The Cullman Tribune

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Frank discussion about mental health care with Chris Van Dyke



W.C. MANN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Mental Healthcare of Cullman Executive Director Chris Van Dyke at the Karma in Cullman suicide awareness walk on Sept. 9

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CULLMAN – Elected officials have recently appeared to be taking a concerned interest in the mental health crisis that has stricken Alabama. As suicides and crimes by mentally ill persons surge, State Rep. Randall Shedd, R-Fairview brought the state's new mental health commissioner to Cullman to talk with mental health experts, law enforcement officers and judges. State Sen. Paul Bussman, R-Cullman talked to The Tribune about how the Legislature could re-appropriate funding into mental health programs. (See www.cullmansense.com/articles/2017/08/01/bussman-weighs-mental-health-care-strong-words-state-alabama-education and www.cullmansense.com/articles/2017/07/29/spotlight-mental-health-new-al-mental-health-commissioner-visits-cullman)

For those concerned about suicide and mental health, this news sounds exciting, but the excitement of experts in the field is flavored with a big dash of skepticism.

At Karma in Cullman's suicide awareness walk on Sept. 9, The Tribune talked with Chris Van Dyke, executive director of Mental Healthcare of Cullman / Cullman Area Mental Health Authority.

He expressed doubt that the upcoming legislative session will see any substantial change in the status of the state's mental health system.

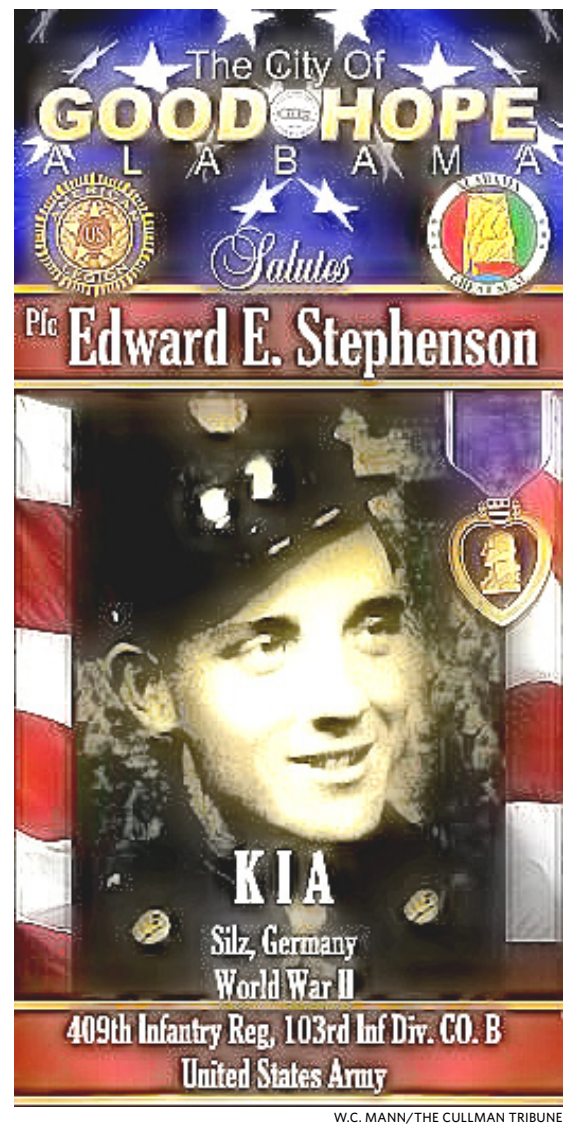
The problem, of course, is money. For the system to provide the best service, it must have adequate funding, and the director sees little in legislative plans to create that funding.

Alabama's mental health services are funded from a dedicated Mental Health Fund, which receives money from (according to the Alabama Executive Budget Office) "certain public utilities taxes, contractors' gross receipts tax, distillers' and whiskey tax profits, insurance premium taxes, as well as federal funds." The Mental Health Fund also receives substantial sums from the state's General Fund.

The General Fund itself is a massive operating fund used for "the ordinary expenses of the executive, legislative, and judicial departments of state government, for other functions of government, for debt service on certain general obligation bond issues, and for capital outlay. The GF supports state programs such as child development and protection, criminal justice, conservation efforts, economic development, public health and safety, mental health, Medicaid, legislative activities, and the court system," also according to the Executive Budget Office.

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Good Hope to honor veterans with banners around town



W.C. MANN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Banners honoring Good Hope veterans will be placed around the city during holidays such as Memorial Day and Veterans Day.

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GOOD HOPE – The City of Good Hope is joining a nationwide program to honor military service people and veterans with banners to be displayed around city during military holidays. The banners will feature a photograph of the veteran, along with service information.

The memorials are produced by TroopBanners, and on its website www.troopbanners.com, the organization explains the program:

"The Military Banner Tribute Program salutes our brave men and women honorably discharged who serve, or have served in the

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Cullman Co. volunteers mount massive response to aid Hurricane Irma evacuees

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CULLMAN COUNTY – When Hurricane Irma set its sights on Florida, wise Floridians set their sights on points north. As traffic began to stack up on northbound routes through Georgia, some decided to try their luck to the west. The really lucky ones, the blessed ones, found their way to Cullman County this weekend.

On Saturday, the first reports coming from the Gov. Guy Hunt Rest Area on I-65 between exits 299 and 302 didn't sound lucky or blessed; they sounded downright apocalyptic: hundreds stranded, no food or water, no place to go. And while first reports painted a bleaker picture than what was really happening, word got out, and the help started coming in: by carloads, truckloads and trailer loads.

Rhonda Hagemore, of the Dodge City Volunteer Fire Department, received notice Saturday afternoon about what was happening at the rest area. She went straight out and began coordinating response efforts at the site. On Saturday evening, she told The Tribune, "We have been told as far as Nashville that there's no hotel rooms available. People have been traveling 16 hours . . . There's just a huge need, and we need to meet that need."

Hagemore shared late Saturday night that the group had fed hundreds and placed 20-30 families in temporary shelters.

On Sunday afternoon, Hagemore was still hard at work, inside a visitors' center that had been transformed into a remarkable one-stop evacuee resource center. She offered encouragement to any evacuees who might be on the road. "They can come here to the rest area; we have supplies that they can get for free, warm food, and they can take everything they need, and then we'll send them out to a place to stay."

Outside the center, volunteers loaded supplies into a trailer that was headed to Mt. Joy Baptist Church, where 19 families were fed and housed Saturday night, and more were expected Sunday.

Mt. Joy's Sherell Barnett shared, "We've got food, water, cots, blankets. They had 19 families there last night. There's not that many there this morning, but we expect more tonight. If anybody needs a place, just send them on that way. If we run out of room at that church, we'll

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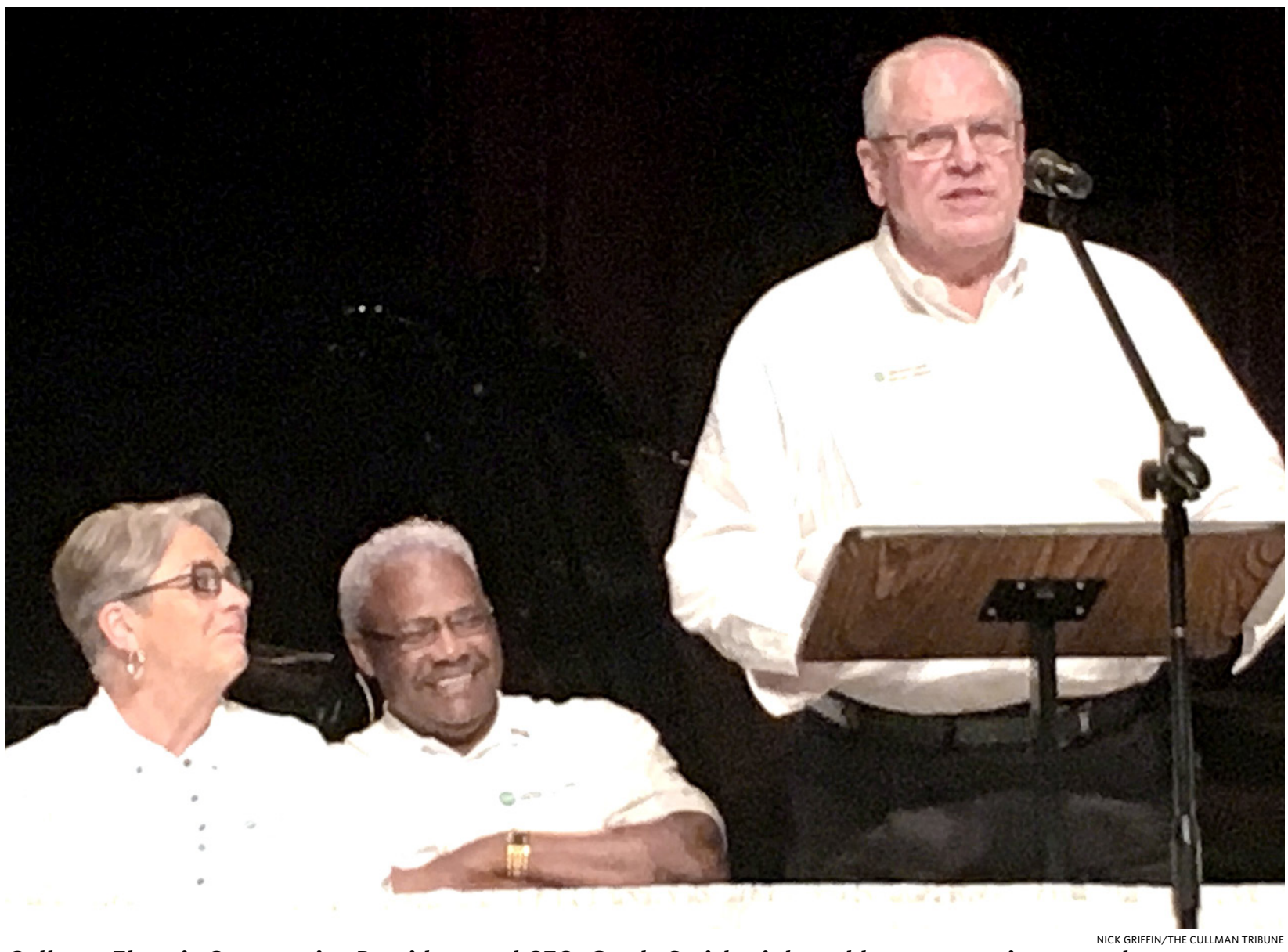
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The visitor center at the Gov. Guy Hunt Rest Area was a full-service stop for evacuees, with food and water, baby items, blankets, toys for children, and even pet supplies.

THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE
SEPTEMBER 12, 2017

Cullman Electric Co-op holds 81st annual meeting

Nick Griffin
Tribune Correspondent



NICK GRIFFIN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Cullman Electric Cooperative President and CEO, Grady Smith, right, addresses meeting attendees.

CULLMAN – The Cullman Electric Cooperative held its 81st annual meeting at Northbrook Baptist Church Saturday morning and there were plenty of new positions to be filled, announcements to make and prizes to given out.

The meeting opened to guests at 8 a.m. with activities including a concert by the Mark Trammell Quartet, inflatable games and activities for children, bucket truck rides and a free health clinic by Cullman Regional as well as free hot dogs, popcorn and drinks for members and their guests.

A shuttle system provided by Wallace State moved people around the area faster as the parking lot began to fill up.

Alabama State Troopers also provided help with traffic control on Highway 157.

The business meeting began at 11 a.m. and started out with the honoring of two former board of trustees members who have passed away: Bill Rainwater who served in District 1 and Herman Reid from District 5.

Also announced was Sue Reynolds will be retiring this year from her at-large position on the board.

Cullman Electric Cooperative President and CEO, Grady Smith, shared the current state of the Co-op featuring video and power point presentations. One of the first things Smith covered was the state of cyber security within the Co-op.

"We've all heard stories in the news about computer hackers trying to break into computer systems to steal money and personal information. I want you to know we take these issues very seriously," Smith said.

"We have a team of computer specialists at the Co-op who work every day to make sure our computer systems are safe, secure and that your personal information is protected."

Smith talked about developments involving local rates for members.

"I'm pleased to share with you that Cullman Electric Co-op does not have any local rate increases planned for the coming year.

"Approximately 75 cents of every dollar you spend with Cullman Electric Cooperative goes to TVA (Tennessee Valley Authority) to pay for electricity. The other 25 cents covers all the Co-op's operating costs."

Lastly, Smith addressed staff changes and the changing age demographics in the business.

"Since we met last year, we've seen a number of changes to the Co-op's staff. Fifteen employees have retired and four other employees are scheduled to retire in the coming months. Some people might see this type of turnover as a red flag or something bad... but I don't," Smith said. "In some cases, positions will be consolidated. We can now use technology that allows one person to do a job that previously required a team of employees. In other instances, technology has created new jobs in different departments. Some of these jobs were not necessary until now."

Finally, the results of this year's election were announced.

There were 6,507 total votes cast, more than six times the minimum amount of participation required.

David Hembree and Chad Alexander ran unopposed this year, retaining their positions in Districts 7 and 8, respectively.

There was however, a race for this year's at-large position, and the winner was Lynda Carter, with 3,748 votes.

Carter edged out Steve McSwain, who finished with 2,388 votes.

Carter previously served as the representative of District 2.

Drawings for $100 cash prizes were held next for 20 individuals and to cap off the meeting, the drawing was held for this year's grand prize, a 2006 Chevrolet Colorado.

This year's grand prize winner was James E. Chaney, who went home with what was described as a "lightly-used" truck.

There was a great turnout for this year's meeting, as hundreds of guests enjoyed all the attractions outside and participated in the election for leaders in their community.

Smith ended, "Remember - this is your cooperative. Without you, the Co-op members/owners, we have no reason to come to work every day."

'Promise Tour' coming to Good Hope and Hanceville High Schools Sept. 15

State Farm
Contributor

CULLMAN – When Blake McMeans speaks, his message is clear, "Don't drink and drive or ride with those who do." McMeans has now added to his speech "don't text and drive." But his message has a far greater impact when the 40-year-old walks to the podium. McMeans tells his compelling story and warns kids not to make the same mistake he did.

On Friday, Sept. 15, 2017 at 11:20 a.m. at Hanceville High School and at 2 p.m. at Good Hope High School, the former athlete will challenge students to make a promise to themselves and him...not to drink or text and to make healthy life choices. Car crashes are the number one killer of teens in the United States. McMeans is coming to Cullman County to share his inspiring message with local students.

A no. 4 nationally ranked tennis player entering The University of Tennessee in 1994, McMeans had it all. Friends, family, full college scholarship and an athletic future. That is, until November of that year when he chose to drive home one night after drinking with fraternity brothers at a Knoxville bar. A terrible car crash less than a mile from home almost took his life, sending him into a months-long coma and leaving him partially paralyzed and facing years of rehabilitation.

It took McMeans seven years to re-learn how to stand, chew and talk. But the accident also forever ended his dreams of being a professional athlete. "I want people to learn from my mistake, that underage drinking and drinking and driving can have a devastating effect on your life," McMeans said.

For more information about the State Farm-sponsored Promise Tour, contact State Farm agent Katherine Morgan at 256-734-4640 or Shirley Quattlebaum at 256-255-1515 or 256-347-4691.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Praise for Ruby Tuesday in Cullman: 'Our family could not be more grateful'

We live in central Florida. I have two little boys so we decided it was best to evacuate. My 85-year-old grandmother followed us as we were trying to get to my mother's in Tennessee.

Due to traffic, traveling was a nightmare and we took the back roads which is what brought us to Alabama. We had a long night and ended up in a hotel room with a full-size bed for the 5 of us (including my husband and our dog).

We were so tired but after living on McDonald's wanted real food. We decided to stop at the Ruby Tuesday in Cullman.

My husband had a set of keys so we left the dog in a running car and asked to sit where we could see the car. I'm sure we walked in there looking like a mess.

The hostess that sat us gave us an awesome window view.

Our server was Nick; he was AMAZING. We didn't have to say much; I'm not sure if the sheer exhaustion gave it away, but he probed with some questions where we explained we had evacuated.

He told us that they were trying to help evacuators by providing a discount. I almost cried, it was honestly the first bit of compassion we'd seen our entire trip. The manager came over to check on us and make sure we knew they would take care of us extra special.

My grandma ordered one baked potato and we got two. My boys wanted to eat off my salad bar plate and he said let them have one don't worry about it.

The whole dinner experience made us feel so welcome and taken care of.

They embodied the true spirit of America in crisis, where we all look out for each other.

Our family could not be more grateful.

Cara Dunford Holt

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Thank You

Wanted to say thank you to the people that came out to the rest area on I65 on Saturday night.

I was greeted when I parked my truck from a lady that lives local now but was from Bloomington Indiana (I also am from Indiana and on my way back home)

They offered free food and water and helping people with a place to stay at local churches. I asked if they were from a church group and they said they were just a group of local people that decided to help out and most didn't know each other till they got out there. They had met on Facebook and wanted to help.

What a great way to help travelers. I thanked them even though we didn't need any food or water and with my wife being handicapped sleeping on the floor or a cot wasn't going to work for us. But they were helping a lot of people thru a bad situation. You have some good people living in your area.

Larry Mayes

Two on Tap to Perform in Cullman on Oct. 2

Erika Finley
Contributor

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Broadway veterans Melissa Giattino and Ron DeStefano are bringing their gorgeous vocals, exciting choreography and unique musical arrangements to the Betty Leeth Haynes Theatre on the Wallace State Community College campus on Monday, October 2nd, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. Single tickets will be available at the door for $30 (adults) and students are free with a paid adult. The concert will feature a special performance by Ron, Melissa and local students from Factory Dance Productions.

For more information please call 256-339-4447, or visit the association online at www.cullmancommunityconcertassociation.com

About

Two On Tap marks the creative collaboration of celebrated musical theatre veterans, Melissa Giattino and Ron DeStefano. Since its debut in February 2010, Two On Tap has entertained tens of thousands at countless theatrical concerts and gala events in the US, and enjoyed headliner status aboard luxury cruise liners. Heralded by presenters and critics alike, Two On Tap aims to breathe new life into classic song-and-dance with clever arrangements, a meaningful connection to the audience, and exciting high-energy routines. Featuring timeless Broadway show tunes, this show will keep you entertained from start to finish!

The Cullman Community Concert Association was established in 1949. The organization is committed to bring a wide variety of entertainment of the highest caliber to the community at a reasonable price.

Live On Stage, Inc. provides affordable entertainment attractions and support services to an American community of concert presenters.



ERIKA FINLEY

Ivey extends voter registration deadline 1 day

Wendy Sack
wendy@cullmantribune.com

MONTGOMERY – Gov. Kay Ivey has extended the deadline to register to vote in the Sept. 26 U.S. Senate run-off election by one day.

The original deadline was midnight on Monday, Sept. 11, 2017.

Voters now have until 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 12, 2017.

Ivey's office said the move comes as a result of Hurricane Irma closing many state and local offices on Monday.

To register to vote, visit http://sos.alabama.gov/alabama-votes.

Voters may also mail registrations, but they have to be postmarked by Sept. 12, 2017.

Cullman County jurisdiction has been selected to receive an award under Phase 34 of the Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP) based upon the available statistics. Congress has appropriated $120,000,000 to supplement and expand emergency food and shelter programs. Your jurisdiction's award is based upon your jurisdiction's total number of unemployed as compared to the total number of unemployed in all qualifying jurisdictions.
Local Board of EFSP is charged to distribute funds appropriated by Congress to help expand the capacity of food and shelter programs in high need areas around the country. The Local Board 0072 of Cullman County is responsible for recommending agencies to receive these funds made available through the Emergency Food and Shelter National Board Program, Phase 34.Under the terms of the grant from the national EFSP Board, local agencies chosen to receive funds must : 1) be private voluntary non-profits or units of government, 2) be eligible to receive federal funds 3) have an accounting system, 4) practice nondiscrimination, 5) have demonstrated the capability to deliver emergency food and or shelter program, and 6) if they are private voluntary organization, they must have a voluntary board of Directors. Qualifying agencies interested in applying to the Emergency Food and Shelter Program funds must contact Donna Jacobs at 256-775-2600 or email vsoced@vsoccullman.org for an application. The deadline for applications to be received is Sept 29, 2017.

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THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE
SEPTEMBER 12, 2017

Sons of Liberty motorcycle ride nets $5K for wounded veterans

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CULLMAN – On Saturday, more than 100 motorcycle riders from multiple organizations descended on Cullman for the Sixth Annual Wounded Veterans Ride, a charity ride to support veterans' causes. Starting at Freddie Day Catering's parking lot, 108 motorcycles and their riders made a 74-mile route through Cullman and Morgan counties, escorted by deputies from the Cullman County Sheriff's Office. They finished their ride back where they started, eating lunch served by the caterer. Event hosts, the Alabama division of Sons of Liberty Riders (SOLR), also held a 50/50 raffle and raffled numerous items, including an AR-15 rifle from Wilborn Outdoors.

SOLR District 2 head Becky "Wonder Woman" Fortner explained, "We're actually splitting the money between three charities: the Gary Sinise Foundation, Three Hots and a Cot, and Still Serving Veterans. We had a ton of folks show up today; it's amazing, so much fun!

"Anybody could come out. We had the trikes, motorcycles, slingshots. It's a great time to come out and support our veterans.

"A lot of our (SOLR) members are veterans, and a lot of the riders are veterans, so that's what we're here for."

The Gary Sinise Foundation provides entertainment, education and relief services to military personnel, veterans and first responders. (www.garysinisefoundation.org)

Three Hots and a Cot is a Birmingham-based charity working to help homeless veterans find permanent homes. (www.cotsforvets.org)

Huntsville-based Still Serving Veterans helps veterans transition out of military life, helping with job searches and applications for veterans' benefits. (www.ssv.org)

Participating organizations included:

- Sons of Liberty Riders (host group)
- Christian Motorcycle Association
- Blue Knights
- Blue Regulators
- Swamp Rats
- Heart of Dixie Spyder Riders
- Armed Forces of America Motorcycle Club
- Indian Riders
- Faith Riders
- Paladins

This is the sixth annual charity ride hosted by the local SOLR chapter. Alabama SOLR President Joe "Papa" Alverson talked about how the event came to be.

"Two presidents ago came up with it, and we've just continued it," said Alverson.

"It was originally designed for Wounded Warriors, but we had a little issue with not enough of the money going to the charity, and more going to overhead, so we decided to do local charities.

"Now, this year we helped Gary Sinise, which is not a local charity, but he's pretty famous for the stuff he does for veterans.

"Off of the registration alone, we've raised a little over $3,600 that will be split equally through the charities."

That amount does not include money from the raffles.

Fortner posted on the event's Facebook page Saturday afternoon, "We had 108 bikes today and raised right at $5,000! Thanks so much for supporting our veterans!"

For more information on the Sons of Liberty Riders, visit www.americanlibertyriders.ning.com/group/alabamalibertyriders.



W.C. MANN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Suicide walk remembers victims and those left behind

W.C. Mann
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CULLMAN – Any number of suicides should be considered too many, but the number in Cullman County is simply becoming unbearable. After a total of 15 suicides in all of 2016, the county had already seen 20 by the midway point of this year. At the most recent report in August, the total stood at 22. A growing number of people are feeling a need to do something about it.

On Saturday afternoon, hundreds attended as local nonprofit Karma in Cullman hosted a suicide awareness walk at Depot Park.

Numerous local organizations came out to support the cause, including The Sanctuary at the Woodlands, Mental Healthcare of Cullman, Compton's Veterinary Hospital, Celebrate Recovery of Cullman and Decatur, Walgreen's, Wallace State Secular Union, Addison Veterinary Clinic, Realtor 1st, Greater Love Ministries, Exterior Expressions Tattoos and LifeSouth.

The Cullman High School Chamber Choir and members of the Fairview High School FFA String Band performed. Volunteers offered face painting and helped kids paint rocks. Greater Love Ministries offered free Bibles.

At one booth, visitors could pin on ribbons in memory of lost loved ones, or in honor of survivors. X-Ternal X-pressions displayed samples of tattoo designs based on the semicolon, which has become the logo of a suicide prevention project whose slogan is "My story isn't over yet."

The walk was the brainchild of Karma Director Rachel Bryant, who told The Tribune, "After logging on (Facebook) and seeing article after article in the CullmanSense (The Cullman Tribune) and other news articles, and we were losing more and more Cullman County residents to suicide, I just realized that it was a heartbreaking epidemic that was going on. Sadly, one of my children lost a very good friend, and the pain in their eyes...I knew there was absolutely nothing I could do to take that pain away.

"So my thought was, I can't take that away, but maybe we can stop it from happening again. That's when I decided that we had to do something; we had to take a stand.

"At the time, even if I had to take a stand alone, I was going to do it. I realized I wasn't going to stand alone. There's a lot of people who were prepared to stand with me."

Bryant offered special thanks to event sponsors Addison Veterinary Clinic, The Sanctuary at the Woodlands, USA Healthcare, Creative Design and Screen Printing, Pepsi, Heritage Pharmacy, Talisa Shikle and the Facebook community she called the "Karma in Cullman family."

If you knew a young person in danger right now, what would you say to them?

Bryant replied, "I would tell them, 'I have that same thought; I have had them since I was 12. I have had that bottle of pills in my hand; I have had that knife in my hand, and I have used them.'

"I would tell them, 'You're not alone. God loves you, I love you. It is a battle, but you don't have to fight it alone. There's always someone else out there who's also fighting.

"All you've got to do is reach out, and you're going to find somebody who's going to reach back."



W.C. MANN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Participants attach a photo of a lost loved one to a memorial placard by the Depot Park fountain.

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Gorgeous fall weather brings hundreds to Bernard Blues and BBQ

Nick Griffin
Tribune Correspondent

CULLMAN – Hundreds of people made their way to St. Bernard Abbey and Prep School this weekend to enjoy the first of what St. Bernard hopes will be the annual Bernard Blues and BBQ Festival. The campus was packed with vendors, food carts, arts and crafts tents and much, much more for patrons to enjoy.

Both days were also packed with live entertainment. Saturday featured live shows from blues artists like Microwave Dave and the Nukes and Chimney Branch. Sunday held even more live music featuring Sweet Licks Dixie Land Jazz Band, followed by Coco O'Connor (a Cullman native) and the Redeemers from Nashville.

The fall festival began because of the popularity of St. Bernard's Bloomin' Festival, held annually in the spring. President of St. Bernard Abbey, Father Joel Martin, says the desire for a fall festival has been overwhelming.

"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," Martin said.

Festival Director Joyce Nix, who has directed 33 festivals at the school, says many artisans registered 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.

Hundreds of people enjoyed the food available at the festival as well. There were dozens of vendors providing funnel cakes, kettle corn, waffles, hot dogs and hamburgers but there was clearly a favorite dish throughout the weekend. There was a line stretching out of the packed barbecue tent in the middle of campus, with never less than a few dozen people filling the seats underneath it enjoying a plate of barbecue and trimmings.

There was a "Kids' Zone" sectioned off on campus with inflatable slides, bounce castles, arts and crafts tables, giant Jenga, face painting, cornhole and more. There was also a train making trips around the festivals for kids and their families to enjoy.

The first Bernard Blues and BBQ Festival lived up to the hype and looked like it will become a new fixture in our growing list of local celebrations.



NICK GRIFFIN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Beautiful fall-like weather welcomed hundreds of visitors to the Bernard Blues and BBQ Festival at St. Bernard Saturday and Sunday.

Bill Smith
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THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE
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Goat Island rakes in the awards at state competition

W.C. Mann
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FLORENCE – Old Mr. Richter would be proud. On Saturday afternoon at the Alabama Craft Beer Festival in Florence, Cullman's Goat Island Brewing made out like a bandit, walking away with four awards, including a gold medal and the second highest honor in the competition.

Prizes included:

- Richter's Pils - Gold Medal, Pilsner category
- Sipsey River Red - Bronze Medal, Red Ale category
- Colonel's Festbier - Bronze Medal, Oktoberfest category

Richter's Pils, developed by Goat Island Brewmaster Gery Teichmiller from early Cullman saloon keeper William Frederick Richter's original handwritten recipe, and brewed by Teichmiller and Head Brewer Paul White, also scored Best in Show, Second Place out of more than 75 beers entered in the craft beer competition.

Richter's Pils won bronze at last year's festival, while Sipsey River Red won gold.

Goat Island President Mike Mullaney said that the company's other beers also "scored well, but just didn't quite make the cut."

"It's just very gratifying," said Mullaney, "that for two years in a row we've medaled. It shows that our beers have consistency in quality.

"And for Richter's, it makes official what we've already known for a long time: that it's a great beer. People really like it."

Judging began in mid-August, and the awards were announced Saturday.

The Alabama Craft Beer Festival is the official state championship for craft beer brewers.

For more information on Goat Island Brewing, visit www.goatislandbrewing.com.



GOAT ISLAND BREWING.

Goat Island earned two bronze medals, one gold and placed second among all beers in the competition.

Obituary Announcements: Sept. 8-10

Janice Galloway, 51 of Haleyville, entered into rest on Friday, September 8, 2017 at ECM Hospital in Florence. Janice was born on October 26, 1965. Arrangements are pending and will be announced at a later date by Nichols Funeral Home.

Funeral Services for Ruby Ann Pitts, 74 of Hanceville, held Monday September 11, 2017 at Hanceville Funeral Home Chapel; Bro. Doug Pitts officiated. Interment at Fairview West Cemetery. Mrs. Pitts passed away at Grandview Medical Center on Saturday September 9, 2017. She was born on May 29, 1943 in Cullman County to Burlis B. & Sarah Annie Pender Ballard. Survivors include her husband of 59 years, Billy Ray Pitts; two children, Shelia (Rodney) Morgan and Phillip (Shelley) Pitts; grandchildren: Justin Morgan, Briona (Ervin) Wilbanks, Chase Winfrey (deceased), Erica (Jeff) Watts and Madison (Brandon) Tanner; great grandchildren: Cooper Morgan, Ily Wilbanks, Crimson Watts, Mia Wilbanks, Lansen Tanner, Jeff Watts, Jr. and Trayla Tanner; a sister, Willie Mae Graves; and a host of nieces, nephews, other family & friends. Pallbearers will be Bo Graves, Butch Graves, Bubba Pitts, Alex McKee, Logan McKee, Nathan Turner and Dale Pitts.

Funeral Service for Norman Dye, 87, was held Monday, September 11, 2017 at Christ First Ministries / Greater Vision Church. Rev. Stanley Dye, Rev. Phillip Ashley, and Jackie Riddle officiated; burial at Fairview Baptist Cemetery. Cullman Heritage Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements. Mr. Dye passed away on Friday, September 8, 2017 at St. Vincent's East. He was born to Grady and Mary Grimes Dye. He is preceded in death by his, parents, and wife, Bettye Jo Dye, and grandson, Joseph Dye. Survivors include his sons, Richard (Judy) Dye, Steven (Denise) Dye. Stanley (Gloria) Dye, David (Wendy) Dye, daughter, Nikki (Ricky) Benson, 12 grandchildren, and 14 great grandchildren

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Complete coverage: Cullman County Youth Football

Nick Griffin
Tribune Correspondent



NICK GRIFFIN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

The Cullman Bearcats faced off against the Cullman Cyclones

CULLMAN COUNTY – Saturday was a busy day for teams in the Cullman County Youth Football Association, with all 10 teams, and almost all of the three age divisions, competing. The Fireplug games began at 4 p.m., and the Wee-Wee and Pee-Wee teams followed.

Holly Pond at Fairview

The Fairview Fireplugs got things started with big scoring plays in the first half, including a 20-yard touchdown run from Gavin Peterson that featured an athletic spin move to get past a defender. Holly Pond answered on the first play on its next possession with a 65-yard touchdown run, but in the end, it was the Aggies who came away with an 18-14 victory.

The Wee-Wee division was up next and featured a much more one-sided contest. The Fairview Aggies were dominant on both offense and defense as they came away with a 32-0 shutout win.

The Pee-Wee teams wrapped things up for the night and it was just as one-sided as the Wee-Wee matchup. The Aggies put together a complete performance on both sides of the ball and finished the game with a 42-0 win over the Broncos of Holly Pond.

Vinemont at Hanceville

The Fireplugs faced off against each other in the newly renovated stadium in Hanceville to start things off for the Bulldogs and the Eagles. It was the road team that showed out in this game as the Vinemont defense smothered the Bulldog offense, and the Eagles cruised to a 22-0 victory.

The Wee-Wee players hit the field next and played a game with identical results. The Wee-Wee Vinemont Eagles followed their younger counterparts with a 22-0 victory of their own. The Eagles took an early 14-0 lead into the half and never looked back.

Things changed for both these teams when the Pee-Wee division hit the field and the Hanceville Bulldogs took charge. Both sides of the ball were dominated by Hanceville as they worked their way to a dominant 34-0 shutout of the Vinemont Eagles.

Good Hope at West Point

The West Point Fireplugs opened a very competitive game that went down to the fourth quarter. The Warriors held onto a small lead of 8-6 late in the fourth quarter when the West Point running game managed to explode for a 75-yard touchdown with less than three minutes to play. Good Hope was unable to come back before time expired and the Warriors came away with a 16-6 win.

The Wee-Wee version of the Warriors carried that late-game momentum into their contest with a dominant performance against the Raiders. The Warriors' defense put together a complete game shutout while the offense put up points with ease to carry them to a 44-0 victory.

The Raiders found some success in their Pee-Wee matchup with West Point in the next game. Good Hope wrapped up the evening of football with an 18-6 win over the Warriors.

Cold Springs at Good Hope Outlaws

The Fireplug Outlaws opened the competition at James W. Shabel Stadium against the visiting Cold Springs Eagles. The Outlaws could not be stopped on offense as they ran in 34 points, and the defense played just as well, giving up no points to the Eagles.

The Wee-Wee Outlaws followed them up with an outstanding performance of their own, with their offense matching the Fireplugs with 34 more points and another shutout of the Cold Spring Eagles.

The Pee-Wee teams did not play Saturday evening in week three.

Cullman Bearcats vs. Cullman Cyclones

The Fireplug edition of the Cullman Bearcats started the action in Oliver Woodard Stadium with a dominant 40-8 win over the Cullman Cyclones. The offense and defense of the Bearcats were in control from the first snap to the end of the game.

The Cyclones bounced back in their Wee-Wee matchup with a standout defensive show and an effective running game of their own as they cruised to a 26-0 victory against the Bearcats.

The final game of the night in Oliver Woodard Stadium between the Bearcats and the Cyclones was a defensive battle. The game was scoreless until the Cyclones took the lead with just more than three minutes left in the fourth. The Cyclones' defense managed one more stop on the next possession and finished with a 6-0 win.

Irma (from Front)

just move to another one!"

As the truck and trailer pulled away, volunteers continued stacking up cases of bottled water on the sidewalk for the next group to load.

Around the other side of the center, a table overflowed with pet food and supplies, and even more supplies were piled on the ground around the table. Evacuees with pets on leashes stopped by to get things they needed.

And then there was the inside of the center: an evacuee's dream, with groceries, toiletries, baby goods (Cullman Regional's Lindsay Dossey confirmed that the hospital donated baby boxes/cardboard cribs, bottles and pacifiers), toys for children, and hot food provided by local churches and the Olive Garden of Decatur.

Emily Nix, who works at the Decatur Olive Garden, was serving salad and spaghetti. She told us, "I seen my friend's Facebook post this morning. I woke up thinking about these people, and that was the very first post I seen. So I called my managers and asked for salad, and they gave me pasta, bread and everything else. An amazing group of managers I work for, for sure."

Numerous organizations came out to volunteer or drop off supplies, and many came and went so quickly that they could not be identified.

Just during the time The Tribune was there on Sunday, we encountered representatives of:

- Dodge City Fire and Rescue (coordinators)
- Cullman Church of Christ
- Mt. Joy Baptist Church
- Eastside Baptist Church
- Daystar Church
- Johnson's Road Methodist Church
- Temple Baptist Church
- Olive Garden, Decatur
- Bremen Volunteer Fire Department
- Bremen Missionary Baptist Church
- North Highland Baptist Church, Warrior

Brian Bloom traveled all the way from Miami Beach with three other adults and two children, putting over a thousand miles on his car in a couple of days.

"We've been trying to stay ahead of the storm," he said. "We heard everybody was going to Atlanta, so we decided to go west into Alabama. We were going to try and circle back around, but that ain't happening anymore. We're going to go further north, probably to Lexington, to try and get out of the storm path. It seems like it's following us!"

Looking around the visitor's center, Bloom stated, "This is amazing. Please tell everybody we really appreciate this. It's overwhelming. I almost shed a tear when I came in here, to see all the support and everyone in here helping out. It's really nice. They helped us with a lot of little stupid things that we didn't think we needed, because we ran out of them: toothpaste, deodorant.

"God bless all the people for helping us out. Thanks!"

On Monday afternoon, Hagemore shared that more than 2,000 evacuees have been fed and more than 100 families placed.

Banners (from Front)

military by displaying military banners in the community between Memorial Day and Veterans Day. These banners represent a source of pride not only in our service men and women, but for the community as a whole. They honor the men and women of the local community who have served their country honorably. The Military Banner Tribute Program does not accept sponsor advertising on its Tribute Banners but only the logo of the non-profit sponsoring group and the municipality in which it represents."

Harold Barnard of Cullman's American Legion Post 4 said that the idea came from a visit to Arley, which displays the banners. "In Arley," he stated, "they have them on every pole around Memorial Day and Veterans Day."

Addison also participates. Good Hope is the third municipality in Alabama to sign up for the program.

According to Barnard, the banners will be displayed two times per year, around the Memorial Day and Veterans Day holidays. The City of Good Hope will take care of putting them up and taking them down. American Legion Post 4 will store and maintain the banners between display periods.

The banners cost $125 each, and take approximately three weeks to produce.

For now, at least, according to Barnard, those honored must be deceased, whether killed in action or passed away later in life. Applications are available from American Legion Post 4.

Barnard hopes that Good Hope can begin displaying the banners this Veterans Day. To allow manufacturing time, applications must be received by Oct. 1 for banners to be displayed this year.

For more information, contact Harold Barnard at 256-339-0765 or Becky Barnard at 256-339-1806. Applications can also be downloaded from Good Hope's website, www.goodhopeal.com. More information on the banner program is available at www.troopbanners.com.

Discussion (from Front)

"The real problem with mental health funding," said Van Dyke, "is that the General Fund is broke.

Every year it's broke. Until they fix the General Fund, there's not going to be a lot of new money coming to mental health.

There's too many things funded from the General Fund: Medicaid, mental health, prisons, roads; all of that is from the General Fund.

And the General Fund is broke. So, that's the problem.

"To really fix the General Fund, they're probably going to have to raise taxes, or change the way money is divided between the Education Fund and General Fund.

"Those are the two (major) funds.

"All of the growth money goes to education: sales tax, all to education. The General Fund is property tax, fees, that kind of thing. Those things don't really change."

Could mental health funding for school programs and students be paid for from the Education Fund?

"They do that a little bit right now. There's a small appropriation from the Education Trust Fund every year to support mental health programs, but it's very small. And to try to do more of that would get a lot of pushback from the schools."

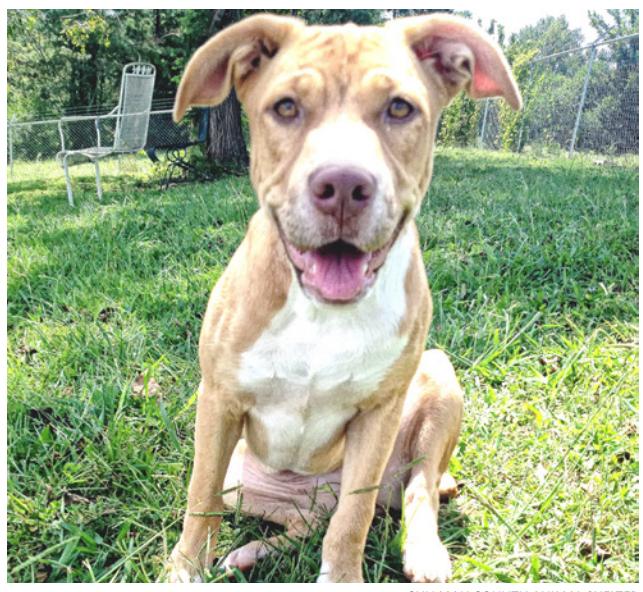
Van Dyke recognized the value of elected officials talking about mental health, especially people like Bussman brainstorming about fund re-appropriation.

He cautioned, though, that Bussman's ideas don't seem to have widespread support among other members of the Legislature.

PET OF THE WEEK

Help Zoey find her forever home

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CULLMAN COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER

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

"Hello, my name is Zoey and I am about 6 months old. I am believed to be some type of bulldog. I have a low to medium energy level, I love other dogs, and I was reported to love children.

"I would make a great companion and I have a good personality. My adoption fee is $90 and that includes my first set of vaccines and wormer at the shelter. It also includes me getting spayed, my general exam at the vet, my rabies vaccine, my microchip, my free 45-day health insurance policy, and our local Pet Depot will give you a free bag of food (you pay the taxes) in support of you adopting me from the animal shelter.

"That is an incredible deal and I will give you a lifetime of love and loyalty. Please consider coming to meet me today!"

For more information, call 256-734-5448 or come by the shelter at 935 Convent Road NE. Please share to help Zoey find a loving, forever home.

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