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Broken Arrow

Alabama native Earl Smith international star of Cold War documentary

Wendy Sack
wendy@cullmantribune.com

When former North Alabama resident, Earl Smith, dropped in to do an interview about the 1961 nuclear incident in which in which he played a pivotal part, the Freedom of Information Act had just made the 1961 secret documents available to the public. Since then, Smith has been a busy man. Here is the latest on the man who helped to save tens of thousands of lives on American soil in the Cold War.

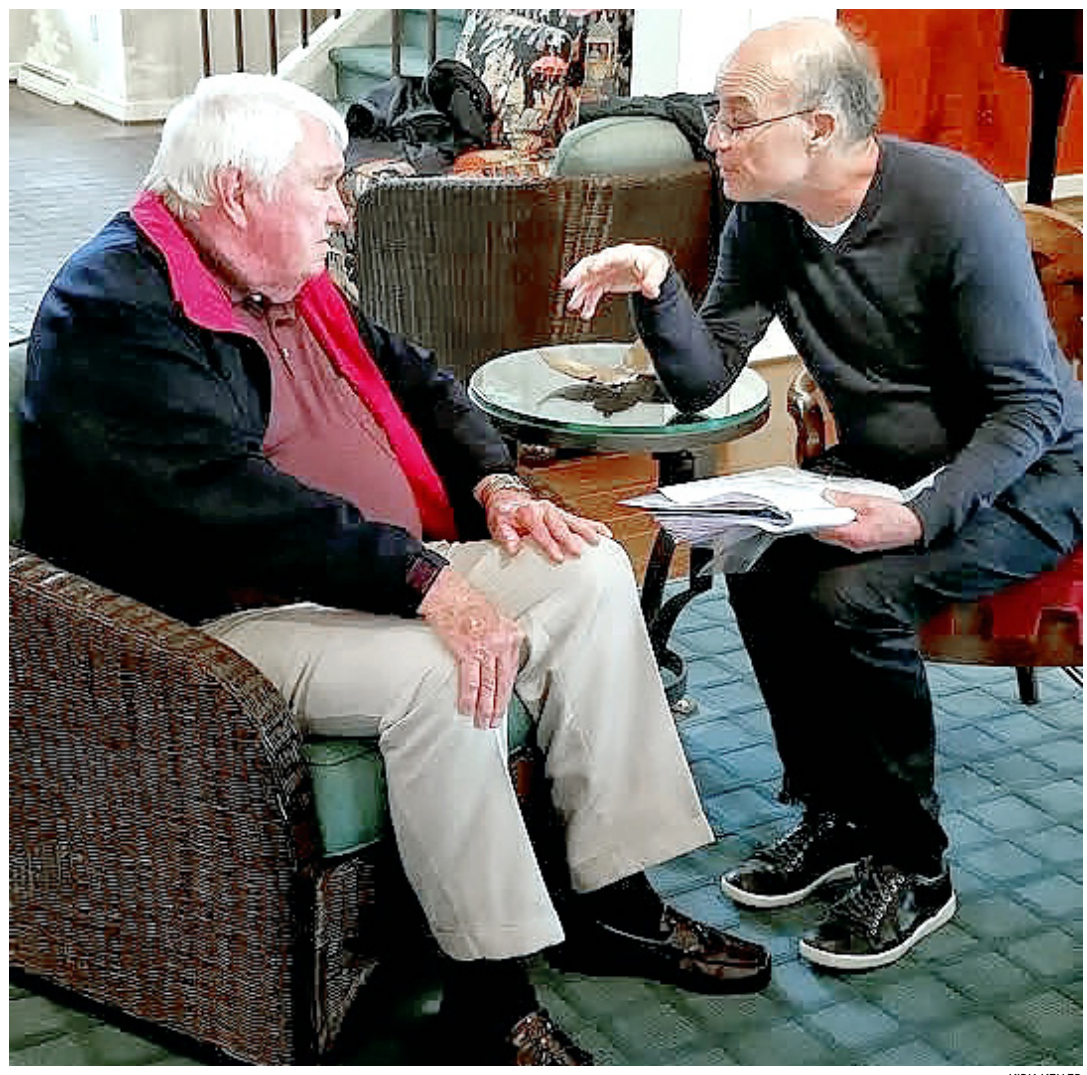
After having told his story in September 2016 issues of The Moulton Advertiser and The Cullman Tribune, (Read the full backstory at http://qrne.ws/brokenarrow), Earl Smith was invited to a reception in Goldsboro, North Carolina where, in 1961, a near-record breaking nuclear incident took place that is still resonating around the world.

As for Smith himself, he had just lost his wife, and was busy taking care of his rental property near the Talladega Speedway when these stories came out.

Since the incident was top secret until recently, Smith had pushed it from his mind until a former military buddy called him about the story being made public following the mandatory 50-year time period. That's when he came back home to break the story.

He was contacted by Goldsboro historian Kirk Keller, who extended an invitation to speak in the area where all of this took place.

Smith accepted Keller's invitation to speak in Goldsboro, in January of 2017, and was given a true hero's welcome by the citizens of the place that is still on the map due to his clear thinking and attention to painstaking details outlined in Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) training, from which he had just graduated. (Smith, who was only 24 years old at the time of the incident, will humbly tell you that he just happened to be the one on call that fateful night).



KIRK KELLER

Earl Smith, left, speaking with Thierry Ptlantanida, gave his first-hand account of the near-miss nuclear disaster that he helped to divert, in 1961, near Goldsboro, North Carolina.

In a note from Keller, the historian has this to say of Earl Smith: "I wish that the story of the 'Broken Arrow' mishap will be told as accurately as possible. I was most fortunate to be contacted by Mr. Earl Smith a couple of years ago. Since that time we have become great friends. I am proud that his first-hand account of the incident has received its rightful place in our history books. I believe that we are now on the way to properly recognizing the efforts and self sacrifices that Earl and his fellow E.O.D. buddies made during the heat of the moment on January 24, 1961."

After speaking at the Goldsboro Rotary, to a crowd of almost 100 members, being taped by Time/Warner, and filmed for the "Tar Heel Traveler" (similar to "Absolutely Alabama"), Smith was featured on the front page of The Goldsboro News Argus. Since then, Smith has gained fame in places all over the world, including catching the attention of a famous Paris film producer, Thierry Ptlantanida, who recently filmed Smith's first-hand account of the incident.

It seems that Keller, the North Carolina historian who had contacted Smith about speaking in Goldsboro, was then contacted by the Veteran's Coalition, who had been contacted by the French production company.

"The French group was searching for veteran's who had been present at the time of the occurrence," explained Keller.

"They are filming a documentary called, 'The Cold War,' and they wanted to include this incident."

Once again, Smith found himself in front of a camera, reliving the incident that reportedly would have been the largest nuclear incident of all time.

If not for a complicated set of coincidences which led to his being the first set of hands on a bomb hanging precariously to the tangled lines of a parachute suspended from the limbs of a tree in a North Carolina field in the middle of the night, the story could have turned out much differently.

That night in 1961, Airman 1st Class, Earl T. 'Buster' Smith, Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) tech, was on call.

As it was, Smith, who was required by law to wait for a second set of trained hands before disarming the bomb, opened the small door in its side, quickly ascertaining that the indicator was in the 'safe' position.

Of the second bomb known to have been in the plane which went down due »PAGE 2

BBQ grill cleaning and safety tips



EXTREMEKLEANER

Loretta Gillespie
Tribune Correspondent

In most parts of the country grilling is a rite of passage, mostly done by men, and separating the men from the boys. Once you can grill a steak to perfection, no one calls you a 'boy' anymore.

From Texas brisket with heavy red sauce to our own Southern style white sauce or vinegar and catsup-based sauces, to the Carolinas where grilling might be fish instead of beef, one thing they all have in common is that when the meal is over all there is left, besides the bones, is a dirty grill.

Products like Goo Gone Grill and Grate Cleaner can cut the time it takes to make your grill ready for the next family get-together in half. According to their product guide, spraying your grill will cut the grease and a grill brush will "glide right across the grates, taking the grime with it."

There are many other products that claim the same ease of clean up, but one thing you can do before hand is spray your grates (once they are clean) with a non-stick spray like Pam. This will also keep your meat from sticking to the grate.

All of these products you »PAGE 4

2 Berlin residents arrested, meth and other drugs seized

Wendy Sack
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BERLIN – A man and woman from the Berlin community were arrested Wednesday after agents with the Cullman Narcotics Enforcement Team (CNET) executed a search warrant of their residence and allegedly found 12 grams of methamphetamine, eight alprazolam pills, a .9mm pistol, steroids, needles and other drug paraphernalia.

Authorities arrested Ronnie Regina Millar, 35 and Jesse Dean Thomas, 34 at the residence on County Road 737.

Millar was charged with two counts of unlawful possession of a controlled substance, possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance and unlawful possession of drug paraphernalia.

She is being held in the Cullman County Detention Center on a $37,000 bond.

Thomas is charged with two counts of unlawful possession of a controlled substance, possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance, certain person forbidden to possess a pistol and unlawful possession of drug paraphernalia. He has made bond.

"This unfortunately continues to show how drug dealers are trying to sell not only meth to our kids and adults, but also pills are becoming a major source of addiction. We try to have a proactive approach in fighting drugs on two fronts: arresting the dealers and also educating our children and adults about the danger of addiction," said Sheriff Matt Gentry.

"I would also like to thank CNET for the good job they did in getting these narcotics out of our community and safely getting the operation done because any time a gun is involved you never know how the operation may go."



Jesse Dean Thomas



PHOTOS COURTESY CULLMAN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Ronnie Regina Millar

THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE
JUNE 24, 2017

Mental illness suspected cause of incident at U.S. 278 Chevron

Wendy Sack
wendy@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN – Mental illness is suspected to have been the cause of an incident Thursday morning at the Chevron on U.S. Highway 278 near Interstate 65, when a man entered the station and casually told the female clerk on duty to give him all the money from her register. No charges were filed.

"She (the clerk) didn't do it," said Cullman City Police Chief Kenny Culpepper. "She didn't comply, but he just kept standing there. He didn't have a weapon. Eventually, he walked out, telling her to turn on the gas pump so he could get gas. Then he was standing around acting like he was getting gas."

Sgt. Chris Nichols, who responded to the scene along with Officer Roy Bates, said the clerk and her male coworker could tell something wasn't right with the man. "They told him to go on out and they would turn on the pump. When he went outside, that's when they called 911."

Culpepper says the incident occurred around 9:15 a.m. Thursday morning.

The man has been identified by police as Mickey Clay Waldrep, 32, of Jones Chapel.

"It was pretty obvious to the officers that the suspect had serious mental issues going on," shared Culpepper.

Nichols and Bates took Waldrep into custody. An emergency probate order was obtained and Waldrep was transported to Cullman Regional for an evaluation.

"When I arrived he was at the gas pump," said Nichols. "I told him to get on the ground and all that. He offered no resistance whatsoever."



ROD WYNN

Cullman police responded to a reported attempted robbery this morning at the Chevron on U.S. 278 near I-65.

Cullman man arrested on multiple charges of sexual child abuse

Wendy Sack
wendy@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN – Cullman County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) investigators on Thursday arrested Henry Dewey Loyd, 44, of Cullman on multiple charges of sexual child abuse.

Following a three-month long investigation by the CCSO, investigators discovered that Loyd was targeting someone with whom he was familiar. Loyd allegedly used social media and arranged to meet the juvenile for an unlawful act. According to the sheriff's office, the victim came forward to CCSO investigators after the incident took place.

Investigators then obtained warrants for the suspect's arrest from the Cullman County District Attorney's office.

Loyd was arrested and charged with second-degree rape, second-degree sodomy, traveling to meet a child for an unlawful act, electronic solicitation of a child and transmitting obscene material to a minor. All of these charges are felonies.

Loyd is being held in the Cullman County Detention Center on a $180,000 cash bond.

"I would like to make all parents aware that social media like Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, etc. have their good points; however, sexual predators are constantly on them as well trying to entice your children. I can in the strongest terms recommend to parents to check your children's social media pages and private messages to see who they are speaking with because the predators are constantly looking for victims," said Sheriff Matt Gentry. "I would also like to thank our investigators for the job they did on this case."

Due to the graphic nature of the crime, no further details will be released.



CULLMAN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Henry Dewey Loyd

Documentary (from Front)

to possible engine failure, Smith had no clue of its whereabouts at the time.

Had the other bomb detonated, it would have also set off the bomb Smith found in the tree, even though the safety mode had worked on the one whose parachute had meant safety for thousands who were sleeping peacefully in warm beds on that cold morning.

Smith's account of the incident took about two days to film.

According to Keller, the French producer was very impressive, and has many film accolades and awards.

"He worked with Jacques Cousteau for 10 years," said Keller. "He has made several international films and documentaries that have won top awards." (See list of films at end of article.)

Smith, who admits to being a little bit nervous at the beginning of the filming, was immediately put at ease by the seasoned documentarian.

"He was very professional, very impressive and spoke perfect English," said Smith. "He was a pleasure to meet and work with.

"I never realized how alive this story was in the area where it happened," marveled Smith, whose head is still reeling from the whirlwind of media attention he is receiving.

"The people who live around there are still very much aware of what happened that night, and what it would have meant if those bombs had detonated."

Even with all of the media attention, Smith says that the thing he will always remember most is the small handcrafted medal he received from a woman who had just lost everything she owned in a hurricane.

"There she was with nothing and she thought enough of me to sit down and make this medal," said Smith in awe.

According to Smith, Ptlantanida plans to air the film on Paris Channel 5, then it will be passed on to National Geographic and from there to PBS. "He expects the first airing to be about a year from now," said Smith.

Thierry Ptlantanida director credits

- 2012 A Thirsty World (TV movie documentary)
- 2012 Die durstige Welt (documentary)
- 2010 Tracking the Blue Diamond (TV movie documentary)
- 2007 Demain, un monde sans glace? (documentary)
- 2006 The White Planet (documentary)
- 2003 Arctic Mission: The Great Adventure (video documentary) (co-director)

Writer Credits

- 2010 Tracking the Blue Diamond (TV movie documentary)
- 2007 Demain, un monde sans glace? (documentary)
- 2006 The White Planet (documentary)
- 2003 Arctic Mission: The Great Adventure (video documentary) (co-writer)

Earl Smith is available for speaking engagements. Please contact Loretta Gillespie for his contact information.

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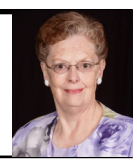


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News from the Pond

Jimmie Dean Carnell
Tribune Contributor



Good morning Tribune readers and families. It appears summertime is in full blast. This time of year, we have the warmest weather followed by thunderstorms and pop-up rain at any time of the day and night.

The First Baptist Church in Holly Pond finished their vacation bible school the past week.

We started on Sunday night and ended on Wednesday night.

We had a total enrollment of 133. We collected over two hundred dollars for a mission offering. These two numbers are a record according to my memory.

On last Saturday, my family went out to lunch in celebration of my sister, Nancy Horton's birthday. The five of us included Nancy and Lane Horton, Walt and Judy Floyd and Jimmie Dean Carnell.

We really had an enjoyable time. This weekend we are celebrating the birthday of Mrs. Gina Webb, the daughter of Nancy Horton. Gina is the principal of the Welti Elementary School. She is the wife of Douglas Webb and they live in Vinemont.

The Holly Pond Homemakers Club held their June 13th meeting at the fire hall. Carolyn Bryan, club president, presided. Deanie Walker led in the pledge to the flag.

Brenda Wisener presented the devotional. Minutes of the past meetings were approved as printed. Gladys Wisener presented a treasurer's report.

To begin our business session, Mr. Bartee Bryan, representing the Holly Pond Lions Club, presented a check to the club as a contribution aiding the upkeep of the cemetery.

We received a very good amount of donations on Decoration Day, the first Sunday in May.

Members told of some comments that they heard during that day on improvements and obstacles.

A motion was made and seconded that the club put some gravel and culvert on the lower part of the Section Three at the cemetery. We also noted that we need to purchase some of the flags to be placed on the Veterans graves.

We also discussed sending a donation monthly to the Cullman Caring for Kids. This will be given to Javon Daniel.

The program was a power-point presentation by Julia Floyd entitled "Remembering Olden Times". We had an enjoyable time looking at these pictures. The July meeting is an eat-out meeting to be held at the Brandin" Iron Restaurant in Fairview.

Members attending were: Carolyn Bryan, Marilyn Calvert, Jimmie Carnell, Judy Floyd, Gail Hatley, Lyndell House, Londalene Jean, Judy Jones, Sue Morris, Peggy Ray, Linda Reid, Madelyn Robertson, Brenda Scott, Tavia Smith, Deanie Walker, Christine Wise, Amelia Wisener, Brenda Wisener,Gladys Wisener, and Annette Yates.

Until next week, be safe and keep cool.

Tribune Files from Yesteryear

From The Files Of 1950

Charley Dewberry, age three, was killed at Liberty Grove, when he fell into a neighbor's boiling pot of water, where they were killing hogs.

Mr. and Mrs. Fonzie Gregory, Mr. and Mrs. Oran Holmes and Lowell Holmes were baptized at the John R. Holmes pond, last week.

The little son of Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Aldridge, of Piney Grove, severely cut his leg on a pile of sawdust. It required several stitches.

Mr. and Mrs. E.E. Bontrager have a new daughter, Barbara Kay, born on September 26th.

Mrs. Ray Benefield, of Hulaco, has a new electric range. It is a present from her daughter, Lucille, of Arab.

John Bishop, of Berlin, has a mule for sale.

Jack Mann, age 22 and Vida Faye Hamrick were recently married.

There was a foot washing held at Spring Hill Church last Saturday night.

Mrs. Lonnie Rice, of Hanceville, rode the Greyhound bus to Birmingham last Monday.

From The Files Of 1900

M. Dickerman has purchased the sawmill, belonging to W. Turney, near Vinemont.

Doctor W.A. Barclift, of Hartselle, is having a cottage erected on the bluff, overlooking the Vinemont railroad station and will use it as a summer home.

Swiss and Limberger cheese always to be had at Al Richters. Adv.

The streets are constantly crowded with cotton wagons.

Mrs. C.J. Brown entertained a few friends on Tuesday evening.

W. Thomas Green, of Joppa, has entered the Polytechnic College.

Miss Hattie Gibson left this week for an extended visit to friends in Morgan County.

A.M. Weatherford has been at work putting electric lights in the courthouse, this week.

Mrs. M.W. Howard stopped in Cullman, this week, on her return from Kentucky, where Mr. Howard has been making campaign speeches.

John F. Knight went to Birmingham on Wednesday to meet Mrs. Knight, who has just returned from Canada. They will reside here.

The length of public schools in this county will be increased this year from three to four and one-half months.

The Tribune-Gazette this week goes to a seven column paper, from a six column.

Probate Judge, S.L. Fuller has received warrants for 253 disabled Confederate soldiers and widows of deceased soldiers, which he will distribute.

The Cullman Cotton Company has completed arrangements for putting in a guano factory, which will be ready for operation next year.

H.A. Worley will conduct an all-day singing at Mount Nebo, on Sunday.

From The Files Of 1930

Byron Ashwander, of Hanceville, purchased the first "A" automobile license in this county on October 1st, according to Probate Judge, Homer F. Mitchell. The tag is number A 103-301 and will be used on a Ford coach. George Ashwander, of Hanceville, purchased the first "B" tag for his Dodge sedan and Alton McBrayer purchased the first truck tag for his Ford truck.

At the B.P.W. benefit "Bug" party, on Thursday, Miss Mamie Hoelscher won first prize and Miss Margaret Schlosser and Miss Gertrude Ziegler second and consolation.

Mrs. M.J. Duke was seriously injured, on Friday morning, when she fell from the back door step at her home.

Mr. and Mrs. J.S. Norton entertained on Friday evening, honoring their son, Willie, on the anniversary of his birth.

W.L. Guthrie and son, Thurman spent Sunday in Sipsey as guests of Mr. and Mrs. Vernie Johnson.

Among those attending the state fair in Birmingham this week were: Mr. and Mrs. Henry Hill and Miss Gertrude Hill, Casper Mages and Miss Betty Mages, Mr. and Mrs. C.R. Rainey, Hartwell Speegle, Miss Sophie Schneider, Mr. and Mrs.

W.S. Leeth and children and Miss Thelma Kinney.

Joe Hacker spent the weekend in Birmingham.

Mr. and Mrs. Theo Watts, Miss Selena Watts, Hubert Stisher, Corbin House and Hugh House have returned from Detroit, Michigan.

The Cullman Bearcats won their opening game of the season, by defeating Fairview, 12 to 0.

Charley Bilgero, who underwent an operation in Birmingham last Thursday is reported to be resting well, at this time.

W.C. Debtor, of Simcoe, is enlarging his poultry farm.

BILLY BOB'S STORIES AND STUFF

An Afternoon Matinee, Popcorn and Cokes

Bill King
Tribune Contributor



Jean and I don't go to the movies much anymore. For one thing, rarely do we hear about a movie that we care to see. Secondly, finding time is hard. Now, I have added another, we can't afford it.

Recently, I asked Drew if he wanted to take in a picture show. He replied, "Maybe, what is a picture show?" I asked him if there were any new movies he would like to see. He answered, "Yes, Captain Underpants." I thought, perhaps, this was a war movie about an army captain. The "underpants" part made me wonder what it might be rated.

When I was Drew's age, going to the "picture show" was quite different from today. The only movie place in my hometown was the Rainsville Drive In. Drive-ins had surround-sound way before theatres. We were surrounded by sound coming from little steel boxes bedside every car in the place.

The price of admission has changed, ever so slightly. What it cost now for three matinee tickets, two bags of popcorn floating on liquid butter and two soft drinks, was about what Jean and I paid for our first house.

Now, I will admit that the size of everything now is so big, we feared Drew might fall in his drink and drown. When the young lady behind the counter said, "That will be $63.43," I asked, "Did you say $16.43?" She said, "No sir, $63.43." As I went down, I visually scanned the lobby for a defibrillator. I believe the first movie I ever saw at the drive-in was a 1965 Disney flick, called "That Darn Cat." If my memory serves me right, it cost one-dollar per person to get in. Back then, for $63.43, we could have carried our entire family, plus Uncle Alonzo, Aunt Hattie Mae and their seven boys and bought everybody a cheeseburger, greasy fries, a large Coke and a box of junior mints for desert and still had enough money left to stop by The Piggly Wiggly on the way home to buy groceries!

On top of all that, back then they gave us a free bingo card when we drove in. None of us ever won anything big, like a car or a bulldozer, but Billy Bob's cousin, Booger Ray, who won a one night vacation stay in beautiful downtown Collinsville, including a pass to Trade Day. I think I won a large box of popcorn once. That's about a $9.79 value by today's prices.

Some, in my generation, tell stories about special drive-in rates. One person, the driver, paid full price and as many as could squeeze into the trunk got in free. I honestly can't tell you that I ever did that.

I honestly can't tell you that I didn't do that either. I can tell you that I have repented for my wayward deeds and I most likely owe somebody for a couple of movies.

The problem is that The Rainsville Drive-in and The Hamilton Drive-in, in Fort Payne, have both closed long ago. I do feel bad about it.

I would never do anything like that these days. That has nothing to do with the fact that drive-ins have closed and you can't get into a walk-in, in the trunk of a car.

When I think that I paid $63.43 to watch Captain Underpants, while the two preschoolers seated behind me kicked the back of my seat so much that it made me seasick, I am slightly nostalgic. Those were good ole days, but then, so are these days. God had not yet blessed me with a grandson back then.

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

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JUNE 24, 2017

Holly Pond Café reopens after renovation

Heather Mann
Tribune Correspondent

HOLLY POND – After a lengthy renovation, Holly Pond's namesake restaurant has reopened with a new look. While there are a few distinct differences, like new wall decorations and lighter paint, the food still has the same home-style taste that the community has come to love. The restaurant plans to have an official grand opening later in the summer, though hungry residents can still come by whenever they need a meal.

Michelle Bell, who runs the restaurant, was pleased with the café's performance after the opening. She talked about a recent rush of customers from Holly Pond High School's cheerleading camp, which helped fill the restaurant. Combined with several take-out orders that were called in, the kitchen was working overtime to keep up. Fortunately, she said, they pulled through for a successful day.

When asked about how the staff would handle the upcoming band camp and other on-campus summer programs, Bell mentioned that she would probably need to hire additional wait staff and kitchen workers. The service after reopening is quicker than it was before, which would make the café a good lunch option for students who would usually go to the nearby Jack's for their lunch hour.

Other changes that might be coming to the restaurant include an ice cream machine to cool down an overheated customer, and plans for sugar-free desserts for diabetics are in the works.

The Holly Pond Café is located at 10800 U.S. Highway 278 East in Holly Pond.



HEATHER MANN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

The Holly Pond Café is now open for business.

Tips (from Front)

simply spray on, wait a couple of minutes, then wipe clean with a damp sponge or use a grill brush to clean away encrusted food.

Really messy surfaces might require a second application.

All advise rinsing your grill with water very well before placing food on the grates.

Tips on making your grill non-stick

• Cut an onion in half and rub the cut side on the cleaned, heated grill grate.

• Always spray with non-stick cooking spray before placing meat on grates.

Remember...

• Never spray accelerant on a charcoal or other type grill when it is lit. The fire has been known to come back up the stream of liquid and ignite the can.

• Best safety tip of all: Carefully read all instructions that come with your grill and with any starter that you might choose to use.

Food safety tips

• To ensure even cooking throughout your cut of chicken or beef, and with different sizes of meat, start with cutlets or breasts that are of a uniform thickness and size. Try using a kitchen scale to make sure your pieces are of about the same size.

• Butterfly thick chicken breasts by cutting across them horizontally with a sharp knife. Do not cut all the way through. Instead, open the two halves so they lie flat. Then place between two sheets of plastic wrap and pound flat with a meat mallet or rolling pin until the entire piece is the same thickness.

• Cook chicken to an internal temp of 165 degrees, not to a clock. Timing by a clock might leave some pieces under done in the middle.

Here's a great recipe for you to try

Balsamic BBQ Sauce

- 1 cup balsamic vinegar
- 3/4 cup ketchup
- 1/3 cup brown sugar
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

• Combine all the ingredients in a small saucepan and mix well. Simmer over medium heat until thickened, about 15 to 20 minutes.

• Season the meat with salt and pepper. Lightly coat meat with the BBQ sauce. Place the meat on the grill. Set remaining BBQ sauce aside to use for basting.

• Cook the chicken about 8 minutes per side, steaks starting at about 4 minutes per side and pork steaks about until a meat thermometer reads the desired temperature Continually brush the meat with BBQ sauce every few minutes. Remove the meat from the grill and let rest for at least 5 minutes. Baste remaining BBQ sauce on meat and serve.

• Alternately, the chicken can be baked in the oven. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Place the chicken skin side up in a baking dish and bake for 25 minutes. Remove the baking dish from the oven and spoon the BBQ sauce all over the top of the chicken. Return the baking dish to the oven and bake for another 15 minutes.

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NOTICE OF SALE In accordance with Section 32-13-1, Code of Alabama 1975, notice is hereby given to the owners, lienholders, and other interested parties that the following described abandoned property will be sold at public auction for cash to the highest bidder at 8:00 a.m., July 26, 2017 at 210 Campbell Drive, Hanceville, AL 35077. Seller reserves the right to reject any bid and the right to bid. 2002 Semi-Trailer, 1RNF50A272R008412 and 2002 Semi-Trailer 1RNF48A252R008216

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Cullman Lioness Club awards scholarships



GINGER HOGELAND, ED.D., CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER/FAST TRACK, CULLMAN COUNTY SCHOOLS

The Cullman Lioness Club recently awarded $1,000 scholarships to three students for promoting community service and leadership in the Cullman area.

Pictured from left to right are Josh Conway, Hanceville; Kelsey Styles, Cullman; and Story Hogeland, Good Hope.

Submitted by Ginger Hogeland

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County school board rolls out new buses, announces new principals

Heather Mann
Tribune Correspondent

CULLMAN – In an effort to increase student safety, the Cullman County Board of Education announced at its meeting Thursday evening that it will debut 20 new school buses equipped with outside security cameras. Last year, the state of Alabama experienced 1,752 instances of cars illegally passing school buses when the crossing arms (stop signs) were out in a single day. To help discourage and prevent drivers from doing this in the future, the new buses each have two cameras located beneath the crossing arms to catch cars that pass illegally. Additionally, all buses currently in use will be outfitted with security cameras of their own.

Along with the two outside cameras, the new buses will feature four inside cameras, easier-to-open windows, easier braking and driver seatbelts that will be more visible to police cars monitoring traffic. The buses will be replacing the 20 oldest models in use: 10 from Fairview, 8 from Hanceville and 2 from Good Hope. The retired buses were declared as surplus and will be sold by sealed bid.

The board was set to recognize the Good Hope High School InSPIRESS (Innovative System Project for the Increased Recruitment of Emerging STEM Students) teams for their achievements, but they had to move the recognition to a different meeting as neither team was present. The teams to be recognized were Team E.T. (Dillon Price, Alec Doss, Michael Moran, Jerrica Vincent, Joanna Crauswell, Breanna Holcombe and Sadie Abbott) and Team Atlantis (Madison Lowery, Jacob Smith, Angel Cortes, Cohen White, Bailey Starnes, Dulce Castellanos and Josie McDonald).

The board approved Good Hope's request for an out-of-state field trip for two of its InSPIRESS winners, Madison Lowery and Jacob Smith. The two will be traveling to Washington D.C. in July to present at NASA headquarters, continuing the school's legacy of excellence in the InSPIRESS program.

After approving the last meeting's minutes, the board approved changes in principals for three schools:

- **Amanda Victoria Johnson** was promoted from assistant principal of Cold Springs Elementary to principal.
- **Tonya Cupp**, previously principal of Arab City Elementary, will serve as the principal of Good Hope Primary after Janet Mattox's retirement.
- **Robin Heath Netherton**, previous assistant principal at Holly Pond Middle, will replace Ferrell Runge as Vinemont High's principal after his retirement.

Next on the agenda was the approval of Kyle Chamblee to teach drivers' ed at West Point High, followed by an approval for Vinemont Middle to use school funds to pay select teachers $22 per hour to develop a comprehensive reading plan for the school over the summer. The board also approved Good Hope High's request to hire on three students to do summer work. The three will be paid minimum wage through the school's funds. All county schools were then authorized to dispose of obsolete/non-working equipment (technological and otherwise) as well as broken and non-repairable furniture for the 2017-18 school year.

The board officially moved to appoint Amanda Johnson, Tonya Cupp and Robin Netherton as probationary principals of their respective new schools, then appointed the following people as contract principals for the 2017-18 year:

- **Kim Brown** - Hanceville Elementary/Vinemont Elementary
- **Tim Burleson** - Cold Springs High
- **Kim Butler** - Holly Pond Elementary/High
- **Chris Chambers** - Child Development Center
- **Jimmy Collins** - Hanceville High
- **Alan Dunkling** - Good Hope Middle
- **Clark Farley** - West Point Middle
- **Chris Gambrill** - Parkside/Fairview High
- **Chuck Gambrill** - Holly Pond Elementary/ Middle
- **Marty Hardman** - Fairview Elementary
- **John Hood** - Good Hope High
- **Tony Johnson** - Parkside/Vinemont Elementary/Hanceville Elementary
- **Michael Jones** - West Point Intermediate
- **Susan Melton** - Garden City/Good Hope Elementary
- **Richard Orr** - Parkside
- **Cyndi Roden** - Hanceville Middle
- **Karen Sparks** - Holly Pond Elementary
- **Vicky Spear** - Vinemont Middle
- **Kevin Sullins** - Harmony
- **Billy Troutman** - CATA
- **Trina Walker** - Fairview Middle
- **Gina Webb** - Welti
- **Angie Yarbrough** - West Point Elementary
- **Heith Yearwood** - West Point High

Two new school policies were put in place to help students in the coming years. The Jason Flatt Act aims to help schools recognize and act on suicidal risks, as well as recognize and prevent the harassment and violence that may contribute to teenage suicide. The next policy stated that "the Board does not discriminate against students or their parents or guardians on the basis of their religious viewpoints or their expression of such viewpoint." The policy will ensure that students will be neither penalized nor rewarded for their religious expression, and that they may pray and participate in religious activities before, during and after school so long as they don't violate any rights established by the State of Alabama or the U.S. Constitution.

The board approved the April bills, salaries and financial statements, then approved the maintenance department's bids for Vinemont High's electrical upgrades and Hanceville Middle's re-roofing, renovation and electrical needs. Also approved was a contract renewal for Jake Marshall Service, Inc. and a request of easement for a Cold Springs driveway.

A request came from the transportation department to provide buses for the Friends of FCA group, which the board approved. The group will take five buses to different venues around Cullman city from July 10-14 and will provide the drivers' pay and bus fuel. The board then approved several insurance IDs.

Following much confusion during months leading up to this year's graduation, the graduation dates for the Class of 2018 were moved a week back from May 19 & 20 to May 26 & 27, pending approval from Wallace State Community College. The decision came from several schools reporting trouble trying to calculate valedictorian and salutatorian GPAs in time to prepare for graduation.

Before adjourning, Superintendent Shane Barnette delivered his report: the additional safety cameras for all existing school buses have been purchased, there will be a Business and Industry Appreciation Reception on Thursday, June 29, from 2-4:00 p.m., he thanked all board members that attended the AASB Summer Conference, and August 1 will be Institution Day at Wallace State starting at 8:30 a.m.

The next Cullman County Board of Education meeting will be Thursday, July 13, at 6 p.m. with a work session at 5:30 in the central office board room.



PHOTOS COURTESY HEATHER MANN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

One of the new bus models with cameras below the crossing arm (stop sign)



Superintendent Shane Barnette, standing, shows board members the interior of one of the new school buses.

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Cullman officially welcomes its first escape game venue

W.C. Mann
craig@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – On Thursday morning the city of Cullman welcomed its first place to play popular escape games by cutting the ribbon on Escape Cullman.

Escape Cullman celebrated three weeks of business on the day of its ribbon cutting, and The Tribune stopped by to see how things were going.

"Very good," said co-owner Allison Meriwether. "We've had a bunch of groups come through; everybody seemed to enjoy themselves, and said they'll be back for game two when it's open."

And about that second escape room, Meriwether commented, "We hope to be open in August. We just got our second game to us, and we hope to start putting it together soon."

The second escape room will have a bank heist theme.

Both rooms' scenarios are designed to accommodate seven to nine participants for a one-hour challenge.

Meriwether and business partner Tyson Pruett also plan to install other games on the facility's second floor.

According to Meriwether, "We're kind of thinking two 30-minute games. Couples can go for date night, and we have some ideas for kids' games."

Escape Cullman, located at 103 Third St. SW is open Thursday through Saturday from 4-10 p.m., and Sunday 1-6 p.m.

Players are encouraged to pre-book online at www.escapecullman.com. Find them on Facebook at www.facebook.com/escapecullman.

See our previous stories at: http://cullmansense.com/articles/2017/04/04/going-out-get-locked-escape-cullman-coming-soon and http://cullmansense.com/articles/2017/06/01/exclusive-preview-inside-escape-cullman.



CULLMAN AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Cullman officially welcomed Escape Cullman to town with a ribbon cutting on Thursday, June 22.

Hanceville mayor gives update on Confederate monuments; Met-South ready to build

W.C. Mann
craig@cullmansense.com

HANCEVILLE – Mayor Kenneth Nail has not spent much time discussing with the Hanceville City Council his offer to receive any Confederate monuments the city of New Orleans is willing to give up; he cites a law that bars mayors from privately soliciting support from council members.

On Thursday, he addressed the issue during the portion of the council meeting reserved for his remarks.

Nail noted the amount of publicity the matter has generated, and stated, "Our intent is always to honor the city, and not put the city in a bad light. Our intent is to uplift people and celebrate people's struggles, and celebrate history. We can't forget our history. But if we should get a positive (response) from New Orleans, I will come back to the council before anything is done."

In light of recent news from New Orleans that Mayor Mitch Landrieu might put the monuments up for sale to the highest bidder, Nail added, "I'll be honest with you; I don't think, about some things I've read the last few days, that it will ever happen. I would not ask the council, nor the taxpayers of Hanceville, to go in debt to buy something."

Met-South

Nail announced that site preparation has been completed for the construction of the new manufacturing facility of Metrology South (Met-South). County and city crews finished work Saturday, and the site passed inspection Wednesday.

With only a task of placing gravel on the parking area, the mayor was ready to call Met-South owner Don Jesse.

"They called Mr. Jesse and told him they are ready to build," said Nail.

"There's no doubt they're ready to start building but I don't know exactly when they're going to start."

Nail also pointed out that the project has come in under budget, so Hanceville should be able to receive full reimbursement from the state for its costs.

The council also passed an amended resolution concerning Met-South's tax abatement, correcting the company's legal name to Metrology South.

The original resolution, previously passed, granted Met-South a 10-year exemption from:

- State and local non-educational ad valorem taxes
- Construction-related transaction taxes, except those levied for education
- Mortgage and recording taxes

Budget

The council voted to amend the City budget to account for the expenditure of $4,500 to replace the library's HVAC unit, and to add $119,000 in revenue this year from the City's half cent sales tax enacted in December. The tax revenue had not been figured into the originally approved budget.

Community yard sale

One of the biggest topics of discussion during the meeting wasn't even on the agenda.

The council heard a request for, and informally approved plans for, a community yard sale July 13-15.

Space for vendors will be available around Veterans Park on a first-come, first-served basis; and local citizens will also be able to hold yard sales on their own properties.

Supporters hope that the community yard sale will grow and become an annual event that will draw visitors from out of town.

The Hanceville City Council meets the second and fourth Thursdays of each month in the Hanceville City Hall auditorium at 6:30 p.m. with work session at 6 p.m. The public is invited to attend.

Obituary Announcements: June 20-22

Jonathan "J.E." Whiteside, 90 of Arley, passed away on June 20, 2017, in Arley, Alabama. He was born on December 13, 1926 in Greenville, South Carolina. J.E. proudly served his country in the United States Navy for two years and is a WWII Veteran. He was a member of Laurel Baptist Church in Greenville, South Carolina for 65 years, where he served as a Deacon, Sunday School Teacher, and on the building committee. After moving to Alabama in 2014, he attended Liberty Baptist Church. J.E. was a member of the Greenville Fire Department from 1947-1982, where he retired as Major. Funeral services held on Friday, June 23, 2017 at Laurel Baptist Church in Greenville, South Carolina. Burial in Greenville Memorial Gardens. J.E. is survived by his son, Gary Whiteside and his wife Lindsay; daughter, Linda Bell and her husband Steve; brothers, Calvin Whiteside and his wife Bonnie and Alvin Whiteside and his wife Joan. He was "Papa" to 4 grandchildren, Justin Bell and his wife Wendy, Lucas Bell and his wife Morgan, Courtney Bell Smith and her husband Derek, and Anna Whiteside Read and her husband Ryan; 3 great-grandchildren, Colton, Camryn and Vivianne Bell. He was preceded in death by his wife Margaret Bishop Whiteside. The family wishes to thank the staff of Comfort Care Hospice for their thoughtful and caring support. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the church or charity of your choice.

Funeral services for Betty Goodwin Adams, 84 of Vinemont will be 11 a.m. Saturday, June 24 at Moss-Service Funeral Home Chapel, Rev. Randy Makemson officiating. Burial will be at Vinemont Baptist Church Cemetery. Mrs. Adams passed away Wednesday at Woodland Village Health Care Center. She was born in Cullman August 6, 1932 to Carl and Fannie Sides Goodwin. She was a homemaker. She is preceded in death by her parents, husband; Hue Gene Funeral services for Betty Goodwin Adams, 84 of Vinemont will be 11 a.m. Saturday, June 24 at Moss-Service Funeral Home Chapel, Rev. Randy Makemson officiating. Burial will be at Vinemont Baptist Church Cemetery. Mrs. Adams passed away Wednesday at Woodland Village Health Care Center. She was born in Cullman August 6, 1932 to Carl and Fannie Sides Goodwin. She was a homemaker. She is preceded in death by her parents, husband; Hue Gene Adams, son; Walter Neal Adams, great granddaughter; Madison Kaufman, brothers; Charles and James Goodwin. She is survived by sons; Norman (Sandra) Adams, Alan (Jan) Adams, granddaughters; Tara (Josh) Lavigne, Casey (Ben) Kaufman, great grandchildren; Zachary Koepke, Layna Kaufman, Olivia Kaufman, Haley Lavigne, Brooke Lavigne, special friends; Lisa and Patty. The family would like to thank the staff, nurses and all the cna's on the west hall and Melanie Riley with Kindred Hospice for all of the love and care shown to our mom during her stay at Woodland Village. We would also like to thank mom's roommate and special friend Patty for watching after and being mom's best friend during her stay. Visitation will be Friday 6-8 at the funeral home. The family would like to thank the staff, nurses and all the CNAs on the west hall and Melanie Riley with Kindred Hospice for all of the love and care shown to our mom during her stay at Woodland Village. We would also like to thank mom's roommate and special friend Patty for watching after and being mom's best friend during her stay.

Funeral services for Michael Joe Netherton, 56 of Addison, will be at 2 p.m. on Saturday, June 24, 2017 in the Chapel of Cullman Funeral Home. Burial will follow at Netherton Cemetery with Bro. Delbert Freeman officiating. Cullman Funeral Home directing. Mr. Netherton was born on August 8, 1960, and passed away on Wednesday. June 21, 2017 at Cullman Regional Medical Center. Michael was an electrician at Cavailer Homes in Addison, he is preceded in death by his father Wilburn Netherton. Survivors include his Mother – Ethel Jean Waite Netherton; Daughter – Brittany (Brandon) Green; Son – Jordan Netherton; Grandson – Jason Green; 5 – Sisters – Diane Beall, Deborah Rodgers, Patricia Rodgers, Shelby Twilley & Angie Netherton; 6 – Brothers – Brian Netherton, Randy Netherton, Greg Netherton, Chris Netherton, Shannon Netherton & Ken Netherton. The family will receive friends for visitation at the funeral home on Saturday, June 24, 2017 from 12 p.m. until 2 p.m.

Melody Ruth Dupree, 56 of Lynn, entered into rest on Thursday, June 22, 2017 at ECM Hospital in Florence surrounded by her loving family and friends. Ms. Dupree was born on December 28, 1960 in Brattleboro, Vermont. She attended Brattleboro Union High School. She enjoyed fishing, drawing, and loved her dogs, friends, children, grandchildren and family, whether blood or adopted. She was known as "Mel" or "Mel Mel". Visitation will be held on Saturday, June 24, 2017 from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. at Nichols Funeral Home in Haleyville, where services will be held at 1 p.m. Brother Richard Bittinger will officiate. Melody is survived by her daughters, Deanna (Michael) Bascom, and Nena (Jason) Aldridge; brothers, Jerry (Sabrina) Downing, Geoffrey (Lori) Downing, and Butch McDurfee; sisters, Crystal (Steven) Thompson, Cindy (Fred) Pike, Debbie (David) LaValley, and Roxanne McDurfee; she was "Mima" to 6 grandchildren, Jared Aldridge, Jasmine Baker, Jack Baker, Blake Aldridge, Thomas Bascom and Myles Bascom; best friend and roommate, Curtis Dickinson; friend/daughter, Becka Bridgmon, and friend/sister, Linda Alexander. She was preceded in death by her mother, Lillian McDurfee; step-father, Douglas McDurfee; and brother, Gordon Downing.

Free Obituary Listings

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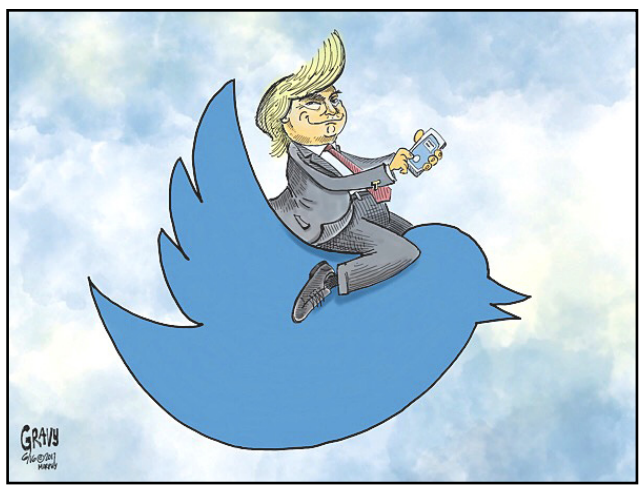
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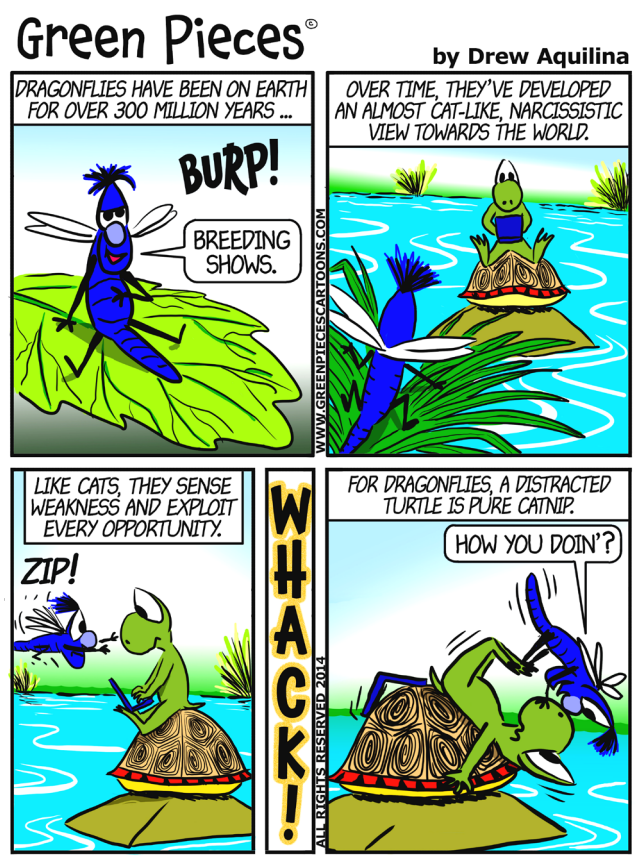
Editorial Cartoons







Comic



Poet's Corner

Climbing

By: Randy C. Hale

Two squirrels are moving through the large
pine outside my back door this morning.

They scamper from limb to limb,
sometimes appearing as swirling
in flawless motion.

Up one limb together,
within inches and then apart, one to the right
and the other to the left and
then together again.

Oh, the freedom to scale the tall
evergreens, with sure footing, the fleet of
feet ascending to the clouds against the
blue sky. Perched in these same trees,
are birds singing anthems
without instruments or rehearsals. Different
colors and sizes, blending high pitch
and low, singing from their very soul.

There must be an invisible maestro, waving
his arms, directing this perfect melody of life.

Inside my heart, I climb!

FOXGLOVES & FIREFLIES

Broken hearts and 'a little thought with eyes'

Loretta Gillespie
Tribune Correspondent

There is just no good answer to the age-old question, "Why do bad things happen to good people?"

Many have tried to come up with some comforting and reasonable sounding answer, but there really isn't one. You can come up with all the platitudes you wish, heartfelt as they may be, they still don't answer the question.

The one thing I can tell you is that the good people that bad things happen to seem to have the ability to lean closer to one another, and closer to God in times of crisis, and that is the difference in say, a family who is not tight-knit, or people who do not know the love of God, and the lifting of a weight when you can give your cares and burdens to Him.

However, that doesn't necessarily take away the pain of loss, the heartbreak and grief when a loved one is taken from us, nor does it give us total peace when we close our eyes at night and the hurt is so great that it's almost overwhelming.

There is no answer to why these things happen. They happen because someone had one too many drinks and got behind the wheel of a car, or because someone was offended, or for no good reason at all – they just happen.

When tragedy does strike, there are always plenty of people to lift us up in prayer, to give what solace they can, and to carry the burden with us for the first few days and weeks, but then life goes on, and we must try to figure out how to best carry the burden of loss on a daily basis.

One thing that has given me immeasurable comfort in times of the passing of a loved one is the following story. It is true, and came from someone that I've known all of my life. To me, it is a message from God to sustain us and give us hope.

My friend left this life for 22 minutes in the summer of 1971. She was in the hospital on a heart monitor when she drifted away. The monitor immediately sounded the alarm and medical personnel came running into her room as the call 'Code Blue' went out over the floor.

I know this because she saw it.

Later, she would tell me that she repeated everything they did and said to them, but they brushed it off, saying that it was impossible for her to know what happened during those first minutes.

After the initial flurry of movement, which she described as seeing from below her, she was somewhere else. She saw the much discussed 'light' and said that there was an even brighter light further along.

"I wanted to go into that light more than I've ever wanted anything," she said.

"Somehow I just knew that the answer to every question was in that light and I felt pulled along toward it."

She describes the sensation as being, 'a little thought with eyes,' because she no longer had a cumbersome body to hold her to this life. "I was totally aware of everything," she said.

But the thought of her two small children intruded on her journey and suddenly she was drawn back to where she had come from.

"It felt like trying to squeeze myself into the neck of a bottle," she explained. "Then I gasped and started breathing."

Years later, when my mother died, I had her tell me the story over and over again. Afterward I asked her if the experience seemed like a distant dream after almost 20 years had passed, "Oh, no, just the opposite," she said quickly.

"It seems like the most real thing that has ever happened to me, and the rest of this life," she waved her arms to indicate the area where we sat, "This seems like a dream."

Another decade passed and I sat beside her as she spoke to a grief support group, publically telling her story for the first time. Grieving women sat all around us, tears coursing down their cheeks as the story unfolded.

"All I can tell you is that where I was during that time...it was pure love," she described, tears welling in her own eyes as she shared her story, even after 46 years had passed.

"I knew without a doubt that I had been there before, and that I was finally back where I was supposed to be... it felt like home."

She went on to try to make the group understand something that is hard to grasp for some, and impossible to believe for others.

I knew she was struggling to make them understand that it was exactly as she said, but words couldn't convey it well enough.

"In that light was peace and love like I'd never known. It encompassed me and filled me with its essence, but it wasn't my time, so I had to come back."

I believe that God gives certain people the opportunity to glimpse a fraction of what Heaven is like, then sends them back on a mission to help us understand the mystery that everyone will encounter one of these days.

That message gives us hope; it gives us some measure of peace to have the assurance of our loved ones entering that place of light, love and everlasting peace.

No matter what happened here on earth in the aftermath, our loved ones are instantly on that journey into the place where peace passeth all human understanding. They have no pain, no horror, no heartache, in that place, only love - forever love.

Her interpretation of being 'a little thought with eyes' is probably the best description of a soul that I've ever heard. The fact that she was out for 22 minutes is incredible.

Her story is one of many that are told of that realm. In 1971, though, I had never heard it before.

However, coming from her, hearing the wonder and excitement in her voice, I never questioned her story, and I still don't. I know it's real, more real than the room I'm sitting in, or the chair you are sitting on right now.

It still doesn't answer the question of why bad things happen to good people, but it sends a message every single time this story is told.

A message of love that we can hold onto, a reaffirmation of what we've been told for thousands of years.

We don't have to understand it now, all we have to do is believe in His promises, and continue to tell His story.

Hearts break every day. Sometimes the sound is almost audible, the sound of those breaking hearts.

But, this story always comes to mind when I can hear them shattering around me, because I know that in that place arms are waiting to welcome them, and love surrounds them for all time.

OPINION

Seriously, where's this competitor of which you speak?

Noah Galilee
noah@cullmantribune.com

Call it cocky, arrogant or just plain rude but when I look around, there's not one single competitor in sight. Nothing has changed since CullmanSense was launched in 2011, nor did it change when we bought The Cullman Tribune in 2016. But I keep hearing people refer to a competitor.

Honestly, I don't know who or what that would be. A blog is not in the same lane as what we do. And I know people are not referring to an antiquated special interest group-owned, AP story-pumping newspaper. So who is this mystery competitor? The only one I can think of is ourselves. We compete daily against what we did the day before, constantly focusing on improving. I don't have the time to sit around, reading someone's sad attempt at telling a complete story, nor do I have time to run around to all the elected officials begging them to rebid legal ads.

Oh, did I just type that? Oh well, it's the truth, and a sad truth at that.

My main focus is creating more positions with The Cullman Tribune in order to fully cover all of Cullman County. We don't sit around in secret meetings discussing how we are going to take over. We just do it naturally because we are invested in all of our communities.

When we started off I would hear people talk about our competitor. When someone says the same thing today they get the stock reply of, "Seriously, where's this competitor you speak of?" Most of the time they will just laugh then say, "For real, what about them. What's your plan?"

The plan is to continue producing quality news, entertainment, educational, sports, lifestyle and feature stories pertaining to our communities. If you're a newspaper publisher and that's not your main focus then you need to pack your bags and go work in public relations. The same goes for wannabe reporters, photographers and bloggers.

We've been the underdog for some time now. However, that changed two years ago when you all graciously voted us The Best of The Best for local newspapers, coming in second to the newspaper who hosts the "competition." How did I know it all changed? Simple. That category no longer exists. Why? Would you want to be beat down in your own contest?

All that did was show us that you all, the readers, were happy to have something different, something that was actually local. So while some may think we have a competitor, just know none of us see it that way. No one does what we do, unless it's copied after we publish it, and it will continue to be that way for as long as we can tell.

Now that's out of the way, let me leave with you with a few kind words from the artist Big Sean.

"The underdog just turned into the wolf and the hunger steady grows

Yeah, I call shots while you call off

Never takin' summer or fall off

When you stay that committed to it, you just fall down and never fall off"

Big Sean – "Bounce Back"

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CAN YOU BREAK OUT?

2017 Educator Alumni Connection

June 28, 2017 8:30 AM - 3 PM

Location: Wallace State Campus

This exciting professional development workshop will introduce you to educational versions of the popular trend of escape rooms. Aimee Bates, Technology Integration Specialist for Cullman City Schools and Susan Boyd, Library Media Specialist for Cullman High School, will show you how to create subject/content-related tasks and clues in order to solve riddles or complete tasks to unlock physical or digital locks and "BREAKOUT" of the class. Aimee will also demonstrate a digital breakout and show participants how to access free resources to use this technique in their classes. Participants will receive lunch and a certificate documenting 6.5 hours of professional development activities.

$15 for WSCC Alumni
$20 for all others
Includes lunch

This easily adaptable workshop is appropriate for educators teaching K – College level

Presented by WALLACE STATE ALUMNI

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Jonathan Echols, D.M.D., P.C. • Ashley Holladay, D.M.D.