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FAITH

North Alabama Quartet Convention coming to Cullman



LISA JONES PHOTOGRAPHY

The Living Faith Quartet is the host group for the inaugural North Alabama Quartet Convention, which will take place Jan. 18-19, 2019 at Temple Baptist Church in Cullman.

» PAGE 2



CHRISTY PERRY/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Guests dine in at the new Firehouse Subs on U.S. Highway 31 South in Cullman on Monday.

» PAGE 2

BUSINESS

Firehouse Subs officially opens in south Cullman

Brooks' Place's Swafford reflects on 2018

W.C. Mann
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CULLMAN TRIBUNE FILE PHOTO

Brooks' Place Executive Director Gail Swafford

CULLMAN – As 2018 draws to a close, Brooks' Place Child Advocacy Center Executive Director Gail Swafford paused to reflect on the agency's 21st year of service to the kids and families of the Cullman area.

Brooks' Place helps children who are victims of physical or sexual abuse. Kids receive a forensic interview in a comfortable setting (no white walls and big tables; it's kid-friendly, with furniture and accessories to accommodate young children to teens), observed via video cameras by law enforcement and Cullman County Department of Human Resources (DHR) representatives who form part of the center's Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT).

In one of the agency's most recent offerings, children can now receive free non-invasive medical examinations including testing for HIV and sexually-transmitted diseases at an on-site medical clinic staffed by a nurse with degrees in forensic science and criminal justice. The in-house service marks a great improvement over the days when victims would have to travel as far as Huntsville or Birmingham for exams. Kids can also receive free counseling from certified center staff. Brooks' Place has also assisted victims and non-offending caregivers in getting protective orders against offenders and has provided other services for victims and families headed to court.

Brooks' Place also conducts outreach, going to local schools to teach sex abuse recognition and prevention under legislation known as "Erin's Law."

Earlier this year, Swafford told The Tribune, "Erin's Law allows us to go into the schools and do sexual abuse prevention education for the kiddos. We do kindergarten, third grade, seventh grade in all of the Cullman County and Cullman City schools. It allows us to teach them body safety, internet safety skills, not just 'stranger danger,' and fire safety. It's so many more important things we need to teach them about ways to keep themselves safe."

Brooks' Place also hosts the annual Safe Kids Expo at Sportsman Lake Park, a family recreation event that introduces kids and parents to community resources that can help protect children.

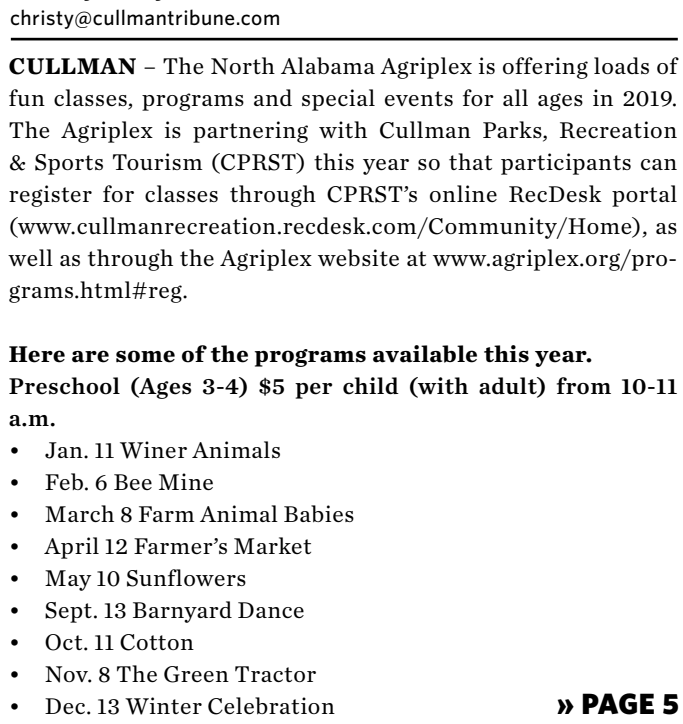
Over 20 years, additions of service and community partners have helped Brooks' Place become something approaching a one-stop center for child victims and their caregivers.

In 2018

In the last year, Brooks' Place served more than 355 child victims, performing 1,049 therapy sessions, 290 forensic interviews and 110 medical exams. The agency also made 85 Erin's Law presentations.

In a newsletter just started this month, Swafford wrote to Brooks' Place supporters and community partners:

"As I reflect on all of the accomplishments of Brooks' Place in 2018, I am filled with excitement about what the future holds as we endeavor to serve abused children » PAGE 3



CONTRIBUTED

Agriplex offering loads of activities for 2019

Christy Perry
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CULLMAN – The North Alabama Agriplex is offering loads of fun classes, programs and special events for all ages in 2019. The Agriplex is partnering with Cullman Parks, Recreation & Sports Tourism (CPRST) this year so that participants can register for classes through CPRST's online RecDesk portal (www.cullmanrecreation.recdesk.com/Community/Home), as well as through the Agriplex website at www.agriplex.org/programs.html#reg.

Here are some of the programs available this year.
Preschool (Ages 3-4) $5 per child (with adult) from 10-11 a.m.

- Jan. 11 Winer Animals
- Feb. 6 Bee Mine
- March 8 Farm Animal Babies
- April 12 Farmer's Market
- May 10 Sunflowers
- Sept. 13 Barnyard Dance
- Oct. 11 Cotton
- Nov. 8 The Green Tractor
- Dec. 13 Winter Celebration

» PAGE 5

Bill Smith BUICK GMC
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Arrests reported on Dec. 31

Wendy Sack
wendy@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN – Below are the arrests reported on Dec. 31, 2018. All persons are innocent until proven guilty.

GJ = grand jury; **FTA** = failure to appear

CULLMAN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
No arrests reported.

CULLMAN POLICE DEPARTMENT
Willingham, Janet L., 43
• fourth-degree theft of property

Cantrell, Jerimiah R., 22
• FTA- public intoxication
• FTA- giving false information to a law enforcement officer

Edwards, Cheryl M., 52
• public intoxication

Moore, Tammy R., 32
• third-degree forgery (2 counts)
• third-degree possession of a forged instrument (2 counts)

Armstrong, Jessica L., 37
• third-degree domestic violence

Harbison, Ann M., 35
• FTA- third-degree criminal trespassing (5 counts)
• FTA- fourth-degree theft of property (4 counts)
• FTA- third-degree theft of property
• FTA- attempting to elude
• FTA- running a red light

Gilland, Ciara D., 26
• third-degree criminal trespassing
• public intoxication

HANCEVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT
No arrests reported.

Find arrest reports online Monday-Friday at www.CullmanTribune.com.

Firehouse (from Front)

Christy Perry
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CULLMAN – After a soft opening for first responders and their families on Sunday, Cullman's newest restaurant, Firehouse Subs, at 1302 Second Ave. SW (U.S. Highway 31), on Monday opened to the public. The restaurant was busy with dine-in, drive-thru and to-go customers throughout the day.

Operating Manager Jim Cain sat down to talk with The Tribune Monday afternoon.

Cain owns stores in the Birmingham area and in Augusta, Georgia. Jason Hayley is also an operating manager and owns stores in the Huntsville area.

The two also own the Diablo's Southwest Grill which is expected to be open in the same complex in Cullman soon.

Cain said, "We've been busy and that's good. I only slept for about 45 minutes last night, but things are going great so far."

Cain estimated that 40 employees had been hired for the Cullman location, many of those being students. General Manager Kim Phillips, who has been with Firehouse Subs for 12 years, transferred from the McCalla location.

This year is the 25th anniversary for Firehouse Subs, founded by firefighters Chris and Robin Sorensen in 1994 in Jacksonville, Florida.

Cain explained, "Cullman is the first new store for Firehouse nationwide in 2019.

"Cullman is the first location in Alabama to have a drive-thru."

Parking is available on the front and back sides of the location, and there is front- and back-door entry.

The restaurant is located on Highway 31, in the spot locals will remember used to be occupied by Cullman Dodge.

That property, along with the one directly across the street, was purchased and is being developed by Athens-based Ming Enterprises.

The two sites will be named Cullman Row East and Cullman Row West. A new traffic light is being installed on Hwy. 31 between the two properties.

Said Cain, "I am not sure when those lights will be on. I believe that is up to the state, but I know it's not up to us.

"I am concerned about the public's safety and I hope those signals will be working soon."

Joining Firehouse in Cullman Row East will be Marco's Pizza, along with Diablo's.

Cain invited Cullman City and County employees, fire departments, the Cullman Police Department, Cullman County Sheriff's Office, Cullman EMS, officials and their families to eat on Sunday.

The store's appreciation of firefighters and those who serve their communities is evident in the pictures and giant mural inside the location. Photographs provided by local fire departments are featured; local fire departments can contact the Cullman store to inquire about having their photos added.

The Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation has donated more than $1.7 million to Alabama public safety organizations. This money has been awarded through grants. For more information on how to donate to the foundation or to apply for a grant, see www.firehousesubs.com/public-safety-foundation/.

Firehouse Subs is open each day from 10:30 a.m. until 9 p.m. Online ordering and catering are also available.

Quartet (from Front)

W.C. Mann
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CULLMAN – On Jan. 18-19, 2019, Living Faith Ministries of Cullman will host the inaugural North Alabama Quartet Convention at Temple Baptist Church. The event will bring together musicians and groups from all over the eastern U.S., many of whom have never visited the Cullman area before, for two days of Southern Gospel performances.

Host group Living Faith Quartet has performed in the Cullman/Good Hope area for 24 years. Current lineup Rodney James and son Nathan James, Mary Mooney and Mark Byrd now perform statewide and book occasional out-of-state gigs, as well. They recently began attending quartet/Southern Gospel conventions and almost immediately decided that they wanted to see such an event in the Cullman area.

Living Faith's bass singer and spokesman Byrd told The Tribune, "We actually went to our first one in March of 2018 at Oxford, Alabama and (it was) the first time that we'd ever experienced one of these conventions like this.

"And we were a part of it, and at that point we decided we wanted to bring this to Cullman.

"And so, we've been working on it all year and planning it and searching for a date to do it and just felt like this January date was going to be the best for everybody, so that's the date we settled on.

"We've been in Pigeon Forge for a week at a convention like this, and Mobile, Alabama and been over in Georgia at a convention like this.

"We met a lot of good groups, and the groups that are coming, we've sang with them all personally, so we know them all."

The convention lineup includes Friday evening headliner, the Triumphant Quartet, former house group at Barbara Mandrell's Pigeon Forge theater and popular draw at the annual Caring For Cullman fundraising concert for the Good Samaritan Health Clinic. The large slate of performers features Triumphant, Living Faith and:

- Answered Prayer
- Battle Ground Trio
- The Bunkleys
- Chronicle
- ClearVision Quartet
- The Coffmans
- The Connells
- Day Three
- Eagle's Wings
- Gloryland
- Joyful Hearts
- Master Peace Quartet
- McKay Project
- Amy Richardson
- The Riders
- The Shireys
- Cami Shrock
- Southern Heritage
- Trusting Grace
- Unity 4

Southern, country and bluegrass gospel source New Journey Radio will also be at the convention.

The event will start on Friday evening, Jan. 19, at 5:30 p.m. and feature group performances capped off by a concert with Triumphant. Saturday will have an afternoon session starting at 1 p.m. and an evening session at 5 p.m.

The Saturday evening session will be a "homecoming-style" gathering and hymn singing.

Free event admission, paid VIP seating available

The convention is free to the public. According to Byrd, Temple Pastor Malcolm Carter "didn't want anybody to have to pay to come in the church.

"And that's big for us, too. But we will be taking a love offering, you know; for those that could give, that's fine. If you can't, that's fine, too."

VIP passes are available for $20 each and will include premium seating and a gift bag. For more information or to reserve, visit the Living Faith website listed at the end of this article.

Southern Gospel not just for the senior crowd

"A lot of the younger generation probably don't know a lot about Southern Gospel music," said Byrd, "just because the times have changed, and churches have changed their music. But it's a great, great experience to come and listen to this style of music.

"And actually, there's new songs being written every day in Southern Gospel. It's not like it's out-of-date stuff; it's brand new songs.

"And our group has actually got a song out on radio now that's a brand new song, got another one we're fixing to send out to radio that's a brand new song. Nobody's ever heard of them. They're our songs.

"But I think it would be just an exciting time for the younger generation to come out and experience really what it is.

"And the groups that are coming, there's a lot of younger age performers in these groups.

"We've got one coming that's got a girl that's like 16 years old, and I think we've got one coming that's got a girl that's 14 years old.

"And a lot of the members of the groups coming are in their 20s, so it's definitely not an old folks thing. It's a younger generation that we're bringing in."

Byrd said that he hopes this event will be the first of many.

Asked if the group is hoping for more than a single gathering, he responded, "We sure are, hopefully. We've got to see how this goes.

"Me and my family go to Temple Baptist Church, and so we have that tie there to the church, and we hope that things would go great and we can continue to do that on an annual basis."

For more information including schedules, artist information and VIP tickets, visit www.livingfaithquartet.com.

Free VIP passes!

The Cullman Tribune will be giving away two pairs of VIP passes to the convention. Check www.Facebook.com/CullmanTribune for more information.

At a glance

North Alabama Quartet Convention

- Jan. 19-20, 2019
- Temple Baptist Church, 30 County Road 1184, Cullman (off Alabama Highway 157 near West Point)
- 5:30 p.m. Friday, 1 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. Saturday
- Friday will feature a concert by Triumphant Quartet.
- Saturday evening will feature a "homecoming-style" hymn singing.

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Cullman Library
200 Clark St NE
Cullman, Alabama 35055
CULLMAN COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
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PREP BASKETBALL

Raiders knock off Warriors to capture 2018 West Point Christmas Classic Championship

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WEST POINT – After winning on days one and two and knocking off the home-standing West Point Warriors in Saturday's title game, the Good Hope Raiders were crowned the 2018 West Point Christmas Classic Champions.

The Raiders were knocking them down from long range early in the game, led by Noah Fendley who finished the first quarter with three makes from beyond the arc. Good Hope led 21-12 after the opening quarter, and back-to-back threes from Cole Maddox helped stretch that lead to 37-28 going into the break. Maddox finished the first half with 18 points.

The second half was a little slower and didn't feature a lot of scoring, but turnovers made it difficult for the Warriors to chip away at the Raiders' lead. Good Hope led 49-37 going into the fourth quarter and had some trouble offensively in the final frame. Whitt Laney cut the Raiders' lead to 55-52 with a minute remaining in the game, but two made free throws from Cole and Drew Maddox held off the late push from West Point. The Raiders held on to win it 59-52.

Cole Maddox led Good Hope with 26 points, followed by Drew Maddox who finished with 14. Rylan Jones led the Warriors with 12 points in the loss, followed closely by Kolton Sapp who posted 10.

The Raiders will look to build off their tournament momentum when they travel to face Fairview on Jan. 3 and West Point will look to bounce back when it plays Russellville on the road Jan. 4.

Cullman 81 – Hayden 73

The 'Cats shot the three ball early and often in their win over Hayden on Saturday, led by Tucker Gambrill who finished the game with 23 points and seven makes from 3-point range. Cullman finished the opening quarter with a 23-17 lead and extended its advantage to 47-31 by halftime. The Bearcats hit nine 3-point shots in the first half alone, four of which came from Gambrill.

The third quarter featured more of the same as Cullman continued to hit shots from the outside and add to its lead.

The Wildcats trailed by 18 going into the final frame and they were able to chip away in the fourth quarter, but it was too little too late for Hayden.

The 'Cats held on to win it 81-73 and finish third in this year's West Point Christmas Classic.

Gambrill led the Bearcats with 23 points, followed by Jayden Sullins and JT White who finished with 19 and 14 points, respectively. Cullman finished the game with 12 makes from 3-point range.

The Bearcats will try to stay hot when they travel to compete in the Pleasant Grove Invitational starting Jan. 3.



MARTHA NEEDHAM/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Cole Maddox led all scorers with 26 points in Good Hope's 59-52 win over West Point Saturday afternoon.

24/7 fitness, Community Wellness Day and Polar Bear Plunge on deck for CWAC

Heather Mann
Tribune Correspondent

CULLMAN – Each new year brings an opportunity for people to grow and change and redefine themselves. For people who aim to work out more and get in shape in 2019, the Cullman Wellness & Aquatic Center (CWAC) is rolling out a change that's been discussed for several years: 24/7 fitness access starting Jan. 1 at 9 a.m.

Up until now, the CWAC's fitness hours have been from 4:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. on weekdays - opening slightly later and closing slightly earlier on weekends - and closed on holidays. However, even those hours presented some trouble for patrons who may work unpredictable schedules.

CWAC Facility Director Aleah DeBoer said the change has been in the works for quite some time, and she was proud to announce the new hours, saying, "It'll be a true 24/7, 365 schedule. It's something that we're very excited to be able to offer our members. I think that to see our efforts come to fruition, to finally be a one-stop shop for everyone - with the fitness, the childcare, the water park, just about everything you'd need here - it's very exciting for us to be able to offer it all to the community, as well as our membership."

CWAC is holding its annual Community Wellness Week this week, culminating in Community Wellness Day on Saturday, Jan. 5 from 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Admission is free Saturday, and there will be multiple vendors and giveaways. Perhaps the most popular event will be the much-anticipated Polar Bear Plunge, which will take place Saturday at 11 a.m. in the outdoor pool. These who enter will have a chance to win a free family membership to CWAC.

Find out more at www.facebook.com/Cullman-WellnessAquaticCenter or www.cullmanwellness.com.

CWAC is located at 1636 Field of Miracles Dr. SW in Cullman.



CULLMAN TRIBUNE FILE PHOTO

Dameon Jackson reacts to the cold air as Christy Turner exits the pool after 2016's Polar Bear Plunge. This year's event will take place this Saturday, Jan. 5 at 11 a.m. at the Cullman Wellness & Aquatic Center.

Swafford (from Front)

throughout Cullman county. I am also filled with gratitude for all of the support from our neighbors.

"With your help, in May 2018, we opened Brooks' Place medical clinic. Liana Hill, Forensic Nurse Examiner, now provides forensic medical exams to physical/sexually abused children on site. In addition, all children who come to Brooks' Place - regardless of whether abuse was disclosed - are offered a well-check medical exam. In 2018 110 medical examinations were provided.

"We welcomed Kate Hall as our new child therapist in August 2018. Kate has a wealth of experience in working with abused children and is trained to provide trauma-focused counseling to kids of all ages. Overall, our therapists were able to provide over a thousand much-needed therapy sessions to kids in Cullman county this year.

"In 2018, Kaylee Proctor, our Outreach Coordinator, assisted by Brooks' Place staff, Ashley Lee, Haley Gaines, and Kate Hall, presented sexual abuse awareness curriculum as mandated by Erin's Law, to over 3,500 elementary and middle school students in Cullman City and County schools.

Judges Nicholas, Williams, Turner, and Chaney, Assistant DA Jeff Roberts, and Chief Juvenile Probation Officer Kay Bell presented to high school students.

"We also worked with our MDT to conduct over 290 forensic interviews this year and worked with agencies as they investigated and prosecuted child abuse cases.

"We are thankful for our community partners who support us in upholding our mission at Brooks' Place. We are looking forward to 2019 as we continue to provide hope, help, and healing to the children and families we serve. We would like to extend a sincere and heartfelt thank you to all of our partnering agencies, to our current Board of Directors, and to all of you, who continue to support our work and make our services possible."

Swafford took time to recognize Brooks' Place's community partners and major contributors, including Lake Catoma Baptist Church, Cullman Women's League, Royal Technologies, Second Century League, Milo's, Shane Quick/Rock the South and the Cullman Association of Realtors.

Safe Kids Expo sponsors included Pepsi, Sportsman Lake Park, the Cullman County District Attorney's Office, Wal-Mart Distribution, Desperation Church, Cullman Lions Club, Cullman County Partnership for Children, Inc., and Cullman County Home Builders Association.

Annual fundraising golf tournament sponsors included AGCOR Steel, Cullman Savings Bank, Frogg Toggs, Johnny's Bar-B-Q, Pepsi, Tri-County Mobile X-Ray, Inc., and Wal-Mart Distribution.

Swafford cited the addition of the on-site medical clinic as one of Brooks' Place's biggest accomplishments in 2018.

In a note to The Tribune, she wrote:

"In reflecting on the past year, one of the most exciting accomplishments we've had is the opening our medical clinic.

"We are one of the few CACs (child advocacy centers) in the state that can offer this service on-site.Having a medical clinic on-site means that families do not have to travel to Huntsville or Birmingham to receive a forensic medical exam for a child who has been abused. Our clinic is a warm, inviting, home-like setting so that children feel more comfortable and less fearful of having the exam. All services to child victims are provided at no cost to the family.

"Brooks' Place is a part of a team of professionals (Cullman City Police Dept. investigators, Cullman Sheriff's Office investigators, Cullman DHR workers, mental health professionals, Cullman County Juvenile Probation officers, Cullman County District Attorney and assistant DAs) who strive to make Cullman a safer place for our children while seeking justice by holding offenders accountable.

"I am thankful for our partners in the community who have supported Brooks' Place and our mission of offering help, hope and healing to children and families impacted by physical and sexual abuse."

STATE / HEALTH

Hepatitis A outbreak under investigation in North Alabama

ADPH
Contributor

MONTGOMERY – The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) is investigating an increase in hepatitis A cases in Jackson County. This outbreak may have spread to surrounding counties. Persons at highest risk for hepatitis A include users of illegal substances, homeless persons and men with same sex partners. Other persons also may become infected with the hepatitis A virus. There is an effective vaccine to reduce the risk of developing hepatitis A.

"We are in the early stages of this investigation, but we need to make sure everyone knows the importance of getting vaccinated and taking health precautions including good hand-washing," said Medical Officer Dr. Karen Landers.

Hepatitis A can spread easily among unvaccinated persons if good hand-washing practices are not observed. ADPH emphasizes that individuals who may be experiencing homelessness, using recreational drugs, sharing drugs or drug paraphernalia, having spent time in jail or prison, or men with same sex partners need to be vaccinated against hepatitis A. Other persons may be vaccinated if they wish.

After being exposed to someone sick with hepatitis A, symptoms may not appear until 15 to 50 days later.

Symptoms may include fever, headache, fatigue, low appetite, stomach pain, nausea, vomiting, dark urine or jaundice. If persons are experiencing any of these symptoms, they should contact their healthcare provider and take steps to prevent spreading illness.

To reduce the risk of hepatitis A disease:

- Get vaccinated.
- Wash hands after using the bathroom, before preparing or eating meals, and after touching anything unclean.
- Do not share food, drinks, eating utensils, cigarettes, towels, toothbrushes or drug paraphernalia.

For more information, visit alabamapublichealth.gov/immunization/assets/hepatitisaflyer.pdf or contact the ADPH Immunization Division at 334-206-5023 or toll free at 800-469-4599.

STATE

Deer CWD sampling Jan. 4-6 in Hackleburg, Jan. 12-13 in Waterloo

Ala. Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources

MONTGOMERY – The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources is increasing Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) sampling surveillance efforts in northwest Alabama after deer in nearby Mississippi and Tennessee counties tested CWD-positive. CWD is a contagious and deadly neurological disorder that affects members of the deer family. To date, no deer in Alabama have tested positive for CWD.

The Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries (WFF) will conduct a voluntary CWD-sampling station Jan. 4-6 in Hackleburg, Alabama, in Marion County, and Jan. 12-13 in Waterloo, Alabama, in Lauderdale County.

The sampling station in Marion County will be set up in the parking lot of Hackleburg Hardware, 125 Boyd Street, Hackleburg, AL 35564. This is located at the intersection of Boyd Street and Highway 172.

Deer may be brought to Hackleburg for sampling during the following dates and times:

- Friday, Jan. 4 from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m.
- Saturday, Jan. 5 from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Sunday, Jan.6 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The sampling station in Lauderdale County will be set up in the parking lot of Waterloo Fire Station #1, 6390 County Road 14, Waterloo, AL 35677.

Deer may be brought to Waterloo for sampling during the following dates and times:

- Saturday, Jan. 12 from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Sunday, Jan. 13 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Deer harvested in Franklin, Marion, Lamar, Lauderdale and Colbert counties are being targeted, but biologists will sample deer from surrounding counties as well. Sampling involves removing the retropharyngeal lymph nodes from the head of a deer. Hunters may bring in a whole deer, field-dressed deer, or just the head from the harvested animal. Collecting a sample from a harvested deer takes only a few minutes.

Since 2002, WFF has relied on the assistance of hunters who have volunteered their harvested deer for CWD surveillance sampling. WFF is again seeking the assistance of hunters to help conserve Alabama's natural resources by taking their harvested deer to the Hackleburg or Waterloo CWD-sampling stations. All hunters who volunteer their harvested deer for sampling will receive the CWD surveillance test result.

To learn more about CWD and to get information on future pubic sampling sites, visit www.outdooralabama.com/cwd.











Agriplex (from Front)

Farm Kids Club (Ages 5 and up) Saturdays 9-10:30 a.m. $5 per child (with exceptions); Max program cost of $10 per family

- Jan. 5 Make and Take Terrariums ($10 per child)
- Feb. 2 The Chicken and the Egg
- March 2 Sheep to Wool
- April 6 Planting the Garden
- May 4 Attracting Birds to the Backyard
- June 1 Horse Talk
- July 13 Water Water Everywhere
- Sept. 7 Cooking Class
- Oct. 5 Charlotte's Web
- Nov. 2 Turkey Time
- Dec. 7 Holiday Crafts

Heritage Homeschool (homeschoolers and parents) Thursdays 9-11 a.m. $8 per child; Max program cost of $16 per family

- Jan. 24 Peanuts
- Feb. 28 Little Red Hen
- March 14 Victory Gardens
- April 25 Strawberries
- May 23 Wildlife
- Sept. 26 Forestry
- Oct. 24 Owls
- Nov. 14 Soybeans
- Dec. 12 Happy Birthday Alabama

Several summer programs are being offered to kids including Garden Camps in June and July, Sewing Camps (101-102-103) in July and August, and the 19th Annual Touring Farms for Kids in June.

Field trips are also scheduled throughout the year for preschoolers, elementary students and middle schoolers (sixth-eighth grades). These trips cover a variety of places and topics. The prices of these field trip vary.

From May 11 thru Oct. 12, Power of Produce will be held at the Festhalle Farmers' Market. On Saturdays and at 2nd Fridays events, children up to age 12 will get free produce samples. Children will also receive market money to spend.

Adult classes $5 per person (with exceptions), 6 p.m.

- Jan. 22 Attracting Purple Martins and Bluebirds to Your Yard
- Feb. 7 Raised Bed Gardening
- March 5 Lasagna Gardening
- April 16 Healthy Lawn Care
- May 7 Combat Invasive Plants/Traveling Band of Privet Remand
- June 4 Training Trees the First 25 Years
- July 16 Backyard Chickens
- Aug. 22 Salad Bowl Garden/ Growing Other Fall Veggies
- Sept. 26 Succulent Pumpkin Centerpiece
- Oct. 3 Native Woody Plants
- Nov. 5 Horses
- Dec. 7 Grapevine Wreaths

Monthly programs $5 per person, 6 p.m.

- Jan. 17 Storytelling Night
- Feb. 28 Life of Tommie Bass
- March 14 Cheesemaking
- April 11 A Cutting Flower Garden from Your Backyard
- May 9 Hypertuffa
- June 20 Healing Salves from the Earth
- July 18 Learn to Crochet an Amigurumi Japanese Stuffed Toy
- Aug. 15 Sacred Harp Singing
- Sept. 10 Woods of Alabama
- Oct. 15 Trapping and the Fur Trade
- Nov. 7 Essential Oil Basics
- Dec. 3 Herbs for the Holidays

The American Iris Society will also meet on the last Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m., expect December, when it will meet earlier in the month.

Lunch and Learn programs are free and will be held on Wednesdays at the Agriplex from noon until 1 p.m.

The dates for Lunch and Learns are Jan. 16, Feb. 20, March 20, April 17, May 15, June 19, July 17, Aug. 24 and Sept. 18. Participants will learn about various outdoor topics. Door prizes will also be given out.

Several exciting workshops have been scheduled, with the first beginning later in January on Beekeeping. Quilting Basics for Adults will take place in March and Blacksmith Workshop in May.

On Feb. 21 at 6 p.m., as part of the Alabama 200 Bicentennial celebration, co-authors Ken Willis and Larry Davenport will be discussing their book "Exploring Wild Alabama." Afterward they will be signing books.

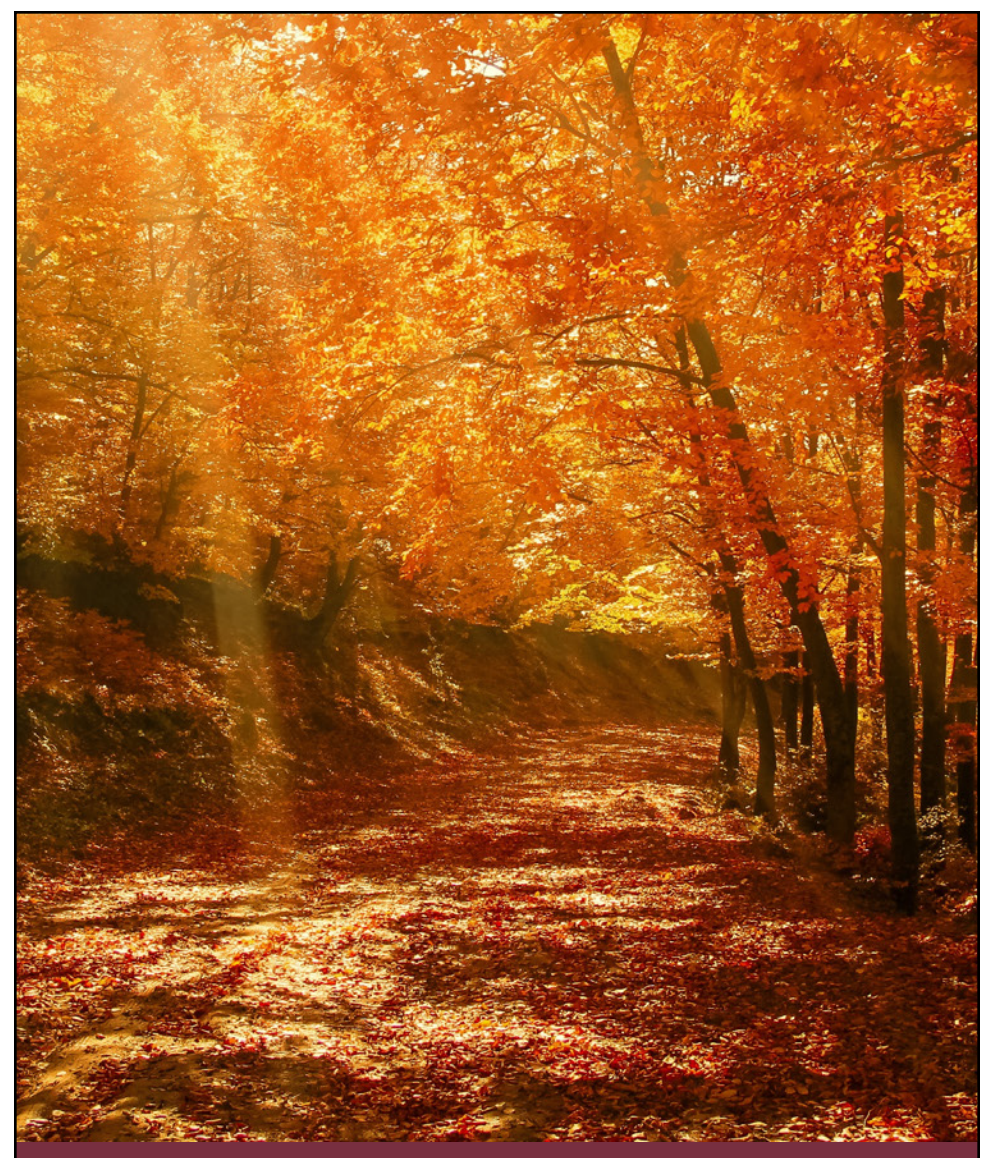
Participants must be registered for events and seats should be reserved for Lunch and Learns. For more information and to register, visit www.agriplex.org.

For updates on upcoming events, follow the North Alabama Agriplex on Facebook at www.facebook.com/NorthAlabamaAgriplex.

The Agriplex's 2019 schedule can also be accessed at www.flipsnack.com/agriplex/2019-agriplex-public-programs.html.







THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE
JANUARY 1, 2019

Strange New Year's traditions from around the world

New Year's Day is here, and people from all over the world are celebrating its arrival by doing some pretty strange things. While people here in Alabama might chow down on black-eyed peas, collard greens and ham hocks, others are doing their own thing, depending on where they live.

Nearly every country has its own special tradition for celebrating the first day of the year, but no matter what those rituals are, everyone does them for the same reasons. They do them in hopes of having a happy, healthy and wealthy New Year. Some of the traditions can be very simple, like eating a specific meal, but others can be rather, well, weird. Here are just a few of the customs from different parts of the world.

People in the Philippines like round things. To them, the custom is all about the money.

They believe everything should be round on New Year's Day to represent coins, which bring wealth. They will eat round food, wear round clothes and use round objects. The sky's the limit - as long as it's round.

In Japan they ring all of their bells 108 times because of the Buddhist belief that doing so brings cleanness.

The Japanese are also all smiles as they go into the New Year because they believe smiling will bring them good luck.

In Romania they throw their spare coins into the river for good luck. Belgium, like Cullman County, takes its livestock seriously.

The only difference is, they take their seriousness to a whole new level; farmers in Belgium actually wish their cows a Happy New Year! Does anyone around here that do that?

The French like to keep things simple and delicious. Every New Year they eat stacks and stacks of pancakes. How about a pancake pig-out over here?!



People in Colombia must love to travel. On New Year's Day they carry their suitcases around with them all day in hopes of having a travel-filled year. That seems like a lot of work, huh?

Denmark's tradition is pretty interesting. People climb on top of chairs and literally "jump" into the New Year to bring good luck.

Besides throwing buckets of water on each other, folks in Thailand also smear each other with gray talc. Maybe they use the buckets of water to wash the talc off after they have been smeared?

How about a sleepover in the cemetery? In Chile, families get together and actually spend the night in the company of their long gone loved ones by sleeping in cemeteries.

Just like the farmers in Belgium, Romanian farmers try to communicate with their cows.

The twist is, if they succeed it means bad luck for the year. Who wants to eavesdrop on one of those conversations!

This is a good one! In Ireland, they actually hit the walls with bread to get rid of evil spirits. Bread!

In some parts of South Africa people throw furniture out their windows. Now that's an expensive tradition!

Frozen tree trunks are a hot item this time of year in Siberia. People there jump into frozen lakes carrying them!

In Panama, statues are made of anyone and everyone famous. Then they are burned as a way to start the New Year off with good luck. Why famous people and not just the average guy down the street?

The Scottish people are rather competitive. Scotland's New Year tradition consists of people racing through their houses, headed for the door.

They believe the first person to cross the threshold of the home in the New Year should carry a gift for good luck. No word on what that gift is.

Most of us have never heard of such oddball New Year's activities, but eating black-eyed peas surely sounds weird to those in other parts of the world. To each his own!

Happy New Year and pass the peas, please.

This Tribune file story originally ran in Dec. 2016.

Obituary Announcements: Jan. 1 - 4

Jessica Lee Beam, 28, was born on April 22, 1990 and passed away on December 30, 2018. Visitation will be held Wednesday, January 2, 2019 from 1 p.m. until 2 p.m. at Moss-Service Funeral Home. A Celebration of Life will begin following visitation at 2 p.m. Moss-Service Funeral Home Chapel. Burial will follow at Cullman Memory Gardens. Moss-Service Funeral Home directing.

Funeral service for Arvel 'Lightning' Allison will be Wednesday, January 2, 2019, at 2 p.m. at Cullman Heritage Funeral Home. Larry Pruitt, Vance Hutton and Justin Guin are officiating with interment in Key Cemetery. Mr. Allison passed away December 28, 2018. He was born September, 17, 1948 to Bart and Ruth Stinson Allison. He was a faithful Christian man who worked for 49 years with law enforcement and was a school resource officer. He is preceded in death by his parents, 2 sisters Dean Allison, and Jean Wells, and a brother Robert Allison. Survivors include his wife, Charlene Allison, sons, Andy (Heather) Allison and Japheth (Bre) Allison, daughters, Jennie (Paul) Allison and Andrea (Robbie) Allison, nephew like a son, Jeff (Donna) Greene, grandchildren, Titus, Thomas, Thatcher, and Hadley Allison, Gyver Clifton, Castiel and Saeko Allison, brothers Donald and Phene Allison and a host of nieces and nephews, family and friends. Visitation will be from 12 p.m. until 2 p.m. at Cullman Heritage Funeral Home.

Gary L. Dunn, 63, of Altoona, passed away December 30, 2018. He was born February 25, 1955, to William Henry and Daphine Callaway Dunn. Mr. Dunn is preceded in death by his parents. Survivors include his wife, Rowena Cantrell Dunn; sons, Jimmy (Candy) Dunn, Tim (Tina) Smith, Toby Smith; daughters, Rene' Perkins, Kim (Roger) Carden; brother, Gerald Dunn; sister, Brenda (Joe) Pace; nine grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. Funeral services will be 1 p.m., Wednesday, January 2, 2019, in the Holly Pond Funeral Home Chapel, Pastor Gary McRae officiating. Friends may visit with the family one hour prior to services, from 12 noon until services begin. Holly Pond Funeral Home is honored to serve the Dunn family.

Geraldine Holley, 99, of Haleyville, entered into rest on December 30, 2018 at Lakeland Community Hospital surrounded by her loving family. Mrs. Holley was born on August 28, 1919, in Tishomingo, Mississippi. She was a lifelong member of Haleyville First United Methodist Church and enjoyed attending circle meetings with her church family. Geraldine's hobbies included gardening, cooking, and sewing. She was known as "Nanny" to her family and friends. Visitation will be held on Wednesday, January 2, 2019 from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. at Nichols Funeral Home in Haleyville, where services will be held at 1 p.m. Brother Mitch Nethery will officiate. Burial will follow in Winston Memorial Cemetery in Haleyville, Alabama. Geraldine is survived by her son, Tommy Holley; grandchildren, Paul Holley and his wife Susan, Jimmy Holley, Brent Holley; great-grandchildren, Becca Stults, Makayla Kelly, Makenzie Holley, Jeremy Holley; great-great-grandchildren, Holly Grace Stults, John Waid Stults, Rainey Holley; and a host of nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her husband, Thurston "Dutch" Holley; granddaughter, Lesia Holley; parents, Charles and Carrie Holley; and 8 brothers and sisters.

Lawton R. Waldrep of Crane Hill passed away on December 30, 2018 at his residence at the age of 92. He was born on February 27, 1926 to Millard G. and Rosa Lee Bigbee Waldrep. He was a veteran of The United States Navy. He is prececed in death by his parents, brothers Alvin Eugene Waldrep, Arthur L. Waldrep, Gerald Waldrep, James "Jimmy" H. Waldrep, sisters in law Frances Waldrep, Sarah Waldrep, Inez Waldrep, Beverly Waldrep. Funeral services are Wednesday, January 2, 2019 at Flat Rock United Methodist Church at 12 Noon. He will lie in state at the church from 10 a.m. until service time. Pastor Mac Larkin and Rev. Bo Prewett will officiate. Interment will follow in the adjoining cemetery. Survivors are: wife Bertha Mae Jackson Waldrep, daughter Carolyn Marie Hunt, sons Horace Lee Waldrep, Michael Wayne (Jayne) Waldrep, Robert Neal (Donna) Waldrep, brother Talmadge Waldrep, sister in law Josephine Burrow Waldrep, 5 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren. Visitation is Tuesday, January 1, 2019 at Moss Funeral Home from 6 p.m. until 9 p.m.

Geraldine Holley, 99, of Haleyville, entered into rest on December 30, 2018 at Lakeland Community Hospital surrounded by her loving family. Mrs. Holley was born on August 28, 1919, in Tishomingo, Mississippi. She was a lifelong member of Haleyville First United Methodist Church and enjoyed attending circle meetings with her church family. Geraldine's hobbies included gardening, cooking, and sewing. She was known as "Nanny" to her family and friends. Visitation will be held on Wednesday, January 2, 2019 from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. at Nichols Funeral Home in Haleyville, where services will be held at 1 p.m. Brother Mitch Nethery will officiate. Burial will follow in Winston Memorial Cemetery in Haleyville, Alabama. Geraldine is survived by her son, Tommy Holley; grandchildren, Paul Holley and his wife Susan, Jimmy Holley, Brent Holley; great-grandchildren, Becca Stults, Makayla Kelly, Makenzie Holley, Jeremy Holley; great-great-grandchildren, Holly Grace Stults, John Waid Stults, Rainey Holley; and a host of nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her husband, Thurston "Dutch" Holley; granddaughter, Lesia Holley; parents, Charles and Carrie Holley; and 8 brothers and sisters.

Betty Jane (Neal) Allbright, 80, of Holly Pond, passed away Monday, December 31, 2018. She was born March 23, 1938, to Raymond and Orene Scott Neal. Betty was a devoted wife and mother. She enjoyed caring for her family and making home a warm and inviting place for them all. She adored her grandchildren! Betty loved watching the grandchildren play ball, rarely missing a game. She also loved to travel, shop, and cook. She was always going, often times outdoing her children and grandchildren with her energy. Betty was a special lady and her absence will be felt by many. Mrs. Allbright is preceded in death by her parents; brother, Harvey Neal; son, Tommy Allbright; and beloved husband, Festus Allbright. Betty is survived by daughters, Phyllis (David) Thomas, Terri (Kevin) Caldwell; grandchildren, Chad Allbright, Chris Allred, Jessica Allred, Jason Thomas, Heath (Breann) Allbright; great-grandchildren, Cade Allbright, Lily Allbright, Olivia Allbright, Uriah Allbright, and Arri Allbright. Funeral services are 1 p.m., Thursday, January 3, 2019, at Pleasant View Baptist Church, Pastor Randy Burtram officiating. Mrs. Allbright will lie in state from noon until services begin at 1 p.m. Burial will follow in Holly Pond Cemetery. Friends may visit with the family in the Holly Pond Funeral Home chapel on Wednesday, January 2, 2019, from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. Holly Pond Funeral Home is honored to serve the Allbright family.

Funeral service for Mrs. Doris Lynn Cason, 59 of Hanceville will be held Friday, January 4, 2019 at 11 a.m. in the Hanceville Funeral Home chapel with Leon Mauldin and Jim Deason officiating. Her family will receive friends Thursday evening beginning at 6 p.m. at the funeral home. Doris, a U.S. Navy veteran and homemaker was the daughter of Richard C. and Erma L. Wamsley. She is survived by her mother; Husband, Rick Cason; Son, Rick Cason, Jr. and fiancé Lacey Lynch, Daughters; Krystal Cason and Michelle (Lynn) Talley. Grandchildren; Abigail Marie Holt and Zaius Byrd. Also surviving is a brother, Richard Wamsley, Jr. She was preceded in death by her father and a sister, Beverly Ritchie.

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MOVIE REVIEW

A more authentic 'Bumblebee': 8/10

Nick Griffin
nick@cullmantribune.com

"Bumblebee" is directed by Travis Knight, written by Christina Hodson and stars Hailee Steinfeld as Charlie Watson, a teenage girl dealing with some past trauma who happens upon one of cinema's most recognizable Autobots.

By now, audiences are more than familiar with the Transformers. Director Michael Bay helmed five Transformers movies from 2007-2017 but has finally decided to step aside, giving us 2018's "Bumblebee." From the opening shot of the film, the director is making it very clear that this is a different Transformers movie than we're used to seeing. Everything has been shifted toward the aesthetic of the 1980s Transformers cartoon, from the names and designs of the Transformers all the way down to the sounds they make. There is a very clear effort being made to differentiate this film from the others that came before it.

The human characters are also clearly part of that effort. Steinfeld is great in the lead role, but even the supporting characters are an improvement over Bay's typical casts. Where Bay's style of humor came off as sophomoric at best and offensive at worst, the humor in this film feels much more natural and less silly. It's also much less forced. Knight allows for some moments of sadness and grief in his film rather than labeling specific characters exclusively as comedy relief or evil government official. Every character gets a chance to be sad, angry and laugh in "Bumblebee," and that makes them much easier to relate to.

A great example of this is John Cena's character, Agent Jack Burns. In a lot of films, especially a Michael Bay Transformers film, Cena's character would've likely filled a cookie-cutter villain type of role, but here his character is much more well-realized.

While you may not agree with every decision he makes, you can see the logic in his decisions and you can understand what motivates him. It seems so simple, but those elements are what truly make for great characters and great films. Steinfeld's character is the most obvious example of this in the movie because we spend the most time with her, but for the most part, every character in the film has a motivation and a dilemma that you can understand.

The core of this film is the relationship between Charlie and Bumblebee and is very reminiscent of classics like "The Iron Giant" and "E.T. the Extra Terrestrial." They need one another for different reasons and help each other through their traumas by the end of the film. The relationship between Bumblebee and Sam Witwicky was one of the strongest elements of the Bay films, but here I think Knight has done just as well if not better at building the friendship between our two main characters.

Overall, "Bumblebee" is a fun, heart-warming, action-packed holiday film full of great performances and laughs that probably should've been the first Transformers movie we got. It's a little predictable and cheesy from time to time, but if that's the biggest complaint I have with this new breed of Transformers films, sign me up for more.

Griffin's score: 8/10



PARAMOUNT PICTURES

MOVIE REVIEW

'Aquaman' is not deep, but a good time: 6/10

Nick Griffin
nick@cullmantribune.com

"Aquaman" is directed by James Wan, stars Jason Momoa as Arthur Curry, aka Aquaman, and introduces audiences to a new corner of the DC Comics Universe. We see him in a brief clip in "Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice" and officially meet him in 2017's "Justice League," but this film shows us Aquaman's origins and the origins of his kingdom.

The story begins by showing us the relationship between Aquaman's parents and how that shaped his life. Once we hit present day, the story turns into a non-stop ride from location to location and doesn't really slow down until the movie ends. This can be a detriment in a few places where we are being given exposition about things to come and an explosion followed by a fight scene interrupts the conversation. That wouldn't be a negative if it didn't happen several times throughout the film. It comes off as if the writer and director couldn't come up with a way to transition to the next scene without a fight happening.

That being said, the action is very well done and fun to watch. From the first fight scene in the opening few minutes, you immediately get a sense of what the action will be like, and it's very cool to look at. Because of the pace and the amount of action in the film, the two-and-a-half-hour runtime goes by a little faster than you might think. The visual style also complements the action very well. This is a film that will be more entertaining in the theater, and maybe even in 3-D if you're into that sort of thing. The underwater action is beautiful and massive, making Atlantis and the ocean in general the most visually interesting environment of the DC films so far. On land, the fight scenes are choreographed and shot in a way the reminds me of the Captain America films that the Russo brothers directed for the MCU. All the fighting is done in wide shots that are easy to see, and they use the environment around the scene to add to the action, particularly during a brawl in Italy.

Where the film is lacking is clearly in the storytelling and dialog. This is a movie in which scenes just seem to happen one after the other without the necessary amount of connective tissue. Because of this, it can be tough to remember what our characters are looking for or talking about from time to time. Like I said before, exposition and dialog are regularly interrupted by action so even in a move that is well over two hours long, the story and character motivations don't get the necessary attention.

Overall, "Aquaman" is a light-hearted action-adventure that is far from perfect but far from boring at the same time. In my opinion, Momoa was forgettable and borderline annoying as Aquaman in his "Justice League" appearance, but he is significantly more likeable this time around in his solo film. If you're looking for a deep, well-written story this may not be your favorite comic book film, but if you're looking for an excuse to put away some popcorn and have a good time at the theater, "Aquaman" will deliver.

Griffin's score: 6/10



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THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE
JANUARY 1, 2019

Community with Carol: Linda Bailey with the Committee on Church Cooperation

Carol Berry
Tribune Columnist

My guest this week on Community with Carol is Linda Bailey with the Committee on Church Cooperation (CCC). This local nonprofit, located in the Cullman County Department of Human Resources (DHR) building on St. Joseph Street in Cullman, was established in 1989. It provides assistance with utility bills, rent and medications for families in need.

I enjoyed meeting Linda and learning more about the organization she is so proud to be a part of.

The CCC is made up of 17 churches, eight Sunday school classes and a handful of personal donors.

The 501(c)(3) is run by volunteers, and 99 percent of the monies taken in go directly to the community.

Linda was kind enough to give us the actual operating statement for the organization.

In 2017, the CCC distributed $56,785 to Cullman residents.

Of that, $51,000 was paid toward utilities, $5,000 toward rent and $785 toward medications.

The CCC is open Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to noon.

The address for the organization is 1220 St. Joseph St. NW, Cullman.

The phone number is 256-739-1578. The CCC does not conduct interviews over the phone; you will be required to visit them at the physical location.

Linda's compassion for others really shined during our time together. She has a servant's heart.

When I asked her what she would like to see improve at the CCC in 2019, her answer was, without hesitation, to assist many more with their medications.

She feels a lot of Cullman residents struggle to pay for medications and at times go without them.

If you or someone you know could use assistance with medications, rent or utilities, please go by and see Linda or one of the other wonderful volunteers at the CCC. They want to help you.

See my interview with Linda Tuesday at www.Facebook.com/CullmanTribune.



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Carol Berry with Linda Bailey



Bill Smith

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