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VOL. 144 • 50¢ PER COPY | AUGUST 8, 2017 | USPS 139-700 • NO. 53

Deeper dive into the Duck River Dam



FACEBOOK/DUCK RIVER RESERVOIR PROJECT

With the reservoir at "full pool" in April 2016, water flowed down the spillway into the rectangular stilling basin at the bottom before rejoining the old riverbed

W.C. Mann
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CULLMAN – Since the Utilities Board of the City of Cullman filed suit against the designers and builders of the Duck River Dam, quite a few readers have raised questions and offered commentary about just what the dam and reservoir are supposed to do.

From The Cullman Tribune Facebook page, (unedited for spelling/ grammar):

• "Water leaking into the dam? Is there open cavities inside the walls or something? I figured it would be solid concrete since this isnt a hydro electric dam."

• "Not getting a drop of water out of it, but we got walking trails!" Reply: "And paying for it."

• "Why haven't they started the pipe project yet? Isn't that suppose to be a given?"

• "Guess I won't be fishing there any time soon."

• "What's the main purpose of this dam." Reply 1: "Supply the city with a water source." Reply 2: "Scenery to look at when we walk the trails."

The Tribune looked for some answers.

Purpose of the dam and reservoir

According to a document from the Utilities Board of the City of Cullman related to the lawsuit, "The purpose of the Duck River Dam is to create an approximately 640-acre reservoir that will serve as a raw water source."

Cullman Economic Development Agency Director Dale Greer offered more detail. "(The) purpose was to construct a dam to create a reservoir to impound water to serve as backup source and future supply for the area. Previous engineering studies had indicated Lake Catoma was not sufficient to continue to meet the water supply needs of the residential, commercial, industrial and agricultural needs of Cullman County. During the 2006 drought Lake Catoma was down 26 feet below full pool and the lake was not sufficient to meet our need for another 60 days. Even the most doubting individuals saw the forecast of a looming water shortage in Cullman County was accurate without a new supply source. The community growth in the past 10 years would imply our water needs will continue to grow."

The Duck River Reservoir will supply raw water to a treatment plant, that will then supply drinking water to the city of Cullman. Cullman's Water Department also supplies several other area water agencies.

While not cogent to the primary purpose, the Army Corps of Engineers allowed for certain recreational uses of the reservoir and its boundaries. The lake has been stocked with fish, and it was intended to be opened to fishing and other recreational activities after completion of the dam and one year after the filling of the reservoir. The land perimeter contains walking and bicycle trails.

Design of the dam and reservoir

The Utilities Board document describes the design: "The dam includes a center spillway section constructed primarily of roller compacted concrete, flanked on both sides by earth core/rock fill embankments. The concrete spillway section incorporates an internal concrete corridor, known as the 'Gallery,' that runs the length of the spillway (perpendicular to the riverbed) and into the west embankment."

The gallery allows workers inside the dam to inspect and make repairs when needed to the internal structure. The gallery also houses electrical equipment. The dam is not designed to generate hydroelectric power, but it does contain powered equipment to control gates and valves that regulate water flow over the dam and downstream.

Rising water in the gallery following the Christmas flood of 2015 gave workers their first indication that something was wrong with the dam. It reached electrical controls, and shut down the valve and gate controls until they could be repaired.

According to the same Utilities Board document drawn from previously, the dam will also feature "an 'Intake Tower' in the reservoir to collect raw water for transmission to a pumping station and water treatment facility and a 'Stilling Basin' on the downstream side of the dam to dissipate the force of water flowing over the spillway before the water enters the downstream riverbed."

The stilling basin will prevent water coming over the spillway (something that is intended to happen from time to time) from hitting the riverbed at the foot of the dam hard enough to erode the bed and possibly undermine the dam.

Pipeline project

The intake tower will draw water

» PAGE 7

Pet of the Week: Help sweet Dixie find her forever home

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CULLMAN – Ryan Whisenhunt of the Cullman County Animal Shelter introduces us to Dixie, the shelter's featured Pet of the Week.

"This week we would like to introduce Dixie. Dixie is a lab mix that is approximately 8 years old. She has a sweet and calm demeanor with a low energy level. She is available for adoption at a reduced rate of $25 because she is already spayed and microchipped. The $25 rate also includes her receiving a rabies vaccination, 5-in-1 shot, general exam by the vet, free limited day trial of pet insurance offered by 25Petwatch, and a free bag of dog food (pay sales tax only) at Pet Depot if the person takes their receipt."

The person who surrendered Dixie to the shelter reported that she is good with children, and the shelter staff added that she likes to play in water.

Said Whisenhunt, "The staff at Cullman County Animal Control and Shelter would be blessed to see Dixie go to her new 'forever' home to be loved and nurtured."



RYAN WHISENHUNT

Dixie is a female lab mix, approximately 8 years old.

THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE
AUGUST 8, 2017

Miss. teen drowns at Smith Lake; 2nd drowning this summer

Wendy Sack
wendy@cullmantribune.com

WINSTON COUNTY – A 16-year-old boy drowned at Smith Lake early Saturday evening, according to the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency and Winston County authorities, who said the incident was reported at approximately 6:30 p.m. According to ABC3340, Winston County Coroner Larry Dilland identified the victim as Thomas Lee Bales, of Aberdeen, Mississippi. Dilland said Bales was recovered from the water deceased. This is the second drowning this summer at Smith Lake.

Dilland said that Bales was at the lake on a field trip with his church group, according to the ABC3340 report.

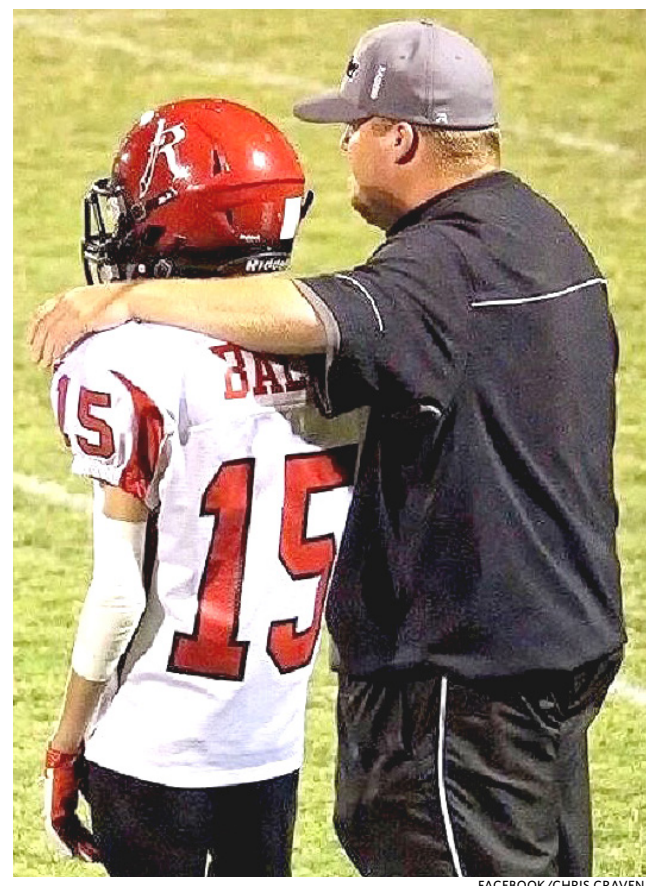
The Monroe Journal reported that a prayer vigil was held last night at Oak Hill Academy, where Bales was a student and athlete.

Oak Hill Academy head coach Chris Craven posted on Facebook late Saturday night: "We lost a great young man on our football team at Oak Hill Academy (Saturday) in a swimming accident. He was a yes sir, no sir kind of guy. A very hard worker. He showed no fear in the face of adversity. His smile lit up the room...He was the definition of loyalty and integrity, putting his teammates before himself at all times. I loved him like a son. I will miss you, #9 T-Lee Bales."

Marine Patrol Troopers are investigating the incident.

Bales is the second person to drown at Smith Lake this summer.

On July 3, Kenneth Claude Sampsell, 62, of Crane Hill drowned while swimming with family off a dock at a residence near Rock Creek. He was pronounced dead at the scene.



FACEBOOK/CHRIS CRAVEN

Oak Hill Academy head coach Chris Craven posted this photo of Thomas Lee Bales on Facebook Saturday night.

Operation Christmas Child kick-off event Aug. 14

David Ozment
Contributed

CULLMAN – The Cullman County Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Ministry will kick off this year's campaign with a community event, Monday, Aug. 14, at 6 p.m. at East Side Baptist Church.

A goal of 10,000 gift-filled shoeboxes from Cullman County has been established to be delivered to children in need around the world.

The meeting will include a description of OCC promotional material, ideas for successful shoebox programs and a special DVD message from Franklin Graham, president, Samaritan's Purse. Free OCC decorated shoeboxes will be given away, while supplies last.

Door prizes will include items that can be used in shoeboxes.

The ladies of East Side Baptist Church will serve refreshments.

More than 80 churches and many individuals from Cullman County participate in this Samaritan's Purse Christian mission program.

More than 10 million shoeboxes are collected worldwide each year.

Each box contains the gospel message and each child receiving a box can enroll in a 12-step discipleship program, "The Greatest Journey."

Millions of children and adults have accepted Jesus Christ as their savior by participating in this effective mission program.

Northbrook Baptist Church, Fairview First United Methodist Church and Crosshaven Church have been selected as shoebox drop-off locations for Cullman County.

OCC collection week is Nov. 13-20.

Other OCC events include an entry in the Cullman Fair Parade, an exhibit at the Cullman County Fair and a joint promotion with Chick-fil-A.

For additional Operation Christmas Child information, visit www.samaritanspurse.org/occ.

Hanceville's Kids' Night Out delights many

Heather Mann
Tribune Correspondent

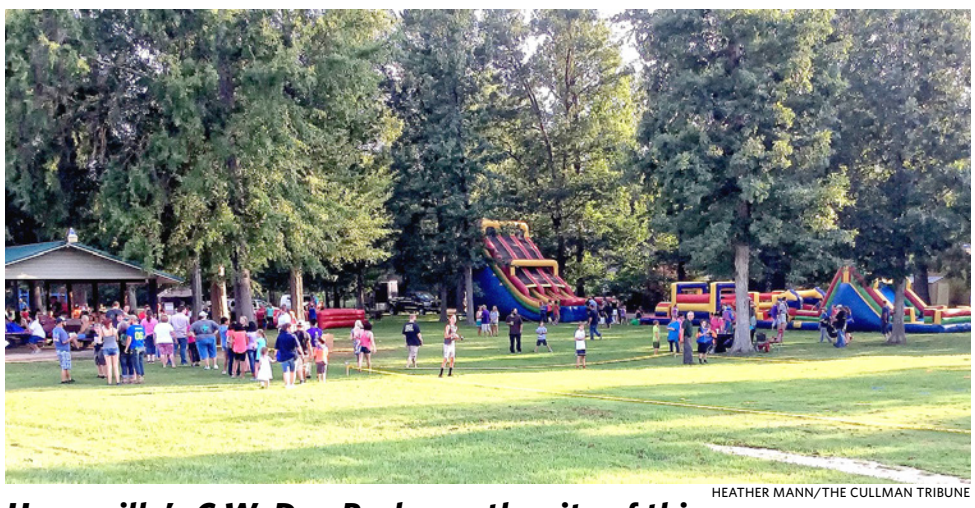
HANCEVILLE – C.W. Day Park was overrun Friday evening as the City of Hanceville held its annual Kids' Night Out celebration, giving children and their families one more night of fun before the kids go back to school this week.

Half of the park was filled with emergency responder vehicles for the children to see.

The Hanceville Police Department had cruisers lined up in front of the pavilions, and several municipalities were represented by their fire trucks along the corner of the parking lot; to the delight of many kids, two helicopters (one from the Cullman Police Department, the other from Air Evac Lifeteam) sat in the middle of the pavement. Also on scene was a trailer with a house fire simulator, and everyone in attendance got the chance to see the Air Evac helicopter take flight.

Behind the vehicles, the park had attractions for visitors of all ages: large inflatables and bouncy castles, a mechanical bull, a rock-climbing wall, archery and the city pool, along with free food and drinks for all.

Area public schools start off the 2017-2018 year this Wednesday, Aug. 9.



HEATHER MANN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Hanceville's C.W. Day Park was the site of this year's Kids' Night Out celebration.

3 local students earn degrees from Troy University

Matt Clower
Troy University

TROY – Troy University is pleased to recognize students who completed the requirements for graduation during the Summer Semester and Term 5 of the 2016/2017 academic year.

Local residents who graduated include:

- Jordan Gray, of Cullman, Bachelor of Science
- Wesley Hendrix, of Cullman, Bachelor of Science
- Laura Weaver, of Cullman, Master of Science in strategic communication

The Summer Semester includes graduates from the Troy campus.

Term 5 graduates include students taking classes at Troy's campuses in Dothan, Phenix City and Montgomery, along with teaching sites outside of Alabama and online.

Wallace State named Innovation of the Year Award winner for Guided Pathways Model

Russell Moore
WSCC

HANCEVILLE – Wallace State Community College has been named a 2017 Innovation of the Year Award winner for its Guided Pathways Model initiative. The award is given by the League for Innovation in the Community College.

Wallace State won in the Leadership and Organization category.

"We are deeply honored to have been recognized by the League of Innovation for Innovation of the Year. Wallace State's transformation began through Achieving the Dream and has broadened through the AACC Pathways Project. The Pathways model assures that students have every opportunity to complete what they start and to earn their degree in two years," said Wallace State President Dr. Vicki Karolewics.

The Guided Pathways model is a new organizational model that comprises specific curricular maps grouped around broad meta-majors for Wallace State students. The framework lends itself to students' changing programs within a meta-major without having to start over. The four meta-majors are Liberal Arts/General Studies, Applied Technologies, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) and Health Science. Electives are replaced with specific courses that are in alignment with learning outcomes and program goals.

Wallace State was one of 30 colleges to be chosen to participate in the Pathways Project spearheaded by the American Association of Community Colleges. The project is funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Wallace State was commended for its creativity, efficiency, cost effectiveness and timeliness in regard to the Pathways Model for its students.

Making up Wallace State's Guided Pathways Model Implementation Team are employees Dana Adams, Dr. Mary Barnes, Suzanne Harbin, Mattie Hudson, Matthew McCrickard, Karen Morris, Renee Quick, Wes Rakestraw, April Sutherland, Amanda Tillman and Christine Wiggins.

The League's Innovation of the Year Award recognizes innovations that reflect extraordinary achievement and the spirit of innovation and experimentation upon which it was founded.

The League's Innovation of the Year competition was devised as a way to recognize significant innovations at Alliance member colleges. These innovations reflect capstone achievements and the continuing renewal of the spirit of innovation and experimentation upon which the League was founded. The award is designed to recognize faculty, staff and administrators at member colleges who have created and implemented innovative programs, practices, partnerships, policies and activities that improve the institution's ability to serve students and the community.

More information on the League for Innovation is available at www.league.org

For more information about Wallace State, visit www.wallacestate.edu.

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Telephone: 256-739-1351 Fax: 1-256-739-4422

Humble Roots, LLC

Published Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday 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: robin@cullmansense.com

ANNUALLY BASED RATES

Cullman.....$75.00
Outside Cullman.....$85.00

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Smith joins chamber

Leah Bolin
Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce

CULLMAN – I am pleased to announce the appointment of Wesley Smith as director of entrepreneurship & education at the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Center.

Wesley returns to his hometown after spending the last 15 years in Birmingham. He was born and raised in Cullman, went through the Cullman City Schools system and graduated from Cullman High in 1997. He then attended Wallace State Community College and later Auburn University, where he studied public relations. While at Wallace State, he was on full scholarship, served as Student Government Association president and was on the Cullman Outlook 21 Community Planning Council.

After college, Wesley accepted a marketing job with Red Bull North America and eventually moved to sales in order to help introduce Red Bull to north Alabama. In addition to his sales and marketing experience, Wesley spent many years as site manager for the City Stages Music Festival and dually served on the Junior Board of Directors. He also served on the Board of Directors for the Birmingham Arts and Music Festival. For the last six years, Wesley has been a sales representative for United-Johnson Brothers of Alabama (UJBAL).

In his spare time, Wesley enjoys listening to live music, disc golfing, collecting vinyl records and giving back to his community. He's spent the past few years serving on the Junior Board of Directors for Firehouse Ministries, which benefits the Firehouse Shelter, Birmingham's largest shelter for homeless men.

I have had the opportunity to work with Wesley on a number of projects. His experience, his understanding of our community and his passion for entrepreneurship are attributes that make him an exceptional team member.

Please join us in welcoming Wesley to the Chamber team and back to our community.



CULLMAN AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Wesley Smith

Bernard Blues and BBQ Festival set for Sept. 9-10

Joyce Nix
St. Bernard Prep

CULLMAN – Saint Bernard Prep School is adding a fall festival this year: the Bernard Blues and BBQ Festival. This arts, crafts and music festival will be held on Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 9-10, 2017 on the beautiful campus of Saint Bernard Abbey and Prep School.

Due to the popularity of the school's spring Bloomin' Festival, many artisans and patrons expressed a strong interest in a fall festival.

"We have received numerous requests for the school to host a fall festival, so we felt it appropriate to wrap up the 125th Anniversary celebration at Saint Bernard with the Bernard Blues and BBQ Festival," President, Father Joel Martin said.

Festival Director Joyce Nix, who has directed 33 festivals at the school, says artisans are registering now to participate in the busy weekend. "Whether one is shopping for seasonal decorations such as Halloween, Thanksgiving or Christmas, something unique will certainly be available at Bernard Blues and BBQ," she said.

Handmade quilts, brooms, pottery, jewelry, children's clothing, doll clothes, ragdolls, pillows, Christmas ornaments, driftwood creations, birdhouses, ceramics, flowering plants, fiber art, honey, handmade soaps, hand-painted door hangers, photography, oil paintings, wooden music boxes, ladies clothing, woodcarvings, handwoven baskets, yard art – these are just a small sampling of what patrons can expect.

"We invite Alabama and neighboring states to attend and support the handmade works of our artisans while enjoying a variety of music we have planned for the weekend," Nix said.

Get ready to tap your toes while enjoying live entertainment throughout the weekend. Visitors can expect to hear live blues music provided by Microwave Dave and the Nukes, of Huntsville on Saturday from 10 a.m. until noon, bluegrass and sacred music from Chimney Branch, of Addison on Saturday from 2-4 p.m. Sunday, Sweet Licks Dixieland Jazz Band, of Birmingham will perform from 10 a.m. until noon, followed by some Americana Blues by Coco O'Connor and the Redeemers of Nashville, Tennessee, at 1 p.m.

The hickory-smoked aroma of barbeque ribs, pulled pork, hamburgers and hotdogs will fill the air. Pair that with ice cold tea, Pepsi or freshly squeezed lemonade, and top it off with Saint Bernard's famous strawberry waffles, funnel cakes, fried spiral potatoes, caramel apples, kettle corn, monk's bread and more. Whole butts and full slabs of ribs will also be available.



JOYCE NIX

Chimney Branch will perform at the Bernard Blues and BBQ Festival on Saturday from 2-4 p.m.

A hands-on art and craft center for children will be available as well as a cash giveaway of $10,000.

Bernard Blues and BBQ promises to have something for the entire family! Mark your calendars and plan to visit Cullman, Sept. 9-10, 2017 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day. An admission donation of $5 per person is requested.

Anyone wishing to participate should contact the school at 256-739-6682 to request a booth application for original handmade items only. This is a juried show and all work must be pre-approved.

All proceeds from the event benefit Saint Bernard Prep School in Cullman. Operated by the Benedictine monks at Saint Bernard Abbey, Saint Bernard Prep is a college prep boarding and day school for grades 7-12.

For more information visit www.stbernardprep.com or www.facebook.com/bernardbluesandbbq.

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PHOTOS COURTESY W.C. MANN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Purple Heart ceremony honors fallen warriors of Cullman and Morgan Counties

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HARTSELLE – On Saturday, military veterans, family and friends gathered for a ceremony of remembrance in Hartselle's Sparkman Park at the monument to Morgan and Cullman County recipients of the Purple Heart, a medal given to servicemen and servicewomen wounded in combat or to the next of kin of those who die from wounds received in battle. The ceremony is held annually on the weekend closest to Aug. 7, the date in 1782 when Gen. George Washington created the Badge of Military Merit, which later became known as the Purple Heart. The event was sponsored by the Finis J. Self Chapter 2212 of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, the only veterans' association composed entirely of combat veterans.

The morning's ceremony involved a keynote address from Major Gen. Alan Elliot of Redstone Arsenal, the veterans' POW table ceremony led by former POW George Mills and the reading of 150 names from the park monument.

In addition to Elliot, Sen. Arthur Orr, R-Decatur; Rep. Terry Collins, R-Decatur; Morgan County Sheriff Ana Franklin; Cullman County Commissioner Garry Marchman and Hartselle Mayor Randy Garrison were among the dignitaries in attendance.

Motorcyclists from the American Legion Riders Post 15 and the Patriot Guard Riders took turns holding a bank of American flags, and Boy Scouts from Cullman's Troop 321 assisted with general duties around the site.

The Army JROTC Color Guard from Priceville High School posted the American flag during the ceremony.

Chapter 2212 President and Vietnam War Special Forces veteran Clifford Gissell announced three additions to the list of names on the monument:

- Bennie Anderson, a Korean War Army veteran who passed away in 2014
- Cordie Lloyd, a WWII Army veteran who passed away in 2016
- Edward Vaughn Harwell, a Vietnam War Army veteran who passed away in 2016

Elliot, in his address, referenced the King's speech from the Shakespeare play "Henry V," "One of the King's generals was lamenting around the campfire how their small force could be so much stronger if more Englishmen had been willing to volunteer. At that time, King Henry stood up, and he stood before his army and he told them, he said, 'Don't worry about that. Don't worry about those men who didn't come, but to cherish the bond that we now share, of those who did come.' He said, 'From this day until the end of the world, but we in it shall be remembered: we few, we happy few, we band of brothers; for he today that sheds his blood with me shall be my brother.'

"Soldiers have found these words endearing for centuries, because they're true. There's a special bond that forms between soldiers when they serve together. I can't explain it...I can't explain it; it just happens. No matter what their background is, there's a bond that's formed.

"When they go to war together, especially when they shed their blood together, that bond is strengthened and really can't be broken.

"They indeed become, in a very real sense, brothers, and neither the pride of victory or the bitterness of defeat can break apart that family."

George Mills

Conducting the POW remembrance ceremony was 95-year-old Mills. Here is a man who has truly "been there and done that."

During WWII, he was a member of the U.S. Army's 28th Infantry, which came ashore at Omaha Beach in the days following the establishment of the Allied D-Day beachhead and fought its way through the hedgerows of western France on the way to Paris, under the command of Gen. George Patton.

Mills recalled, "When we got to Paris, we marched 24 abreast down the Champs Elysees boulevard, to let everybody know we liberated the main city in Europe.

"We had (Gen. Dwight D.) Eisenhower, Omar Bradley, Patton and (Charles) de Gaulle was all on the reviewing stand."

In December 1944, Mills' fortunes changed as his company found itself facing off against two German divisions near the Germany/Luxembourg border in what would go down in history as the Battle of the Bulge.

"No (Allied) troops within two miles, and two divisions hit us: the Fifth Panzer Division and the 373rd Vanguard Division surrounded our company. And we held them three days."

On the third day, an inventory check showed that the company had a total of six rounds of ammunition left.

At that point, they surrendered. Mills and his fellow soldiers spent the next five months marching across Germany from one POW camp to another, as their captors tried to stay ahead of advancing Allied forces.

Eventually, the chase ended as the POWs were liberated by the U.S. 2nd Armored Division.

As he watched people gather to remember the sacrifices he and many others made through our nation's history, Mills reflected, "I was with my outfit for a little over three years. We lost 75 men; some killed, some wounded. These names we've got here are men who gave their lives for the freedom we all enjoy."

What do you want people to remember about your service?

"That I'm George Mills, and I served my country the best that I possibly could."



WWII veteran, Purple Heart recipient and ex-POW George Mills



Cullman County Commissioner Garry Marchman was among those reading the names of Purple Heart recipients

Run, color, repeat

Nick Griffin
Tribune Correspondent



NICK GRIFFIN

Some EvaBank Midnight Run participants chose to be doused in colorful neon powder.

CULLMAN – The 2017 EvaBank Midnight Run 5K has come and gone and hundreds of people from all over the area came out to show their support as either spectators or participants.

According to Cullman Parks and Recreation, the race averages close to 1,000 runners per year from across the region, and this year's event was no exception.

This year's overall male winner was Jeffery Rhodes, posting a time of 16:37, and the overall female winner was Christina Chambers, clocking in at 20:03.

This is the eighth year that the event has been organized by CP&R's Marketing and Recreation Programs Director Waid Harbison.

Having competed in the event several times, he was excited to see the excitement for this event continue to grow as they make some fun changes to the annual tradition. For the last three years, the 5K has included several color stations on the route and Harbison thinks it has lead to a wider range of people coming out to participate.

"We started doing the color stations in 2015 and I think we're seeing the same kind of numbers come out but we're really seeing different kinds of people come out," Harbison said.

"We saw some of our 60- to 70-year-old crowd start to phase out so we're really excited to see the new additions bringing a lot of younger people in and that's great because with parks and rec, we're all about health and wellness and helping people be active and doing fun things."

Part of the competition's popularity stems from the fact that it caters to all types of runners, whether you're taking it very seriously or just trying to have fun. Harbison believes that flexibility is what helps this event stand out.

"The thing I really like about this is that most runs you go to are either completely serious or are fun runs that aren't timed so I think we've found a really good middle ground with this run and I think we're really hitting two different audiences."

One of the runners in the middle ground this year was Maison Goodwin, who said he enjoys being able to have fun running with the community while also being able to the see results of his training.

"This'll be my third year in a row to do it," Goodwin said.

"I just like running with the community; it's a lot of fun to come out and test yourself to see how your work has been paying off. It's great to see so many people come out to support the community and become more interested in staying healthy and active."

Thanks to the new additions brought on by CP&R, along with consistently huge participation every year, the Midnight Run keeps growing in popularity within the community and everyone seems to agree that it's only getting bigger and better.

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2017 FALL SEMESTER

Obituary Announcements: Aug. 6-10

Funeral Services for Benjamin Herman Reid, age 93 of Good Hope, held Sunday, August 6, 2017 at Good Hope Baptist Church. Entombment in the adjoining cemetery, along with military and masonic honors, with Bro. Ben White, Bro. Tommy Blackwood & Bro. Steve Rodgers officiated. Cullman Funeral Home directing. Mr. Reid passed away Thursday, August 3, 2017, at Woodland Village. He was born October 26, 1923 to the late Benjamin Homer Reid & Cora Maggie Rabun Reid. Herman was a lifelong member and deacon at Good Hope Baptist Church; graduate of Auburn University and member of Alumni Association; a WW II veteran and retiree with the rank of Lt. Colonel. Mr. Reid started the Cullman Chapter of Gideon's; a charter member of both the Cullman & Hanceville chapters of the Civitans. He was on the Board of Directors for Cullman Mental Health; board member of CCCDC; a Mason of the Cullman Lodge #421, member of the American Legion; past Board of Directors for the Cullman County Cooperative; past moderator for the West Cullman Baptist Association; member of NARF; member of Campers on Mission; a participant of Disaster Relief and retired from Cullman Federal Land Bank; and was the first Mayor of Good Hope. Special request of the family, all Auburn Fans are requested to wear Orange & Blue "WAR EAGLE." He is preceded in death by his parents, 4 sisters, Evelyn Lawrence, Addie Messersmith, Daisy Reid & Ruth Reid; 4 brothers, Tom Reid, Claud Reid, Glenn Reid & Cecil Reid. Survivors include his wife of 72 years, Nina Gantt Ried; 3 – Daughters, Paula (Steve) Walker; Lauren (Don) Smith & Adrienne Reid; one Son, Benjamin Herman (Pat) Reid, Jr.; 4 – Grandchildren – Shannon Baxley, Andrea Talley, Chris Reid & Jake Walker; 4 – Great-Grandchildren – Tyler Baxley, Shae Baxley, Luke Reid & Ella Reid. Visitation will begin after 4:30 p.m. Saturday August 5, 2017 at the funeral home ending at 9 p.m. In Lieu-of-Flowers, the family request donations to be made to Good Hope Cemetery Fund or to Gideon's International.

Phillip Meigs entered into rest August 7, 2017, surrounded by his family. Complete obituary and arrangements will be announced at a later time. Nichols Funeral Home directing.

Danny Ward, 66 of Double Springs, passed away on August 6, 2017 at Princeton Hospital in Birmingham surrounded by his loving family. Danny was born on September 9, 1950 in Winston County, Alabama. He was a member of Kelly Mill Baptist Church for 12 years and loved the Lord and his Church and Church family. Danny graduated from Winston County High School in 1969, and after graduation went on to be a butcher, drive truck and handled shipping and receiving at Southern Homes. He especially loved deer hunting with his son Allen. Funeral service will be held on Tuesday, August 07, 2017 at Kelly Mill Baptist Church at 12 p.m. Brother Donny Dodd and Brother Darrin Reynolds will officiate. Burial will be in New Hope Cemetery. He is survived by his wife of 48 years, Vanessa Jayne Ward; mother, Nellie McDonald McGeehee; sons, Allen Ward and his wife Carla; sisters, Diane Dutton and Patricia (Steve) Turner; he was Paw Paw to 2 grandchildren, Lexie and Macy Green; brother-in-laws; O.B. (Janie) Williams and Dale (Debra) Williams; uncle, Auther Ward; aunts, Azell (Johnny) Dutton, Winnie Jo Loyd and Judy Tornabean; and a host of nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his father, Simon Ward; uncles, Lacy Ward, Frank Ward, Welborn Ward, Walker McDonald, Blake McDonald and Melvin McDonald; aunts, Ola Faye White, Levern Leadbetter, Inez Knight and Inis Johnston; and brother-in-law, Frank Dutton.

Roger Dale Marks, 67, of Logan, entered into rest on Friday, August 4, 2017 at Cullman Regional Medical Center. He was born on January 27, 1950 in Cullman. Roger graduated from Meek High School and went on to serve his country in the United States Navy for 10 years as a lab tech, some of which was during the Vietnam War. He worked in the construction business after he left the Navy. Funeral services will be held on Tuesday, August 8, 2017, at New Mt. Zion Baptist Church in the Mt. Zion Community at 1 p.m. He will lie in state from 12 p.m. until 1pm. Brother Shannon Caudle will officiate. Burial will be in the adjoining cemetery. Roger is survived by his son, Rodney Marks; daughters, Angela DeBoer, and Angie Yarbrough; mother, Arvie Lee Marks-Smith, brothers, Marty Dean Marks, Phillip Marks and his wife Carey, and Hugh Michael Marks and his wife Becky; sister, Kathy Caudle and her husband Jackie. He was preceded in death by his father, Hugh Lee Marks; and brother, Larry Lee Marks.

Funeral services for Kerry James Duke, 55, of Welti are Thursday, August 10, 2017 at 11 a.m. at Mt. Zion Baptist Church; with interment in Welti Cemetery. Visitation on Wednesday from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Hanceville Funeral Home and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the church. Kerry was born on July 20, 1962 to James and Elna Von Kilgo Duke. He was co-owner of Affordable Automotive. He was a life-long resident of Welti and member of Mt. Zion Baptist Church. He passed away at his residence on August 5, 2017 surrounded by his loving family and friends. He was preceded in death by his mother and grandparents, Handley Duke, E.E. and Reba Kilgo. He is survived by his wife of 33 years, Merry Quick Duke; two daughters, Sara and Pruett Allen and Hayley and Jeremiah Duke; grandson, Henry James Allen; father, James and Joyce Duke; brothers, Jon and Lisa Duke and Kelly and Randa Duke; sisters-in-law, Sherry and Kent England, Debra and Rick Freeman, Margaret and Larry Creel and Joyce Burks; grandmother, Ruth Duke and a host of nieces, nephews, other family and friends. Pallbearers are Jon Duke, Kelly Duke, Tanner Duke, Russ Davis, Blake Drinkard and Eric Maynor. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to the Margaret Jean Jones Center, 1807 Beech Avenue SE; Cullman, AL 35055.

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Cullman's Kyle Morris named finalist in State Discussion Meet

ALFA
Contributor

MONTGOMERY – Up-and-coming agriculturalists showed nerves of steel during State Young Farmers contests in Birmingham Aug. 5. That evening, Outstanding Young Farm Family (OYFF) and Excellence in Ag competition winners and Discussion Meet finalists were announced at the Alabama Farmers Federation's 45th Commodity Producers Conference closing banquet.

Cleburne County's Eric and Carrly Lovvorn and their children, 2-year-old Chloe and 3-month-old Landon, are the 2017 OYFF. The Lovvorns live near Ranburne and operate a four-house poultry farm, raise cattle, grow hay and own a commercial poultry house clean-out business.

As the OYFF, the Lovvorns won a prize package worth more than $60,000. They will receive $35,000 toward a new Ford vehicle courtesy of Alfa Insurance; a John Deere 825i Gator from Alabama Ag Credit and Alabama Farm Credit; and a lease on a John Deere tractor from John Deere and local dealers.

Runners-up are Beth Hornsby of Auburn in Lee County and Ben and Jessica Johnson of Fyffe in DeKalb County. Alabama Ag Credit and Alabama Farm Credit provide each family $500.

OYFF contestants receive more than half their income from production agriculture. Finalists were named at the Young Farmers Conference in March.

Andrew Brock of Douglas in Marshall County took home top prize in Excellence In Ag, where he beat out 10 other competitors. Contestants are individuals involved in agriculture, but receive more than half their income off farm.

As the winner, Brock receives a zero-turn mower courtesy of Dow AgroSciences and a computer package from Valcom/CCS Wireless.

First runner-up is Samantha Carpenter of Madison in Limestone County, while Abby and Jay Stewart of Lineville in Clay County are second runner-up.

The Discussion Meet had 17 competitors, who reviewed pressing agricultural issues in a committee meeting-like setting.

Finalists are Landon Marks of Leesburg in Cherokee County, Kyle Morris of Cullman in Cullman County, Ethan Mobley of Red Bay in Franklin County and Hunter Garnett of Danville in Morgan County.

The final Discussion Meet round is in December at the Federation's annual meeting in Montgomery, where the winner will take home a four-wheeler courtesy of First South Farm Credit.

Finalists in all three contests received Yeti coolers from the Federation.

State winners will represent Alabama at the American Farm Bureau Federation annual convention and contests in Nashville, Tennessee, in January 2018.



ALFA FARMERS

Cullman County's Kyle Morris, left, is one of four finalists in the State Young Farmers Discussion Meet contest. Morris competed in the Discussion Meet first round with 16 other participants Aug. 5 at the Alabama Farmers Federation's 45th Commodity Producers Conference in Birmingham. Morris, who lives in Cullman, will compete in the final round in December at the Federation's annual meeting in Montgomery. He is pictured with Federation President Jimmy Parnell.

Dam (from Front)

from the reservoir to be pumped out to a treatment plant for conversion to drinking water. The water will move via a pipeline system between the dam and plant.

In June 2016, the Cullman County Commission and City Utilities Board signed an agreement that would, according to Cullman County Engineer John Lang, "govern the perimeters surrounding the water line installation that will go from the new reservoir to the water treatment plant." Lang also stated at that meeting that the agreement also provided that any portions of roads affected by the construction would be restored to "as good or better condition than what they found it after they get done completing the work."

According to the project map, the pipeline will exit the lake near the intake tower in the reservoir just north of the dam, and cross County Road 1640 before turning south toward U.S. Highway 278. From there it will run along the north side of the highway, crossing to the south side just east of the County Road 747/278 intersection at Berlin.

On the south side of the highway, the pipeline will turn due west. On the Cullman side of East Point, it will begin a series of turns north and west to take it into the Cullman Water Treatment Plant on Hwy. 278 near St. Bernard Abbey.

This pipeline was not a topic in the lawsuit, because the dam and pipeline comprised separate projects. Construction of the pipeline has not yet begun, but bids were taken the week before the suit was filed, and the impending legal action will not affect work on that project.

Greer explained, "The pipe work will go ahead. The bid was just over $9 million for the 7-mile pipe line back to the treatment plant. It will be constructed over 12 months (on property purchased as an easement so the landowner retains usage right). There was a lot said that the City of Cullman would use that pipeline to incorporate Berlin and other properties, but Alabama law prohibits easement use for that purpose."

The delay in timing between the dam and pipeline was part of the Utilities Board's plan. Since the reservoir was going to have to undergo a year of water quality monitoring before the board could begin pumping water to the treatment plant, and the million dollar-plus pumps had a one-year warranty, the board decided to delay the installation of pipes and pumps until the time for their use was closer.

Recreation on the lake/reservoir

According to a 2013 plan drawn up for the Utilities Board by St. John & Associates, the reservoir and its boundaries will be able to support the following recreational activities:

- Boating
- Fishing
- Picnicking
- Hiking
- Sightseeing and photography
- Nature observation

A walking/bicycling trail is already open around most of the reservoir's perimeter. Due to concerns about pedestrian traffic crossing County Road 1669 in a blind curve, the City and County together recently constructed a pedestrian underpass below the County Road 1669 Duck River Bridge.

With many trails open, people are asking when the lake itself will open for fishing, boating and swimming. The projected date was as early as November of this year, but that will now depend on the settlement of the lawsuit.

During the press briefing on the lawsuit, Greer stated that the reservoir is required to undergo a year of water quality monitoring by ADEM (Alabama Department of Environmental Management). According to information provided by CEDA Project Coordinator Susan Eller, the one-year monitoring schedule is not arbitrary, but an amount of time required by federal environmental protection regulations. Under EPA regulations, the Duck River Basin is currently classified as a "fish and wildlife" waterway. Before water can be sent to the treatment plant, the basin must be reclassified as a drinking water source termed a "public water source."

A public water source can still support a fish population and can be used for certain recreational purposes, but meets quality standards needed to begin the treatment process for drinking water.

Previous efforts by the Utilities Board have improved the water quality of the basin, and prepared it for reclassification, as soon as the required monitoring period concludes.

Eller stated that the monitoring is around 25 percent complete at this point.

"When we finished the dam and plugged the dam in '15," said Greer, "(the reservoir) was supposed to be filled by November of '16, and you would have had to have waited till November of '17 before you could use it. We're running pretty close on that side, but I do not know about the repairs and the timing on it."

Greer added, "Legal counsel advised against opening the lake to fishing and boating because construction continued (liability). Also, the lake water level was lowered 20 feet and the two public boat ramps were not useable. Most of the ramp work is now complete.

"We obviously built boat ramps, a fishing pier and had the Alabama Game and Fish Department stock bass and bream because we plan to open the lake to the public. The board will make the call in when to open the lake for public use. We opened parts of the bike trail that were away from construction and have allowed that use to continue."

The lowering of the water level allowed access to the face of the dam for the repairs that are now the subject of litigation. The dam and intake tower are essentially complete, with the exception of the needed repairs. Until the lawsuit is settled and its terms are known, its effect on the timeline cannot be determined with any certainty.

So who's going to pay?

With the cost of litigation and possible further work to be done to fix the problems at the dam, several Tribune readers have speculated that the cost is going to be passed on to Utilities Board customers.

Greer stated during the briefing that the suit should determine who is at fault and require them to take care of the problem at no cost to Cullman.

When asked by a reporter if there was a plan to pass along the cost, he responded, "No. That's why we're saying that we need to have them do that and fix it, and whatever the cost is, because the rate payers shouldn't be responsible."

Cullman Mayor Woody Jacobs, who was present for that part of the briefing, added, "Our whole thing has been to make sure that the customers, the rate payers, are protected."

For more information on the Utilities Board lawsuit against CH2M Hill Engineers, ASI Constructors and ASI's bonding agency Western Surety, see http://qrne.ws/dam.

For more information on water quality standards, visit the ADEM page at www.adem.alabama.gov/programs/water/wquality/2012WAM.pdf.

For more information on the Utilities Board Duck River recreation plan, view the plan drawn up by St. John & Associates at www.sjaonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/DUCK-RIVER-RESERVOIR-RECREATION-PLAN.pdf.

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THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE
AUGUST 8, 2017

Celebrate Cullman returns bigger than ever

W.C. Mann
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CULLMAN – On Friday evening, Celebrate Cullman returned to the downtown retail district after a brief pause. Begun as a way to attract shoppers back downtown after the 2011 tornadoes, the event became a means of drawing in competitors and spectators from the McKenzie ASA Classic Archery Tournament at St. Bernard; when that event moved, the celebration took a break. But the tournament returned this year, with a guarantee of two additional years, and the Downtown Merchants' Association and Warehouse District Merchants' Association revived Celebrate Cullman.

Downtown Merchant's Association event coordinator Ron Pierce explained, "It came out of the tornado back in 2011, and we tied in with the ASA national invitational archery tournament; and we hope that all those people will come downtown, and all the locals will come downtown; because this is a tourism event, and it's also for locals, and everything's free: free rides, free music everywhere. There are six bands in town; there are singer-songwriters walking around."

With an expanded special events district that now reaches down First Avenue Northeast to include the seven blocks between the Busy Bee Café and the Cullman Police Department, the celebration didn't just return, it grew and expanded into a multi-venue street fair.

Michael Sapp, one of Celebrate Cullman's coordinators, shared, "We've got some great carnival rides; we've got rides all the way from Depot Park down to Busy Bee. We've got food vendors . . . we've just got a whole lot of stuff going on right now!

"We've got the Overtones playing; down the way, we've got the Escalators playing. County Wyde's playing. The Cloggers are clogging. Moe's is packed, Busy Bee is packed, the restaurants are packed. We've got a lot of people here; it's looking great!"

This reporter stopped in Moe's for a bite, and asked a server if the evening's festivities were affecting business. She responded, "It's been really busy! Usually on a Friday, we start getting a lot of people coming in around seven, but today they started coming in at five, and it's just been really busy."

Many businesses in the district stayed open into the evening, some even setting up sale tables on the sidewalks outside their doors.

Though Jennifer's Treasures Boutique didn't move outside, the store still enjoyed brisk business during the event. Owner Jeff Bennett said, "We knew there'd be a lot of people involved, so it's good for business. It's been good; there's been a lot of people in and out, all afternoon. It's been real good."

Asked if the extra business was worth the extra effort, Bennett replied, "Oh, absolutely, yes!"

Even a few businesses with no inventory in their showrooms got into the spirit of Celebrate Cullman. At Waldrop Real Estate, the staff threw open the doors and set up a popcorn cart inside, giving away free bags to passersby.

Between bags, realtor Terri McGriff Waldrop took a moment to share, "We just love our community. We love to see that there's so much activity and people together, and just wanted to be a part of it. We can't really sell a house; we don't have something we can put outside. But we just want to give popcorn out and say, 'Hey, we're here, and we love our community.' We just want to be involved."

Some business owners planned to gauge the foot traffic to see how long they wanted to stay open, but several restaurants were set to serve well into the night, in many cases with live entertainment inside.

"I love Cullman," concluded Pierce. "The whole idea behind a tourism event is to bring people through your downtown, and they come back. That's what it's all about."



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