk to people in the hospital about getting voluntary treatment. Sometimes that's very effective. Once somebody sees 'I'm going to get treatment whether I agree to it or not,' they agree to go voluntarily. And that's good.

"Here in the office, we try to do a more full assessment we call the Bio-Psycho-Social Assessment. We're looking at your medical history, we're looking at your family history, we're looking at your mental health history; and we walk through all those factors to try to come up with a diagnosis.

"Once we have a diagnosis, then we establish a treatment plan. That may be just counseling, it may be counseling and seeing a psychiatrist, it may be a day program or addiction program. We have all of those available."

Long-term and short-term care

For persons in danger, who cannot be helped effectively though outpatient programs, certain residential treatment options may be available; but access is often limited.

Van Dyke walked us through the details of long-term and short-term facility care:

"Our entire system is very limited in both short-term and long-term care, and becoming more and more so. If someone is admitted to a psychiatric hospital, they're going to be there as short a time as possible; because of the pressure on the system to take hurt people, and reimbursement issues that hospitals run into. Whether that person has insurance or not, the hospital has to get them out to outpatient treatment as fast as possible. And the determination in a lot of cases, especially suicide, is what the person says.

"Every time they see the doctor, the question's going to come up, 'How are you feeling? Are you feeling suicidal now?'

"It doesn't take very many days of 'I'm feeling better now' til they're making discharge plans and it's time to go home. The length of stay varies quite a bit, but it all hinges on what the person is reporting to the hospital, for short-term stays.

"Really, the only time you have long-term stays these days is if there's a commitment. It's a little bit longer term, because there's less pressure to move people through. But there's still pressure, because those beds are limited, as well."

Van Dyke reported that north Alabama has 64 beds in four long-term facilities: Cullman (CMHA), Jasper, Anniston and Huntsville.

Each facility has 16 beds. Additionally, many people are familiar with Bryce Hospital in Tuscaloosa (whose famous old facility was replaced in recent years by an updated but smaller facility); finding space there can be quite frustrating.

Van Dyke said, "Bryce Hospital has a waiting list. North Alabama, we're sort of allotted 20 beds, but there's a waiting list, and we don't even have 20 people in there. Right now, there's about eight or nine out of our 20, and we usually have two or three people waiting to go. If someone is too severe to go to one of our units, then they go on that list to go to Bryce."

The length of stay in the CMHA long-term facility averages around 40 to 50 days.

Bryce tends to keep patients longer, as it typically gets patients with more specialized needs. The typical person threatening suicide, though, will not be sent to Bryce.

The biggest weakness in the north Alabama mental health system

Van Dyke did not shy away from the question: "It's kind of two-pronged; it's hard for me to choose between acute care (crisis response and short-term care) and long-term care.

"They're both equal needs. We need more acute care, because people are waiting in the emergency room for days to go to a psychiatric bed. It's about how those beds are paid for. Medicaid pays for psychiatric stays, but there are so many people who have nothing, that the hospitals end up closing beds, because they can't afford it. They're overwhelmed by people who have no pay source.

"If there were a way to pay for those beds, there would be more. But because there is no way, they have to close them, so those people have to wait.

"And we need more long-term care because we have people who need to be in a group home, but there are no group homes they can go to.

"The group homes that we have are full from people coming out of Bryce and the commitment units. But there are people who need a group home who haven't even been to them. We need both sides of that equation."

Advice to Alabama's Legislature

Van Dyke was direct and to the point: "They've got to quit ignoring mental health. People think that it's an issue that doesn't touch most of the population; I hear that all the time. But it does: it either touches your family or a neighbor's family.

"But then it has impacts on law enforcement, on the hospital and the ER, DHR, schools; it touches everything.

"I keep trying to make the point to people: mental health treatment is part of the infrastructure of the community, just like having a hospital or a school system. They really need to see it that way, and they don't. That's what I'd say."

If there was to be a bill put before the legislature this session, what should be the first item on it?

"There is a push already on, started with NAMI (National Alliance for Mental Illness) at a summit in Birmingham a few weeks ago.

"They were pushing for restoring the funding cuts that have been made over the past eight years. Then, on top of that, they were looking for money to expand the service I was talking about, both acute and long-term. All totaled up, it was like $68.9 million."

Advice to a person in danger

"The most important thing," said Van Dyke, "is to talk about it. Not hint, but actually say to someone, 'I'm feeling like killing myself.' That can be a family member, friend, crisis line, us, a pastor; it needs to be somebody. Verbalize it, talk about it. Then make sure that you stay in a safe environment.

"Don't spend a lot of time isolating; stay with people. Remove any weapons or drugs that might be tempting or a threat.

"We have our local crisis line available 24/7 (256-737-2000, an on-call system operated by CRMC). Just say, 'I need mental health,' and they'll page whoever's on call. There's also the national hotline (1-800-273-TALK)."

Advice to a family member or friend

"I would say, confront your concerns with the person. If they (friends and family) want to call here and talk about it, we're happy to talk to them.

"Our Access to Care office (256-255-1020) has been getting an extraordinary number of calls this year, and that's good; that's what we want. If you call and don't get them right away, leave a message, and they'll call you right back. They can give you advice and help figure out what the best course of action is."

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CCBOE (from Front)

year. This has been really positive.

"Parents were sent home a letter. Some parents are very leery about us talking to their children about suicide, but we've done it in a very delicate way."

The act sets forth numerous standards and policies for suicide prevention, including:

- fostering individual, family and group counseling services
- making referral and intervention information available to students, parents and school staff
- training school personnel who counsel and supervise students
- increasing student awareness of the relationship between drug/alcohol use and suicide
- educating students to recognize warning signs
- promoting cooperation between schools and community suicide prevention programs
- promoting school- or community-based alternative programs
- developing strategies to assist suicide attempt survivors, students, and personnel with issues related to suicide, suicide attempts, student deaths and healing
- training school employees and volunteers to prevent all forms of bullying
- providing annual training for all certified school employees in suicide awareness and prevention

As part of the program, middle and high school students view a video titled "More than Sad," that covers mental illness, drugs/alcohol, bullying and other topics.

Parents and teachers also have the opportunity to view the video.

It can be checked out from school libraries, and it is available on YouTube.

For more on the Jason Flatt Act, visit http://jasonfoundation.com/about-us/jason-flatt-act.

System Curriculum

"Just like your children are required to learn certain things in math and science," said Pinion, "we're required to teach certain things. We have a course of study, with three different domains that we teach, but one that deals with suicide."

The "personal/social development" domain of the curriculum has components set up to instruct students in appropriate age-level ways about topics such as acquiring and applying self-knowledge (positive self-image, appropriate vs. inappropriate behavior, personal boundaries, self-control, cooperation, conflict resolution, peer pressure, coping skills, etc.), interpersonal skills (respecting alternative points of view, appreciating ethnic and cultural diversity, communication skills, making and keeping friends, etc.), and personal safety (individual rights and personal privacy, identifying and accessing resources for help, making healthy life choices, dangers of substance abuse, etc.).

CCBOE resources and partnerships

The CCBOE has a contract with Mental Healthcare of Cullman/Cullman Area Mental Health Authority to provide in-house mental health services in system schools. Currently, only three system schools are without an onsite representative.

For those schools, as well as the others, Pinion said, "We have a full-time social worker, Scott Carpenter. He travels to all of our schools, so he is an important resource. When we have a student to threaten their life, we call him immediately."

Carpenter is based at Cullman Area Resource Education, the system's alternative school.

The CCBOE also has a partnership with The Bridge Inc., a Gadsden-based substance abuse/addiction recovery program for teens, with an outpatient treatment center in Cullman.

For more information, visit http://www.bridgeinc.org/programs/?id=2 and http://www.mentalhealthcareofcullman.org.

Teacher Advisory Groups

Students entering system high schools are assigned to a "teacher advisory group" under the supervision of a faculty member.

They will continue in that group and with that staffer all the way through graduation.

The goal is building relationships, so students will always feel that at least one adult in the school knows them and is on their side.

Pinion said, "In the past two years, those have really become pretty spectacular. What happens is that if a kid coming into ninth grade has Dr. Kilpatrick for her advisory group, Dr. Kilpatrick stays with that group of kids all the way out, just like that kid's advocate. In that big or small high school, they have someone they could go to.

"In these advisory groups that meet monthly, they're talking about issues of harassment, academics, coping skills, all the things on (the personal/social development curriculum). They're not just talking about how are you going to make better grades; it's 'How can you get along with people with opinions that are different than yours.'

"Advisory groups, I think, have done well for our system. I think our kids like it. I think the parents who really understand it like it, and many of our teachers will tell you they enjoy those advisory groups--getting to know specific kids all the way up."

The role of guidance counselors

The CCBOE does not employ full-time psychologists or therapists. Instead, those tasks are given to contracted professionals.

"We do not do individual therapy," explained Pinion. "We are not trained, we are not qualified to do that. We meet the needs of those students then; responsive services is one of our areas. If it is a student who is threatening to commit suicide, we will meet with them, we will transition them back into school if they leave."

Patrick added, "We are not licensed therapists, but they (counselors) have been trained. During this partnership we have with Cullman Area Mental Health, they did extensive training with the counselors to hit on those things more so than what they had in their college education."

This training involves developing such skills as recognition of warning signs and initial response to threats.

If a parent expresses concern that their child is in immediate danger

"If the kid is at home with the parent and didn't come to school that day," said Pinion, "the first thing we would say is take them to the Emergency Room and have an assessment done. That's going to be the quickest, most efficient way.

"If the child is at school, a parent would need to come and get the kid. If a parent is suspicious that a kid may commit suicide, I don't know that leaving them alone is what you want to do. They need to be seen by a professional immediately."

If a student appears to be in immediate danger

According to Pinion, "If a kid threatens himself with a teacher, that teacher, discretely and without alarming the class or hallway, would bring that child to the counselor or to the principal. From that time, he or she would never be left alone. We would make contact with the parents, always.

"We have safety contracts. If they have a therapist with Cullman Area Mental Health, we call them. If they have another therapist, we contact them.

"If a student has said, 'I'm going to kill myself tonight,' we contact the parents and they come and get them. We release them. That kid needs to see a physician stating that they are capable of coming back to school, before they're just dropped off the next morning at 8 a.m.; because we can't be in all places at all times, and we don't want to imply to a kid in any way that we don't believe their threat is serious."

Patrick added, "Those protocols for teachers and counselors were written several years ago; so those have been in place, and teachers and counselors have been trained on those protocols of what to do, and risk factors that indicate a student might be depressed or considering suicide."

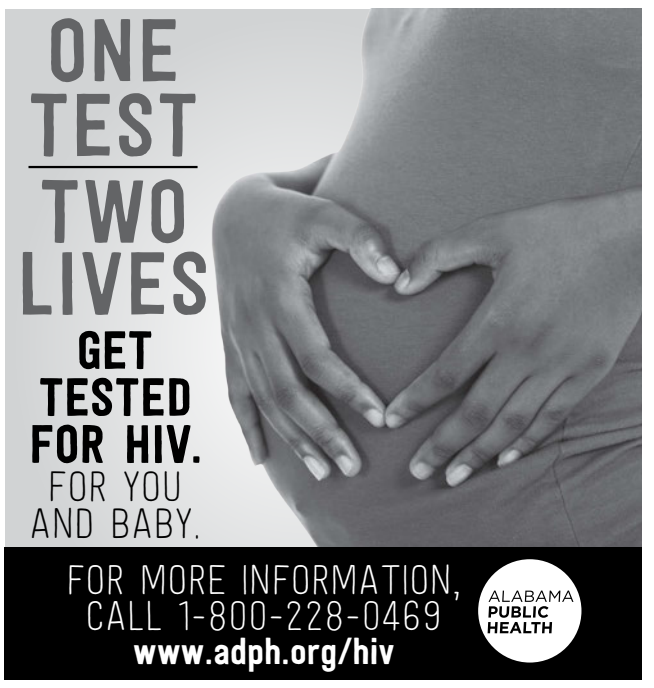
The final word

Patrick: "Always take any kind of statement seriously, because you know what the alternatives are. That's what we do at the school level: we take any statement, any indication that a student is interested in self-harm, we take those seriously."

Kilpatrick: "Be mindful and watchful of changes in behavior. Stuff may be going on and they're not telling anybody, but you can tell: if they don't want to go to school, or if they're trying to hide in a room all the time. It's hard because they're teenagers and they're up and down, but if it's a consistent pattern, be watchful."

Pinion: "This is something we say to parents all the time: if they suspect anything is going on with their kid, if they have questions about anything, call the school and build a relationship with that counselor or the principal. We're all here to help their kids."







Li (from Front)

W.C. Mann
craig@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – The 91st annual Cullman County Spelling Bee was held at Temple Baptist Church Monday evening, and Jadon Li, a seventh grader from Cullman Middle School, took the top prize. Li will represent Cullman County at the state spelling bee on March 11 in Alabaster. The event was open to local contest winners from city and county schools, as well as area private schools.

Competition went through three rounds of spelling and vocabulary, and got off to a fast start; seven contestants went out in the first spelling round, with three more leaving in the first vocabulary round. By the end of the second spelling and vocabulary rounds, fewer than half the contestants remained.

Students who advanced to later rounds were Brady Cleek, Jake Gandy, Jessie Godbee, Nolan Kelly, Chloe Lambert, Ava Lewis, Jadon Li, Christopher Posey and Ella Stephenson.

When the number of contestants reached five at the end of the third round, they moved to spelling only.

The final five:

- Abigail Kusz, Holly Pond Middle School
- Chloe Lambert, Sacred Heart School
- Ava Lewis, Vinemont Middle School
- Jadon Li, Cullman Middle School
- Ella Stephenson, Cold Springs Elementary School

After several more rounds, including multiple rounds with none missed, the contest was down to Li and Kusz. After Kusz missed "Pampas," Li correctly spelled "wiseacre" to set himself up for the championship word "clapboard," which he correctly spelled.

Li was presented his championship trophy by Cullman County Schools Superintendent Shane Barnette and Cullman City Schools Superintendent Dr. Susan Patterson.

Up next for Jadon Li:
Alabama State Spelling Bee
Saturday, March 11, 2017, starting at noon
Alabaster First United Methodist Church in Alabaster

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN RE: The Estate of *
JANET D. BROADBROOKS * CASE NO: PC2011-186
Deceased *

NOTICE OF HEARING ON REPORT OF INSOLVENCY

TAKE NOTICE that a Report and Statement of Insolvency has been filed by Phylena A. Broadbrooks Babbitt as Personal Representative of the Estate of Janet D. Broadbrooks, deceased, on 22nd day May, 2011.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to all the creditors of and all persons interested in the estate that a hearing has been set for the 24th day of March, 2017, at 9:30 A.M. in the Cullman County Probate Court to hear and determine said Report of Insolvency.

Tammy Brown
TAMMY BROWN, JUDGE OF PROBATE
CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

NOTE: The Publisher of The Cullman Tribune

Please public the foregoing notice once a week for (3) consecutive weeks and send an Affidavit of Publication to the Judge of Probate.

Beverly Paschal Poston
Attorney at Law
200 First Avenue SE
Cullman, AL 35055

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN RE THE ESTATE OF:)
PAUL HILLARD BIRMINGHAM, SR.,) CASE NO.: PC-2017
Deceased.)

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT TO BE PUBLISHED
BY PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE

Letters of Administration of said Deceased having been granted to PAUL HILLARD BIRMINGHAM, SR., on the 26th day of January, 2017, by the HONORABLE TAMMY BROWN, Judge of Probate of Cullman County, Alabama, notice is hereby given that all persons having claims against said estate are hereby required to present the same within the time allowed by law or the same will be barred.

ETTA LOUISE BIRMINGHAM HIGGINBOTHAM,
As Personal Representative of the Estate of PAUL HILLARD BIRMINGHAM, Deceased

To the Publisher of The Cullman Tribune

Please publish the above notice once a week for three successive weeks and send an Affidavit of Publication to the Judge of Probate.

Tammy Brown
TAMMY BROWN, JUDGE OF PROBATE
CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

atty for petitioner:
Thomas E. Drake II
419 2nd ave SW Suite B.
Cullman, AL 35055
256-739-9445

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

In the Matter of the Estate of | Case No. PC-2016-334
Floyd L. Arrington, Deceased | Notice to Creditors by Publication

Letters of Administration upon the Estate of said decedent, having been granted to the undersigned on the 20th day of January, 2017, by the Honorable Tammy Brown, Judge of the Probate Court of Cullman County, Alabama, notice is hereby given that all persons having claims against said Estate are required to file an itemized and verified statement of such claim in the office of the said Judge of Probate within six months from above date, or said claim will be barred and payment prohibited.

Michelle Johnson,
Personal Representative of the Estate of Floyd L. Arrington

JERRY L. KILGO,
Attorney for Personal Representative

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN THE MATTER OF:)
THE ESTATE OF DONNA SUZETTE WILSON MORROW,) Case No. PC2016-338
Deceased.)

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Letters of Administration of said deceased having been granted to **ERIKA MORROW FOSTER**, Personal Representative on the 1st day of February, 2017, by the Honorable Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate Court of Cullman County, notice is hereby given that all persons having claims against said estate are hereby required to present the same within time allowed by law or the same will be barred.

R. Champ Crocker
Attorney for Petitioner
P.O. Box 2700
Cullman, Alabama 35056
(256) 739-5005
(256) 739-5007 fax
Champ@ChampCrocker.com

TO: Publisher of The Cullman Tribune
219 2nd Avenue SE
Cullman, AL 35055

Please publish the above notice three successive weeks in said newspaper.

Tammy Brown
(Tammy Brown, Probate Judge)

STATE OF ALABAMA
COUNTY OF BLOUNT

IN THE PROBATE COURT

IN THE MATTER OF:
AELAND CHRISTOPHER FRANKLIN HULL CASE NO. 2016-288
A minor. DOB: JULY 8, 2015

AND

AURIANNA GRACE HULL CASE NO. 2016-289
A minor DOB: MARCH 6, 2013

NOTICE OF ADOPTION PROCEEDINGS

Notice to: ANY PERSON CLAIMING TO BE THE NATURAL PARENTS OF SAID MINOR CHILDREN; BORN TO BRITTANY DIANNE KILLOUGH & JUSTIN SETH HULL, whereabouts unknown

Please take notice that a Petition for Adoption in the above styled matter has been filed in Probate Court of Blount County Alabama by the Petitioners, PETE WHATELEY & WILMA WHATELEY, on the 20th day of December, 2016. Please be advised should you intend to contest this adoption, you must file a written response within thirty (30) days of being served this notice herein with counsel for said Petitioner, whose name and address are as shown below, and with the Clerk of the said Probate Court of Blount County, Alabama, 220 Second Avenue East, Oneonta, Alabama 35121.

DONE this 24 day of January, 2017.

Chris Green
Chris Green
Blount County Judge of Probate

Attorney:
Sara Baker
100 Fifth Street SE
Cullman, Al. 35055
Telephone: 256-737-7181

FILED
BLOUNT COUNTY, AL.
1/24/2017
CHRIS GREEN
JUDGE OF PROBATE

To: Cullman Tribune

Please publish the above notice in your newspaper for four (4) consecutive weeks, and after having done so, file with the Court an affidavit showing the fact of publication together with a copy of the notice of publication.

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THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE
February 16, 2017

Weekly online news recap, Feb. 9-15

The Cullman Tribune's weekly print edition is packed full of important community news and current events. Did you know that you can also access our content for free online, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week?

Find us three ways: on our website at CullmanSense.com, on social media at facebook.com/CullmanSense and twitter.com/CullmanSense or through our free mobile app, "CullmanSense NOW," available from the App Store or the Google Play Store. Also online is our calendar, so you never miss an important community event. Find it at CullmanSense.com/calendar.

Here's a recap of our online news you may have missed since last Thursday.

2 arrested in Cullman for marijuana trafficking

CULLMAN – Two men were arrested Thursday in Cullman and charged with trafficking in marijuana. Nicholas Moody, 18, of Cullman and Dylan Moody, 24, of Riverside, California are both being held in the Cullman County Detention Center, each on a $1 million bond.

Undercover operation leads to meth distribution arrest

CULLMAN – A local woman is behind bars after allegedly selling methamphetamine to undercover officers. Cullman Police Sgt. Chris Thomason, Officer Trey Higginbotham and Officer Shannon Cheatwood arrested Jennifer Alicia Tennihill, 30, of Cullman this week, following the undercover operation led by Thomason and Investigator Justin Craft.

Warrior man arrested after 3-week burglary spree in Cullman

CULLMAN – A rash of recent burglaries was solved after Cullman City Police Department investigators conducted an undercover operation. Over the last three weeks, multiple thefts from the parking lot of Lowe's were reported to the CPD. Items reported stolen included various types of power tools. According to a press release from the department, there was video of the suspect committing the thefts and investigators had a description of the vehicle being used.

Convicted felon arrested with drugs, firearms in Cullman County

CULLMAN – A Hoover man is behind bars after attempting to trade a shotgun and drugs for a handgun with an undercover officer in Cullman. On Wednesday, Feb. 8, investigators with the Cullman City Police Department (CPD) conducted a further undercover operation in which the proposed transaction was to take place in southwest Cullman County.

New Eagle Scouts, leader recognized at awards dinner

CULLMAN – Boy Scouts and adult scout leaders from Cullman and Blount Counties gathered Thursday evening for a district awards dinner. Ten Scouts from five different troops achieved the rank of Eagle Scout in 2016. In Cullman County, these Scouts were Hunter Looney and Dallas Curtis of Troop 34, Zachary Clayton and Joseph Myers of Troop 219, and Austin Rusk and Chad White of Troop 241.

Cullman pro-life group rallies against Planned Parenthood

CULLMAN – A pro-life rally gathered Saturday morning in the parking lot of the Cullman County Courthouse. The rally, organized by local woman Katie Thompson, was part of a national movement against abortion and abortion providers, particularly Planned Parenthood.

Cullman Rotary Club members assist in making the Cullman Police Department "safe exchange zone" a reality

CULLMAN – Since the introduction of e-commerce and internet sales transactions, robberies, assaults and even murder have been a concern nationwide.

Finding a safer place to make internet sales transactions has proven to be a challenge.

The idea for the "safe exchange zone" in Cullman was brought to the Cullman Rotary Club by one of their own Cullman Rotarians.

The idea was presented to Cullman Police Chief Kenny Culpepper to see if such a site was warranted in the community.

Cullman Regional CEO earns top healthcare management credential

CULLMAN – James Clements, FACHE, president/CEO at Cullman Regional, recently became a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE), the nation's leading professional society for healthcare leaders.

Honorable Kim Chaney sworn in for fifth term as Cullman County District Judge

CULLMAN – On Friday afternoon, the Honorable Kim Chaney was sworn in for his fifth term as Judge of the Cullman County District Court, in a ceremony at the Cullman County Courthouse. Circuit Judge Greg Nicholas presided, with District Judge Rusty Turner delivering the opening and closing remarks, Circuit Judge Martha Williams leading the Pledge of Allegiance, and Cullman Bar Association President Perry Knight delivering the invocation and benediction.

Hanceville council names Cemetery Rehabilitation Authority, approves upcoming special events

HANCEVILLE – After a vote at the last meeting to create a Cemetery Rehabilitation Authority, the Hanceville City Council on Thursday voted to appoint three members who were approached and agreed to serve. The members will begin in staggered terms of two, four and six years, so new incoming members will always have an experienced member on the committee.

Baileyton Town Council addresses finances; Dyar new president of mayor's association

BAILEYTON – A big portion of Baileyton's town council meeting this week focused on the town hall basement. In particular, the almost $6,000 the council says the latest renter, MultiLine Cable Company, LLC, owes the Town of Baileyton. The Town's attorney, Todd McLeroy, has placed locks and no trespassing signs on the basement in an effort to persuade the company to pay what the Town says it is owed. At the meeting, it was stated that If the money is not received, property left on the premises will be sold.

Strong 4th quarter propels Fairview girls to first area championship since 1996

FAIRVIEW – Fairview won their first county title in 34 years in the last weekend of January in the Cullman County Tournament at Wallace against Cold Springs. They were looking to end another long streak: 21 years since they won an area championship. That streak is now over as well, as the Lady Aggies came from behind in tonight's final quarter against West Point, winning 58-52.

Holly Pond hits triple digits (again) to claim 3A, Area 11 title

HOLLY POND – For the 29th time this year, the Holly Pond Broncos did what they do best- win. The Broncos defeated the Locust Fork Hornets by a final of 101-49 to win the 3A, Area 11 Championship and earn the right to host their sub-regional game Tuesday night at 7 p.m. versus Carbon Hill.

A thriller and a thumping: Cold Springs Eagles, Lady Eagles win 2A, Area 13 titles

BREMEN – It was a thriller and a thumping Thursday night as the Cold Springs Eagles welcomed the Winston County Yellow Jackets to Bremen for a pair of 2A, Area 13 championship games. Cold Springs opened the boys game with a jumper by Jesse Lee but didn't get much else as they were ice cold from the floor. Luckily for the Eagles, the Yellow Jackets were equally as cold, as the first quarter ended in a 9-9 stalemate.

Lady Raiders claim 4A, Area 10 title, upsetting Dora 49-46 on the road

DORA – The Good Hope Lady Raiders pulled off a 49-46 upset of Dora in the Class 4A, Area 10 championship Wednesday night, and will now host a sub-regional playoff game Monday. The Lady Raiders put together a furious fourth quarter comeback, going on a 12-0 run to the lead and hanging on to it in the final seconds.

Cleveland eliminates Cold Springs, 66-50, in 2A northwest sub-regional

COLD SPRINGS – Cleveland took advantage of a cold second quarter by the Cold Springs offense, defeating the Eagles 66-50 Tuesday in the Class 2A Northwest Sub-Regional playoff. The Eagles scored two baskets quickly to start the second and take their largest lead of the game at 18-12. But in the last 7:00 of the quarter, the Eagles were unable to add points to their side of the Jesse George Gymnasium scoreboard. Cleveland finished the period with a 13-0 run and moved ahead by the score of 25-18 at halftime. That performance pretty much silenced the crowd on the side wearing "True Blue" T-shirts.

Hanceville's season ends in OT loss to Locust Fork, 68-64

HANCEVILLE – After defeating Carbon Hill to win the area championship five days ago, Hanceville was looking to advance to the regionals at Wallace State with a win over Locust Fork. It was a back-and-forth game between both teams, and free throws were the key as Locust Fork went on to win, 68-64 in overtime, ending Hanceville's season.



BILL PIPER

Fairview defeats West Point, 67-63 to claim area 5A, Area 12 championship

HAYDEN – Last year, West Point defeated Fairview in the opening game of the area tournament, ending their season. This year, the Aggies were determined not to fall to them again, with the area championship on the line. A great battle ensued between both teams, and two free throws by Fairview's Bryson Fletcher sealed the 67-63 5A, Area 12 championship win over the Warriors, who will host their sub-regional game next Tuesday night at 7 p.m.

OBITUARY ANNOUNCEMENTS: FEB. 8 - 14

Donald David Patton, 83 of Double Springs, entered into rest on February 7 at Hendrix Health and Rehabilitation in Double Springs. Mr. Patton was born on May 9, 1933 in Double Springs, Alabama. He was a graduate of the 1953 class of Winston County High School and was a member of the Winston County Sports Hall of Fame for football. He was a member of Union Grove Freewill Baptist Church for 41 years. He enjoyed "piddlin" around the yard. Funeral service held February 10 at Nichols Funeral Home in Double Springs. Brother Bill Frank Wilson and Brother Mickey Millican officiated. He is survived by his wife of 36 years, Joyce Vines Patton; sons, David M. Patton and his wife Sandra, Richard Patton and his wife Laura, and Gary Stanley; daughters, Patricia Sides, Sharon Sodders, and Charlotte Adair and her husband Randy; he was "Paw Paw" to 14 grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, Joseph Lloyd and Velma Mae Patton; and sister, Evelyn Hill.

Funeral services for Arvel Daves Holcomb, age 92 of Baileyton, held February 11 at Cullman Heritage Chapel; interment in Bethel Methodist Cemetery at Eva. Cullman Heritage Funeral Home in charge of arrangements. Mr. Holcomb passed away February 10 at Brookwood Medical Center. He was born February 6, 1925 in Morgan County to the late Amos Matthew Holcomb and Tempe Jane Jones Holcomb. He was a WWII veteran serving in the US Army and later as a Civil Service Dispatcher. Survivors include his wife, Helen Buckelew Holcomb; daughter, Anita (Bill) Nelson; son, Tony (Rita) Holcomb; grandchildren, Jacy (Kelly) Douglas, Jared (Sarah) Thompson, Jody Thompson, Andrea (Daniel) Gullion, Gregory (Mallory) Holcomb, Jeffrey Holcomb, Jason (Kim) Nelson, Cory Nelson and Miranda Nelson; and 10 great-grandchildren.

Funeral services for Tammy McKenzie Davis, age 54 of Cullman, held February 11, 2017 at Cullman Heritage Chapel with Dr. Tim Lipsey and Rev. Clyde Ledlow officiating; interment in Mt. Hope Cemetery. Cullman Heritage Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements. Mrs. Davis passed away Wednesday, February 8, 2017. She was born July 20, 1962 in Cullman. She was a teacher at Fairview Elementary School. She is preceded in death by a son, Jake Davis. Survivors include her husband, Gary Davis; her father, Ben (Patricia) McKenzie; mother, Eloise (Bobby) Allred; sons, Josh Davis and Luke Davis; brother, Todd McKenzie; sister, Cathy Burnham; and a host of nieces and nephews.

Funeral services for Bertha Lee Flanigan, 78 of Hanceville, held February 11 at Pleasant Grove United Methodist Church; interment in the Colony Cemetery. Mrs. Flanigan passed away February 8. She was preceded in death by her parents, Earl and Ruthie Johnson Sims; husband, Norris Flanigan Sr.; son, Norris Flanigan Jr. and sisters, Josephine Robertson and Betty Ann Sims. She is survived by eight children, Gladys M. (Melvin) Hammond, Cecelia (Ronnie) Barfield, Edsal (Lynette) Flanigan, Marlon (Alesia) Flanigan, Michael (Ella) Flanigan, Sharonda Flanigan, Corey Flanigan and Shantel Flanigan; sisters, Mary Flanigan and Eleanor Fields; brother, Earl Sims Jr.; twenty-one grandchildren; thirty-seven great-grandchildren and six great-great-grandchildren.

Funeral services for Jack Hill Garnett, age 81 of Cullman, held February 11 at First Baptist Church of Fairview with Bro. David Chambers and Bro. Gene Higginbotham officiating; interment in adjoining cemetery. Cullman Heritage Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements. Mr. Garnett passed away Wednesday, February 8 at Cullman Regional Medical Center. He was born September 1, 1935 in Dadeville, AL. He was preceded in death by his parents, Calvin and Georgia Stokes Garnett; a brother, Clinton Garnett; and a sister, Rebecca Garnett. Survivors include his wife, Lora Guthrie Garnett; children, Chris Garnett, Jackie (Paul) Goodwin, Sonya Babb, Shelia Baker, Marty Garnett, Bobby Garnett and Mickey Garnett; sisters, Oreva Lett, Mary Lou (Irvin) Menefee, Betty Sue (Roger) Houle and Deborah (Jim) Lee; brother, Carl (Helen) Garnett; and a host of grandchildren, nieces, nephews, family and friends.

Funeral service for Brenda Carol James Meeks, 66 of Cullman, held February 12 at Cullman Funeral Home Chapel with interment in Cantrell Cemetery, Rev. Roger James officiating. Cullman Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements. Mrs. Meeks passed away February 9. She was born March 18, 1950 to Troy Virgil & Ruth Zelma Jacobs James. She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Gerald Meeks; brothers, Ronnie & Ricky James. Survivors include her son, Joseph Meeks; daughter, Mundi (Kelly) Ergle; brother, Roger (Janette) James; a host of family and friends, and her special dog, Buddy.

Graveside service for Juanita Scott, 74, held February 13 beginning at Holly Pond Cemetery. Moss Service Funeral Home directed.

Funeral service for Linda Gail Griffin, 62, held February 13 at Moss Service Funeral Home.

Brother Clarence Eugene Price, 76 of Arley, entered into rest on February 10 at his home surrounded by his loving family. Clarence was born on January 12, 1941 in Sweetwater, TN. He was a member of Friendship Freewill Baptist Church in Addison for approximately 30 years, where he served as Pastor. Funeral service held February 13. Brother Bobby Smith and Pastor Robert Partridge will officiate. Burial will be in Arley Congregational Church Cemetery. Clarence is survived by his wife of 56 years, Gayla Smith Price; son, Steven Eugene Price and his wife, Denise; daughters, Vickie Lynn Hendon and her husband George, Melissa Kim Vaughn and her husband Chris, and Christi Nicole O'Rear and her husband Chris; brothers, Ellis Price and his wife Rosemary, Don Price, and Amos Price and his wife Becky; sisters, Lea Malone, Joyce Mellilo and her husband Bart, Cordie Akins, Linda Lambdin and her husband Parris, Roma Kirkland, and Alice Akins and her husband Julius. He was "Paw" to 4 grandchildren, Bridgette (Douglas) Denson, Matthew (Taylor) Price, Samantha Price and Sydney O'Rear; and "Paw Paw" to 9 great grandchildren: Biley and Breonna Denson; Trey, Alexis, Kalandra, Destiny and Daylen Thompson; and Lane and Lexi Price. He was preceded in death by his parents, James Ladell and Reva Gladys Price; and brothers, Therlow and Calvin Price.

Kenneth W. Hopson, 75 of Nauvoo, entered into rest on February 10 at Northwest Medical Center, Winfield, Alabama. Mr. Hopson was born on April 18, 1941, in Nauvoo, Alabama. Kenneth attended Lynn High School. He drove truck for Newburg Road Lumber Company, and was known as "Poor Boy" by his fellow truck drivers. Kenneth was a long time member of New Hope Baptist Church and enjoyed playing soft ball, hunting, driving his truck and riding his motorcycle. Funeral service held February 13. Brother Gary Wakefield officiated. Burial followed in Old Union Church Cemetery, Nauvoo, Alabama.

Betty Nell McDonald Hallman of Cullman passed away on February 10, 2017 at Woodland Village Health Care Center at the age of 89. She was born in Birmingham Alabama on March 12, 1927 to Robert Fred and Ethel Mullins McDonald. Graveside service held February 13 at Elmwood Cemetery. Survivors are: Daughters: Sharon (Jerry) Payne of Hayden, Melanie (Rodney) Dellinger of Cullman, Linda (Larry) Newsome of Pell City, 7 Grandchildren and 5 Great Grandchildren.

Gail "Breezie" Andrews of Fairview passed away on February 11, 2017 at her residence at the age of 86. She was born on October 21, 1930 in Baileyton Alabama to Chesley S. and Wanda Garnet Burks Smith. She is preceded in death by her husband: Bill Andrews and her parents. Funeral service held February 15 at Moss Funeral Home Chapel with Rev. Deborah Moon officiating. Interment will be in Fairview Baptist Cemetery. Survivors are: Daughters: Melanie (Ken) Plunkett, Karen Andrews, Susan (Steve) Eddleman, eight grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

Funeral services for Troy Glenn Gay held February 15, 2017 at Cullman Heritage Funeral Home; Dale Moore officiated. Interment in Flint Creek Cemetery.

Troy Glenn Gay, 79 of Vinemont, passed away February 13 at his residence peacefully with his family by his side. Cullman Heritage Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements. Born, August 21, 1937, he was the son of the late Earl Gay and the late Bessie Ray Gay. Surviving are his wife, Judy Chance Gay, son, Michael (Amanda) Gay, daughter, Mandi Bentley, grandchildren, Makayla Whitlock, Tanna Ball, Ethan Gay, Kaden Gay, Macee Bentley, Great grandchildren, Cooper Ball, Carson Ball, Jacee Ball, Jack Whitlock, brothers, Freeman Gay, Billy Gay, Sim Gay and Will Mac Gay, sisters, Eloise Calloway and Mary Ann Mobley. He was preceded in death by son, Stanley Gay, brothers, Tommy Gay and Estes Gay, sisters, Beulah Richter, Emma Grace Shikle and Marie Gay.

Funeral service for Howell Walker Mead, 74, held February 15 at Moss Service Funeral Home.

Memorial service for Melba Jo Bath, 53, will be held Saturday, February 18, 2017 beginning at 6 pm at McDaniel Farms. Arrangements under the direction of Moss Service Funeral Home.

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Problem (from Front)

"There's a couple of ways that you do it," said Gentry. "There are petitions that we have to sign, a commitment order, and we'll take them to the hospital. At that point, they'll start trying to find a facility.

"Those are commitment orders by law enforcement: if we come upon someone who's going to commit suicide, harm themselves or harm others, we will petition to the probate court to get a commitment order to get them treated.

"The probate court does commitment. The probate judge has a lot of responsibilities, and we have a good working relationship with our probate judge here, Judge (Tammy) Brown. She's always pro-law enforcement, she's always there to help us.

"They have avenues, because they do the commitment orders for mental health evaluations; but they also have more resources for families than average law enforcement does.

"Again, often you don't have a facility; so, what we see is a lot of outpatient treatment. If you don't have a facility to send them to, it's a short-term solution for a long-term problem. And that's not positive."

Mental illness in jail

How many inmates would be better served at a mental health facility?

Gentry replied, "It's hard to say. We have about 330 inmates. There are some that would be better suited for a facility than jail, but where we're at right now in society, you have to protect society. Until we have those solutions, the only thing we can do is keep them here.

"We do have a medical side to our facility in there; we have nurses and doctors, and so we try to do the best we can with people who have true mental illness. There again, you have to remember that you have so much drug-induced mental illness, too."

Do you have psychologists or trained counselors?

"We're not set up to do that, because we're a jail. We have a contract with CRMC. Any of that would come through them. There are times that we utilize Cullman Mental Health.

"Most resources we bring in are on the faith side of things. We have a lot of groups that come in, that provide faith-based counseling to our inmates. For a lot of them, it's very important to get that to them."

When a cop has to be a cop

Gentry shared about those moments when law enforcement officers are no longer able to consider a person's mental state:

"When you're dealing with people that are in mental rages, that are committing violent acts; we know it's mental illness, but they may be armed and shooting at people or us, carrying a knife or whatever.

"We have to do what's in the best interests of society. That's why we're there: to serve people and protect society. You don't want to have to hurt anybody, but there's instances where we're forced to make those decisions.

"What people don't realize is not only what it does to the family that's dealing with mental illness, but what it does to law enforcement.

"We have deputies that go out and see horrific things every day: suicides, violent acts because of mental illness; and that takes a toll on the deputies. It's a bad thing."

Do you make resources available to your deputies?

"We do," replied Gentry. "We have not only our sheriff's chaplains, but also Capt. Ed Potter, our victims' services deputy. He is certified, and he is part of a team here in Alabama that will go around and counsel with law enforcement officers that are involved in traumatic incidents. He does everything from helping victims of domestic violence and victims of crimes, to the families, to helping our deputies here, coordinating things they need."

Advice to those in danger of a mental health crisis

"Reach out," said Gentry, "look for somebody you can talk to; whether it's somebody through mental health, the probate office, or a family member, or through church.

"The biggest thing that we see is the venting process: people don't have a way to release what's going on inside, to talk it out, to work through those problems to see that there is a light at the end of the tunnel. I tell people every day, you can't deal with it through drugs, you can't deal with it through alcohol; those only escalate the problems that you're facing."

Further reading

Interview with Cullman Police Chief Kenny Culpepper: http://www.cullmansense.com/articles/2017/02/09/cullman-city-police-chief-kenny-culpepper-addresses-local-mental-healthcare-and

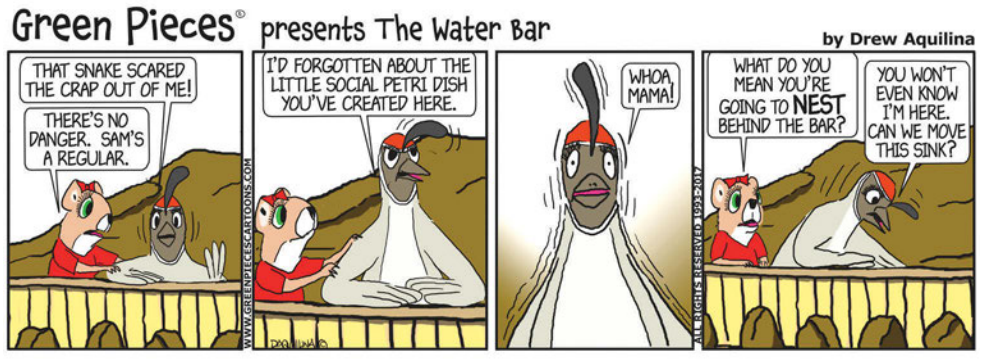
Remembering Nate: Interview with local suicide victim's parents: http://www.cullmansense.com/articles/2017/02/09/remembering-nate-parents-local-suicide-victim-open-about-impact-loss

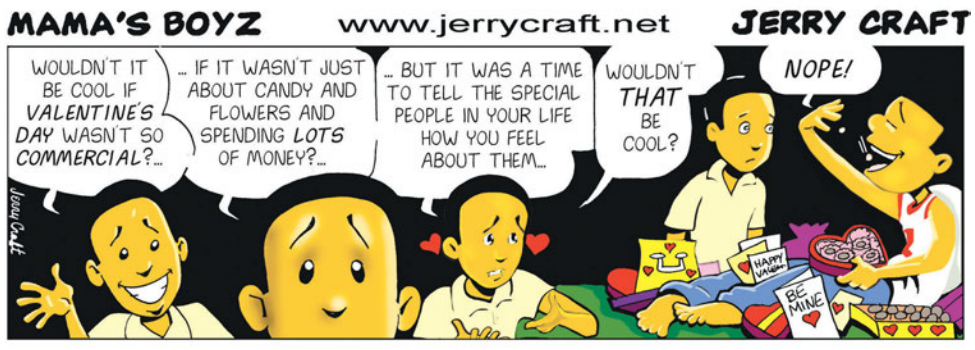
Cullman sees frightening increase in numbers of suicides: http://www.cullmansense.com/articles/2017/02/02/cullman-co-sees-frightening-increase-suicides

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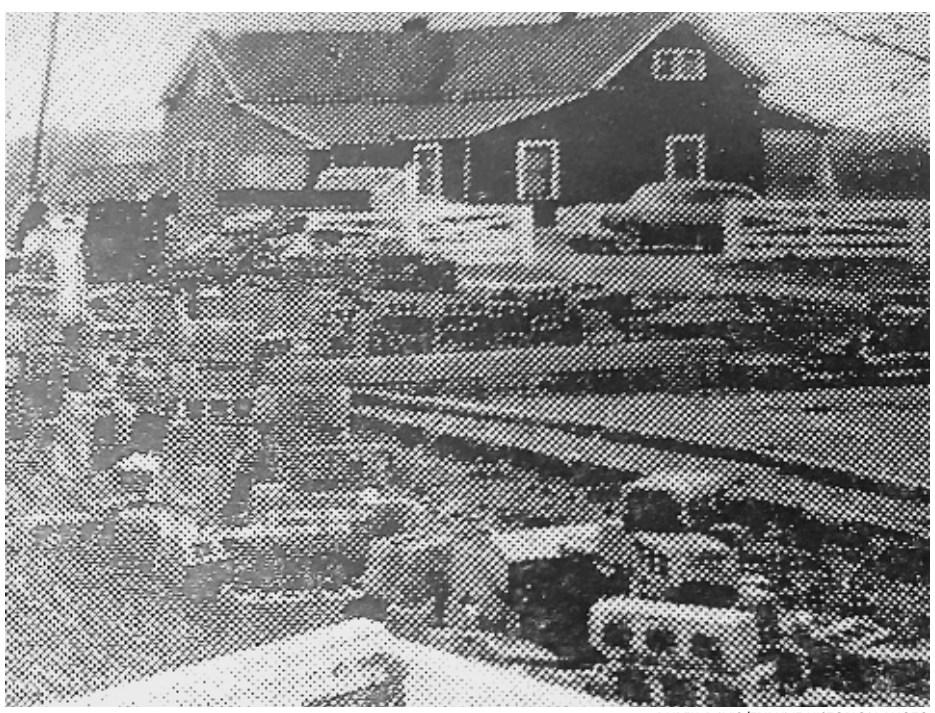


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This week in Cullman history

On the night of Friday, Feb. 17, 1956, a tornado struck Cullman County. No fatalities occurred, but there was widespread property damage to homes, barns and cars. Roof damage was particularly widespread. At least one home was destroyed in Addison, and the J.C. Mobley farm in Grandview sustained extensive property damage.

Compiled by Samantha Vest



DURELL DAVIS/TRIBUNE HISTORICAL PHOTO

Poet's Corner

THE FORTRESS

Enclosed in this fortress I have built Sitting in

sackcloth, ashes and guilt There's a question

ringing in my mind However could my eyes be

so blind? Remembering the words ever so old My

soul stirs against the bells toll Protection, security,

fears laid aside It's in Him alone I must hide.

I have stood, blocking my own way

But no more, not another day

These fortress walls must come down If

there's any hope and joy to be found.

Throwing open the doors to all that I am

Boldly I welcome this shepherd of lambs

Create in me, O God, I pray

A right spirit, this moment, this very day.

By: Martha Lingerfelt Prattville, Alabama • Submitted by: Randy Hale

"For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock." **Psalm 27:5**

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There but for fortune: A mother's story, Pt. 2

Loretta Gillespie
Tribune Correspondent

This is the true story of heartache, physical, sexual and alcohol abuse, love, hate, financial burdens and finally, finding joy, happiness and hope.

We trust that you will understand why the names and some of the circumstances had to be changed to protect the privacy and safety of some of the people in this story. It contains information that is true, but the situations have been framed in slightly different circumstances, or alternative locations to protect the source of the story. In some cases, several people have been combined into one person or events gathered into one time frame for the same reason, to protect the source of the story, who still lives in Cullman County.

This could very well be happening right there in your neighborhood. It could be happening to one of your classmates, your co-workers or your neighbors. It could happen to you, as the song says, "There but for fortune, go you, or I."

Keri's grandparents are elderly now, her grandfather has lost a lot of his strength, and her grandmother is battling a severe illness, but they are still her touchstones, her link to the parts of her childhood that were not associated with hurt and abuse. They made Christmas a happy time for the children, Keri remembers finding some of the things she asked for under the tree at their house, but one year the one she wanted most wasn't there.

Her grandmother suggested that Santa might have run out of parts for that particular toy, but the next year, when the same thing happened, her grandmother said that Santa quit making E-Z Bake Ovens, but that there were other gifts under the tree.

Later, she learned that her dad's new girlfriend had promised to get the little oven both years but had spent the money on something else.

"I sort of quit believing," she said. "Then, one Christmas Eve, years later when I was a single mom with two children, I opened the door and there were presents on the steps. I know now that there is something like Santa, or the good Lord just knew that there were things going on and He helped. I don't know, but I do know that those two babies had a good Christmas and that made mine better than ever."

As the children got older, their father showed up from time to time, mostly smelling of whiskey and trying to pick a fight. He was never again allowed custody of his children.

Although there were periods of calm, like some Christmases, the safe harbor of her grandparent's home had turned into a dreadful existence for her.

The sexual abuse continued, "It went on until I was 15, when I ran away to a church."

There, Keri was introduced to, 'the sweetest people I've ever known."

"They knew that something was wrong," she said, "I don't know if they realized exactly what it was at that point, though."

The family member who caused Keri irreparable damage, sexually abusing her over and over, until she escaped, was never far away, always a threat that loomed over her, day and night.

"It started about a year after I moved in with my grandparents," she recalled. "Then, for some reason it stopped for about a month, but started up again and never stopped until I left at almost 17."

One night, Keri left her grandmother's house on the pretense of returning to the church. When she got there, she went to the couple who had befriended her and told them exactly what was happening to her...

"Once I did that, there was no contact with the family on that side because they didn't believe that what I said was true," she said. It would be years before she finally broached the subject with her grandmother, who still wouldn't listen to the whole story. Her denial was so great that she still won't accept the facts.

This time, a police report was filed. The abuser was arrested and served time in jail. Keri was never offered the services of a counselor because her family didn't want to prolong the experience. "Out of sight, out of mind" seemed to be their way of dealing with problems.

However, emotions long buried have a way of resurrecting themselves when least expected...

School, which had once been Keri's refuge, took on another meaning as she got older.

Word had gotten out that her relative had abused her. She was made fun of and bullied daily. She began to see herself in the light that her peers saw her.

Her self-esteem vanished and she became introverted, wanting little to do with the outside world, turning inward and hiding her pain because it was not something that was talked about in her family.

Her grades suffered, she was unable to pay attention and her life was in such turmoil that she couldn't concentrate.

In the last years of high school, once she was away from her abuser, things started to get a little better. She had her first real best friend, and later that year, a boyfriend who was on the football team.

"My grades came up, the next year I didn't make anything below a C," she recalled. In her senior year, she started to slip, and because she couldn't stand the thought of failing, she quit school altogether.

"I regret not getting my GED now. I wish I had and I know it's not too late. I still want to do that, and I will someday," she vowed.

Even now, at 35, Keri still has trust issues, especially with men. "I never had a 'teen' childhood," she said stoically.

"I was forced to be a grown up until I realize now that it's all I ever knew. I don't much like to be around people that are younger than I am because of their immaturity."

Keri only has one friend that she truly trusts. "I trust her, but have issues with that, too," Keri admitted. "I'm not sure why, but I don't trust many people, never really had a reason to trust anyone because it seems that I got let down if I trusted too much..."

Part 4 of "There but for fortune: a mother's story" will be published next week, in the Feb. 23 edition of The Tribune.

Read part 2 here: http://www.cullmansense.com/articles/2017/02/12/part-2-there-fortune-mother-s-story

Read part 1 here: http://www.cullmansense.com/articles/2017/02/04/part-1-there-fortune-mother-s-story

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Bicentennial (from Front)

State Jazz Band will play, and the fifth graders of West Elementary School will be singing the Alabama state song wearing red T-shirts with the Alabama 200 logo."

There will be cake and refreshments for those who attend.

March 3 was chosen because it is the 200th anniversary of Alabama becoming a territory.

"Gov. Bentley will make this announcement on the Capitol steps in Montgomery that day," said Green.

"We chose the Depot because the train tracks through the wilderness brought our founder, Col. Cullmann, to the area."

"John Cullmann was an agent for the railroad and responsible for bringing a large number of German immigrants to here," Green pointed out.

The state Alabama Bicentennial Commission meeting will be at the Cullman County Museum on Feb. 24.

Sen. Arthur Orr, R-Decatur and various state and local leaders will be present.

The Alabama Museums Association Annual Conference will be in Cullman March 5-7. Green will be leading a historic walking tour for those attendees who are interested.

"We are also having a "rolling dinner" with dessert hosted by and served at the Cullman County Museum," he said.

"The rolling dinner for the attendees of the Alabama Museum Association Annual Conference will be Monday March 6," said Green.

"It will begin with a pre-dinner reception at Southern Accents Architectural Antiques, then a walk around the corner to the All Steak Restaurant, where everyone will get to try their famous orange rolls and discover why they are on a list of 100 places to eat in Alabama before you die.

"Following the dinner at the All Steak, guests will enjoy the short walk down the street where they will be welcomed to the Cullman County Museum for desert in a replica of John Cullmann's home, where they will learn about Cullman's unique German heritage."

For more information about the bicentennial, visit www.Alabama200.gov or call the Cullman County Museum at 256-739-1258.

The Alabama200.gov site will feature weekly/daily announcements about what was going on in Alabama each week/date 200 years ago.

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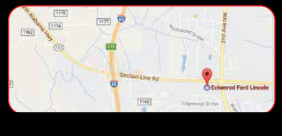
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SATURDAY FEB 18TH 9:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.
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