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Sherry Boatright, Barbara Whitehead inducted into Alabama Senior Citizens Hall of Fame

Staff Reports
Contributor

CULLMAN, Ala. — The Donald E. Green Active Adult Center was abuzz with celebration on Monday, Aug. 12, as two of its cherished members, Sherry Boatright and Barbara Whitehead, were inducted into the Alabama Senior Citizens Hall of Fame. The intimate ceremony, held at their hometown activity center, honored their remarkable contributions to the community with heartfelt speeches, cake and joyous festivities.

Honoring Sherry Boatright

Boatright, a beloved resident of Hanceville, has been a beacon of inspiration at the Active Adult Center for over 18 years. As a dedicated dance instructor, she has enriched the lives of 25-30 senior citizens weekly through her classes. Her dance troupe, "The Kickers," is well-known for their spirited performances at local events, including the "Kicking Cancer in Cullman" fundraiser, which Boatright founded » PAGE 5



CITY OF CULLMAN

Sherry Boatright, left, and Barbara Whitehead, right

Names not forgotten
Annual Purple Heart memorial service remembers local heroes



GAUGE DAY/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

The Purple Heart Monument, located at Sparkman Park in Hartselle

Gauge Day
gauge@cullmantribune.com

HARTSELLE, Ala. — On Saturday, Aug. 10, Chapter 2212, the Joe Hooper, Medal of Honor, Chapter of the Military Order of the Purple Heart hosted its annual memorial service to honor fallen warriors of Cullman and Morgan counties. The ceremony, held at the Purple Heart Monument in Sparkman Park in Hartselle, was marked by the patriotic presence of American Legion and Patriot Guard motorcyclists standing at attention with flags. The event was presided over by chapter Commander Clifford Gissell.

With the na- » PAGE 3



GAUGE DAY/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

A Purple Heart flag is given to the family member of one of the names being honored on Saturday, Aug. 10, 2024.

Commission on Aging to host Spaghetti Fundraiser Aug. 22 » PAGE 2

West Point Back-to-School Bash a slam dunk



CHEYENNE SHARP/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Children line up to shoot their shot at the dunking booth at West Point's Back to School Bash on Saturday, Aug. 10, 2024. » PAGE 5

West's Community Block Party returning for 2nd year » PAGE 6

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CRIME

Arrests and incidents reported Aug. 12

Cullman Tribune staff
Contributor

CULLMAN, Ala. — Below are the arrests and incidents reported Aug. 12, 2024. All persons are innocent until proven guilty.

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

CULLMAN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

INCIDENTS

July 8
- dog bite; CR 688
- domestic violence; CR 187

July 9
- harassing communications; CR 1114
- theft of property; US. 31
- shooting into unoccupied vehicle; CR 702
- theft of property; CR 216
- violation of protection order; CR 590

July 10
- unlawful possession of controlled substance; resisting arrest; Hwy. 68N
- unlawful possession of controlled substance; possession of drug paraphernalia; public lewdness; CR 437
- possession of marijuana; CR 747
- domestic violence; CR 1343
- animal cruelty; CR 1467

July 11
- escape; CR 1807
- domestic violence; interference with a domestic violence call; Hwy. 278E
- unlawful breaking and entering motor vehicle; CR 1807

ARRESTS

Aug. 8-11

Brannon, Kristie J.; 53
- DUI

Deboard, Gregory D.; 33
- FTA – driving while license suspended (3 counts)
- FTA – possession of marijuana-2nd degree
- possession of marijuana-2nd degree

Duncan, Devin S.; 24
- public intoxication

Flores, Kelly J.; 18
- making false report to law enforcement authority

Haggermaker, Shannon F.; 36
- public intoxication
- resisting arrest
- possession of cocaine

Harris, Jacob D.; 24
- GJ – dissemination/display of child pornography (20 counts)
- GJ – possession of child pornography (20 counts)

Herron, Dean E.; 37
- GJ – sex offense – force
- GJ – sodomy-1st degree
- GJ – directing a child to engage in sexual intercourse

Hollis Jr., Robert L.; 47
- PROBATION VIOLATION – possession of drug paraphernalia (2 counts)

Johnson, Brandi M.; 35
- FTA – possession of drug paraphernalia

Martinez, Bryann L.; 26
- retail theft-3rd degree
- criminal trespass

Mcconnico, Deonte' J.; 23
- FTA – theft-shoplifting, $500-less than $1500

Olszowka, Dax M.; 21
- GJ – sex offense-force

Orear, Christopher A.; 33
- assault-domestic-simple assault-family (2 counts)
- interference with a domestic violence emergency call

Owens, Chad M.; 39
- sell/distribution of dangerous drugs (3 counts)
- possession of dangerous drugs (2 counts)
- illegal possession of prescription drugs
- possession of drug paraphernalia (2 counts)
- violation of a domestic violence protection order

Ponder, Steven W.; 55
- GJ – DUI (alcohol)

Resetar, Cody M.; 26
- escape

Sanford, Kristin L.; 31
- burglary-residence-force

Sharp, Michael A.; 42
- GJ – theft-miscellaneous – theft

Smith, Evelyn G.; 49
- FTA – possession of drug paraphernalia

Smith, Joseph B.; 43
- assault-domestic-harassment-family

Ulatowski, Peter J.; 61
- possession of methamphetamine
- possession of drug paraphernalia
- public intoxication
- exposure of lewd act in public

Weaver, Jennifer N.; 37
- FTA – possession of drug paraphernalia (3 counts)

Wilson, Kevin D.; 41
- FTA – assault-domestic-simple assault-family

York, Kodi V.; 29
- assault-domestic-simple assault-family

CULLMAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

INCIDENTS

Aug. 5
- leaving the scene of an accident; City of Cullman; damage to '08 E-One Rescue; $100 1st Ave. SE

Aug. 9
- retail theft-3rd degree; Wal-Mart; general merchandise; $333; Olive St. SW
- criminal mischief-2nd degree; person; damage to '05 GMC Yukon; $574; Hwy. 157
- burglary-3rd degree; person; damaged property; $3,750; Bower Dr. SE
- theft of property-3rd degree; Med South; miscellaneous; $628; Denson Ave. SW
- theft of lost property-3rd degree; fraudulent use of credit/debit card; person; miscellaneous charges

Aug. 10
- retail theft-3rd degree; Wal-Mart; general merchandise; $304; Olive St. SW
- theft of property-4th degree; Wal-Mart; general merchandise; $179; Olive St. SW
- theft of property-4th degree; person; cash; $151

Aug. 11
- domestic violence-3rd degree; person; Ann St. NW
- burglary-3rd degree; person; damaged door; $200; Bower Dr. SE

ARRESTS

Aug. 7- 8

Veres, Stephen M.; 39
- public intoxication

Cook, Rodney E.; 58
- criminal mischief-1st degree

Williams, Joshua L.; 42
- public intoxication

Horton, Melissa I.; 30
- theft of property-4th degree

Whitworth, Homer W., Jr.; 64
- domestic violence-3rd degree

Wallace, Chad T.; 50
- GJ - theft of property-2nd degree

HANCEVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

No arrests or incidents reported.

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

Southern Crown's Disney Divas Pageant welcomes all ages Aug. 18

Gauge Day
gauge@cullmantribune.com

HANCEVILLE, Ala. — The Disney Divas Pageant is set to take place at the Hanceville Civic Center on Sunday, Aug. 18, starting at 10 a.m. Registration is currently open to all prospective contestants.

The pageant offers a $50 all-inclusive entry fee, which covers the beauty category, one photogenic entry, all Supremes and group side awards. Optional categories, such as Outfit of Choice and Overalls, are available for an additional fee. Currently, there's a friend special where two participants can enter for a combined fee of $75, effectively lowering the cost to $37.50 each.

Age groups range from 0-23 months to 20-plus years, ensuring that contestants of all ages can participate. The pageant organizers reserve the right to combine any age groups with low participation.

The Disney Divas Pageant follows a natural system, allowing for extensions, tans, nails and makeup but prohibiting wiglets, falls, flippers and glitz routines. X's will be marked on the stage for contestants, but they are free to choose any walk they prefer.

Scoring in the beauty category will be based on facial beauty, poise, personality and overall appearance. The Outfit of Choice category is open-themed allowing for contestants to model anything, with scoring focused on stage presence and overall appearance.

Contestants will compete for beautiful crowns, medallions, acrylic awards and cash-paying jackpots. The event is an all-crown pageant, ensuring that no contestant leaves empty handed.

Robin Paul, director of Southern Crown Pageantry, shared her inspiration behind the pageant, "Our family has been in pageants since our 14-year-old was 6 months old. I began this journey of leading others to pageants as a passion for young girls and women to experience the growth pageants have given my girls in personal skills and confidence. It doesn't matter how old you are; who doesn't love Disney? We are excited for this pageant to offer the opportunity for young and old to come out, meet new friends, enjoy great entertainment and gain the confidence, support and experience of pageantry."

For more details on the Disney Divas Pageant and how to register, participants are encouraged to follow the Disney Divas event page on Facebook. A link to all rules and details for the pageant can be found on the event page or is located at https://tinyurl.com/DisneyDivasHanceville.

For direct inquiries, contact Southern Crown pageantry at 205-504-5293 or southerncrownpageantry@gmail.com.

Commission on Aging to host Spaghetti Fundraiser Aug. 22

Lauren Estes
lauren@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. — The Cullman County Commission on Aging will host the 2024 Spaghetti Fundraiser at the Cullman Senior Center on Thursday, Aug. 22, from 4:30-8 p.m.

COA Director Stephanie Lawson said the event is an effort to raise funds to benefit the seven full-time senior centers located throughout the county, as well as to support their largest event of the year – the annual Christmas Party.

"This year we are anticipating approximately 1,000 seniors in our area to come together for a nice Christmas event with our local and some state leaders," Lawson said.

"Our centers not only provide opportunities for socialization Monday through Friday, but participants are able to receive a hot nutritious meal.

"Also, thanks to our volunteers we are able to serve homebound meals to some of the most vulnerable seniors in our county."

Spaghetti dinners will be $15 a person.

"We work really hard to provide a sense of community for our seniors and they look forward to the events that we hold for them," Lawson said.

"This particular fundraiser is being sponsored by Peoples Bank and we truly appreciate their support.

"Our goal is to promote healthy aging and socialization and we could not do this without so many of our community partners."

Lawson said the event will be a home-cooked spaghetti dinner that is a staff member's family recipe.

"This is definitely not just a jar of sauce that we are serving," Lawson said.

"Our office staff has taste tested and given it a stamp of approval.

"We are looking forward for folks to coming and seeing for yourself."

Lawson said they are encouraging the community to join them for a sit-down dinner event, but there will also be take-out options available.

"We know many are busy with school and daily life, so we will have a convenient drive-thru at the back of the building or come in and order your spaghetti to go," Lawson said.

The event will be held on Thursday, Aug. 22, from 4:30- 8 p.m. at the Cullman Senior Center located at 1539 Sportsman Lake Road NW in Cullman.

For more information or to buy a meal ticket, call 256-734-1241. Please RSVP by Aug. 14.

New CCPS playground set to open

Staff Reports
Contributor

CULLMAN, Ala. — The finishing touches are being put on the new playground at Cullman City Primary School, with the expansive new amenity set for student use in the coming days.

The new playground features a turfed play area, as well as new swing sets, slides and climbable play areas. The new playground will complement the existing playground on the campus, providing even more outdoor play options for young learners at CCPS.

"Our students can't wait to utilize the new playground," CCPS Principal Elizabeth Shaddix said. "They are very excited about the multiple swings on the new playground structure."

Class is back in sessions now for the 2024-2025 school year at CCPS, along with the entire Cullman City Schools system.



CULLMAN CITY SCHOOLS

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Submit your calendar items or public notices to wendy@cullmantribune.com

The Crossing Food Bank
The Crossing is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 a.m.-noon and 1-3:30 p.m. We are located at 1503 Second St. SW, Cullman, AL 35055 (in the Housing Authority).

Cullman Low Vision Support Group Meetings
Third Tuesday of every month, from 10-11:30 a.m., at the Alabama Career Center, 1201 Katherine St. NW in Cullman. Contact Olivia Wade, case manager, at 256-389-2502. The August meeting is Aug. 20.

Baileyton Bargain Days
First Saturday of each month from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. at the old Baileyton fire station next to the town's park. Beauty and health products, toys, home goods, pet items, food and many everyday items. A donation of $20 will allow a shopper to fill up a bag, and for $40 a shopper can fill a large box. Some of the items of greater value will require a larger donation. There will be some restrictions and product limits on the items. Cash and checks accepted. Proceeds will be used for park improvements and capital improvements for the town.

Alcoholics Anonymous
The Grace of God group of Alcoholics Anonymous has open AA meetings (all are welcome) Mondays and Thursdays from 7-8 p.m. at the Carriage House, located next to Grace Episcopal Church, 305 Arnold St. NE Cullman. Contact phone numbers: 256-347-1097, 256-841-2209 or 256-708-1340

Church Services- Spirit Life Church of GOD
• Spirit Life Church of GOD, 1650 St. Joseph Dr. NW, Cullman
• Mondays-Fridays- Free hot meals for children Mondays 11 a.m.-noon, Tuesdays 1-2 p.m. and Wednesdays-Fridays 11 a.m.-noon. Cullman Housing Authority Community Center 1545 Vine Circle SW. Please call Kristie 256-636-5362 for more information. Eat in or take out. Sponsored by Kids Loving Kids, Raising Arrows Ministry and Spirit Life Church.
• Kids Loving Kids Birthday Blessings serves children ages 1-18 in need of assistance to celebrate their birthdays. Register your child and pick up a birthday box with cake mix, icing, sprinkles, decorations and toys! Pickup is the last weekend of the month. Saturday (5100 Curry Highway Suite 100-B Jasper, AL 35504) from 3-5 p.m. or the last Sunday of the month at Spirit Life Church Cullman from 12:30-1 p.m. Birth certificate is required at the time of box pickup. Register at https://form.jotform.com/203435614640045. For more information, text or call 205-717-7478.
• Wednesday, Aug. 14 - 7 p.m. Children and youth classes. Adult worship, teaching and testimonies in the sanctuary. Free pizza at 6:30. Van runs in the 5 Points Area at 6. Call Cedric Davidson at 256-339-5755 for pickup.
• Friday, Aug. 16 - Celebrate Recovery. Fellowship and testimonies. Hurts, habits and hangups are a part of everyone's life. Come and see how to overcome these and more! Bring a dish, dessert or drink for a potluck meal at 5:45 p.m. Meeting starts at 6:30. Childcare provided.
• Saturday, Aug. 17 - Food bank
• Sunday, Aug. 18 - 9 a.m. Van runs in the 5 Points Area. Call Betty Hays at 930-9680 for pickup. Breakfast at 9:30. Bible study classes for children, youth and adults at 10. Praise and worship and message by Pastor Bobby Dodd at 11.

Alcoholics Anonymous
Sundays, 3 p.m. at Cullman First Church of the Nazarene, 5415 Alabama Highway 157. CLOSED literature study. Handicap accessible.

TOPS (Take off Pounds Sensibly) Meetings
Fridays, 9:30-11 a.m., at the Donald E. Green Adult Active Center, 1625 Cleveland Ave. SW. The first meeting is free. TOPS, a national program, is a hands-on/pounds-off approach to weight loss and management through weekly meetings providing information, accountability, support and encouragement where you make the changes that make sense to you.

Cullman NAR-ANON Group Meetings
The NAR-ANON family group meetings are a worldwide fellowship for those affected by someone else's addiction. We offer Help by sharing our experiences, strength and hope. We carry the message of hope by letting others know that they are not alone by practicing the 12 Steps of NAR-ANON and changing our own attitudes. We Respect Your Anonymity. Our program is not a religious one, but a spiritual way of life. Meetings will be held at The Ruehl Building (Family Life Center of St. John's Church) Tuesday evenings at 6 p.m. Contact Jamie Weathersby Smith 256-708-7122 or Don or Nancy McKenzie 256-736-3327 or 256-736-3470 for more information.

Cullman Al-Anon Meetings
The Al-Anon Family Groups are a fellowship of friends and family whose lives have been affected by alcoholism. The Cullman Serenity Al-Anon Group meets each Monday at noon at 1519 St. Joseph Dr. NE. There is also a Zoom meeting each Tuesday at noon. The Courage to Change Al-Anon Family Group meets on Thursdays at 6 p.m. at Grace Episcopal Church at 305 Arnold St. NE in the Carriage House, located between the church and the Arnold House on the corner. For more information call 256-734-2231 or 256-531-4429.

Master's Hand Food Pantry at The Link
• 708 Ninth St. SE, Cullman, AL 35055
• Tuesday and Thursday 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
• Closed for lunch noon-1 p.m.

Holly Pond Homemakers Club Meeting
Tuesday, Aug. 13, at 1 p.m. at the Holly Pond Event Center. Peggy Ray and Judy Jones are hostesses. Program is "Keeping safe from scams."

Holly Pond Lions Club Pancake Breakfast
Join us as we serve you all the pancakes you can eat with a side of bacon and sausage and your choice of coffee, water or juice for a donation only. Invite your friends and have a fun morning on Aug. 17, from 6-9 a.m. at the Lions Club Building in Holly Pond near the ballfields. Donations benefit Lions Club special projects such as sight and juvenile diabetes. Thank you for your support.

Save the Date: Little Pink Dress Benefit
Tuesday, Oct. 1, from 6-9 p.m. at The Venue at Cotton Creek. Handicapped parking at north entrance. Doors open at 5:30. A night of fun with dinner included, Active Adult Senior Kickers, Wallace State Jazz Band, live and silent auctions, door prizes and much more! Ticket are $60. Tickets available through Stefani Nelson at 256-708-3191 or snelson@alfains.com or Judy Grissom at Options at 256-347-5993 or options5993@gmail.com and www.CullmanBosomBuddies.com.

Sacred Heart Oktoberfest Dinner
This year's dinner will be held in the church's Family Life Center on Wednesday, Oct. 2, beginning at 4 p.m. The dinners are available for dining in or drive through/take out and the cost of the dinner is $15. The dinner features a traditional German menu of bratwurst, German potato salad, sauerkraut, green beans, applesauce, bread and a homemade dessert. The meat used in the dinner comes from Brickyard Meats in Cullman, which is owned by a family of parishioners.

Peinhardt Farm Days
Saturday, Oct. 19, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. and Sunday, Oct. 20, from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Gates will close one hour before the event ends. Hands-on activities will be demonstrated over 40 acres of the farm. Farm Days are free for ages 2 and younger, and $10 for all others, cash only. Please leave your pets at home; only service animals are allowed. This is a walking tour with limited accessibility. Peinhardt Living History Farm is located at 1711 Talley Ho St. in Cullman. Find out more at www.peinhardtfarm.com or on Facebook/Peinhardt Living History Farm.

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Service (from Front)

tional anthem opening the ceremony, Commander Clifford turned it over to Purple Heart recipient Woody Carpenter as he guided attendees through the solemn POW/MIA ceremony, explaining the significance of the symbolic artifacts on the table.

"I call to your attention to the small table that occupies a place of dignity and honor to our front. It is set for one, symbolizing the fact that members of our armed forces are missing from our rounds. They are referred to as the POW and MIAs, we call them comrades," Carpenter reflected, drawing attention to the lone, white table.

The ceremony featured MSG Donna Johnson (retired), who delivered a stirring rendition of the national anthem and the "Battle Hymn of the Republic," and ENell Baker, who performed her original song, "Spirit of America," which includes a verse dedicated specifically to the Purple Heart.

Guest speaker Col. Leonard Kiser (retired) provided a detailed history of the Purple Heart medal, tracing its origins to the Badge of Military Merit introduced by General George Washington during the American Revolution. The Badge of Military Merit was to be used to recognize the heroic action of Washington's troops during the American Revolution.

With only three to ever have been known to be issued, the Badge of Military Merit would be forgotten for 150 years.

"The award was lost in time after the revolution and was not awarded again until 1932 when it was reintroduced to the Army forces by General Douglas MacArthur and made retroactive to World War I. General MacArthur was the first recipient of the award," Kiser explained.

Without official records of the total number of Purple Hearts awarded to date, Kiser highlighted the significance of the honor by sharing estimated unofficial figures, noting that over 2 million U.S. servicemembers have received the distinction.

Kiser also highlighted the remarkable legacy of Chapter 2212's namesake, Joe Hooper. Hooper was the recipient of the Medal of Honor while serving as an Army sergeant. He was also the recipient of the Purple Heart eight times, having sustained eight wounds in combat. Hooper would finish his career as captain and as one of the nation's most decorated soldiers. Hooper's extraordinary service and dedication to his country were a central theme of the ceremony.

The ceremony then transitioned to the reading of the names of the fallen warriors from Cullman and Morgan counties. Kiser, along with Rep. Terri Collins, R-Decatur; Morgan County Commission Chairman Ray Long; and Cullman County Commissioner Kelly Duke, took turns reading the names aloud. Each name was followed by the solemn toll of a bell, and a small Purple Heart flag was presented to the next of kin or a friend of the honored individual.

As the final name was read and the bell's echoes faded into silence, "Taps" was played to close the ceremony. Families were then invited to spend time at the memorial, reflecting on the lives and sacrifices of their loved ones.

Gissell further reflected on the importance of the memorial ceremony, saying, "When we started this chapter, we had made a promise to the next of kin who had put their loved ones names on the monument as well as the chapter members who have their name on the monument, we made a promise that we would read the names of the deceased."

He continued, "I believe you perpetuate the memory of people if their names are said, especially within a family. If that gets passed down from generation to generation, it perpetuates the memory of those people within your family. Saying their names aloud has some meaning."

The annual memorial service stands as an important reminder of the sacrifices made by those who served and have since passed away, ensuring their legacy lives on in the hearts and minds of their families and the community.

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PREP FOOTBALL

Tigers hungry for postseason return in 2024

Nick Griffin
nick@cullmantribune.com

ARLEY, Ala. — Football season is fast approaching and at Meek High School, Head Coach Daniel Evans and the Tigers are preparing to kick things off at the end of August. Evans will be heading into his second season as the head coach of the Tigers and after helping lead Meek to a 6-5 record and a playoff berth last year, he feels even more comfortable in his role as year two gets underway.

"Having a better idea of how my role changes from being an assistant coach to being a head coach has slowed things down for me so that definitely helps with the day-to-day stuff. You still have a lot of stuff to prepare and prep and organize and have to make sure everything is the way it's supposed to be so that takes a lot of work," Evans said. "It takes a lot of effort and these kids put a lot of effort in so it's our job as coaches to make sure we're doing the same thing. It has slowed down a little bit but at the end of the day, August is August, and there's always a lot to do."

Evans was very pleased with his team's focus and effort during the offseason and is excited to see the habits they created in workouts carry over to the football field.

"I would say our culture is the best that it's been in a few years, and that's no disrespect to the guys that came before, but these guys have been around me and they kind of get that workman's attitude. I don't like to just rest on being good athletes or gifted, we work. I think it's important for them to work and they picked up on that pretty early," Evans said. "I've also got a couple of guys that have played four years for myself and Coach (Houston) Powell when he was here, so it's been pretty easy for these kids to understand what we're trying to do, and they've worked their butts off since January to do what they need to do. Now we're getting to a point where they can reap the rewards. I've had to turn the lights on from my phone a couple times because I've had kids up there working at 7:30-8:00 at night and they call me and ask if I can turn the lights on for an hour so they can get some work in. So, these kids are ready to go."

One of the position groups that Evans is most excited about is the defensive line. He believes the Tigers will have as good a defensive front as they'll see all season and he's looking forward to watching them terrorize opposing offenses this fall.

"Our defensive line is going to be as good if not better than pretty much everybody in 1A North and I know what that sounds like but I'm not going to apologize for it. We're really strong up there and we're also very seasoned. They're pretty athletic and that group uses their hands well so they're going to be an issue for a lot of people. We kind of saw that during 11-on-11 during the summer. So that group is going to be really good and another thing for us is we probably have more team speed than I think I've had at this school in the four years I've been here," Evans said. "We're going to have a lot of guys competing for skill jobs like wide receivers, DBs and positions like that. On the offensive line we've got some young guys that have worked their butts off that are pushing some of these older guys for positions, which is good. I don't want kids to think they can be complacent. I always tell them that they have to compete, and everything is up for grabs all the time, so you've got to make sure that you're doing what you're supposed to be doing. Those kids going into 10th grade took the weight room very seriously and they're going to start pushing some of these older guys for starting jobs pretty quick."

The Tigers have big goals this season and are hungry to return to the postseason. Evans has big expectations for his team on the field this season but something else that means a lot to him is that his team enjoys playing the game. The Tigers also have all three of their Winston County Rivals on the schedule this year and Evans knows those games will mean a lot to his players and the community.

"I just want us to compete every week and enjoy the game. I think it's real easy to get caught up in wins and losses and forget how fun this game is. For 10 or 12 of my guys this is it. Obviously, there are opportunities to play in college, but that stuff is not guaranteed. They've got 10 regular season games and that's all that's guaranteed so I just want them to have fun and enjoy being around each other and enjoy the greatness that is high school football," Evans said. "You don't experience anything else like it for the rest of your life. I'm not saying it's better than anything else, but it is its own unique thing and once you get done playing this game, you just don't really find anything sportswise that compares to all the preparation just to play one game on a Friday night with so much energy and intensity. On top of all that we've got every county school on the schedule for the first time in a while, so it'll be nice to travel around to a couple places and have some teams from around here come to us. We go to Lynn and then Winston County and Addison will come to us so we get to play the county schools and those games are extremely important to me and to Winston County in general so that's something I'm looking forward to."



NICK GRIFFIN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

The Meek Tigers will kick off the 2024 regular season at Lynn on Aug. 23.

2024 Meek Tigers Football Schedule

Aug. 23 - @ Lynn
Aug. 30 – vs. Winston County
Sept. 6 - @ Hackleburg*
Sept. 13 - @ Phillips Bear Creek*
Sept. 20 - @ Waterloo*
Oct. 4 – vs. Shoals Christian*
Oct. 11 – vs. Addison*
Oct. 18 – vs. Cherokee*
Oct. 25 - @ Vina*
Nov. 1 – vs. Carbon Hill

*region game

PREP FOOTBALL

West Point preparing to hit the field this fall

Nick Griffin
nick@cullmantribune.com

WEST POINT, Ala. — All of our local teams are getting ready to kick off the upcoming football season and at West Point High School, the Warriors are gearing up for the first season under Head Coach Kevin McCravy. This will be McCravy's first head coaching job but after many years serving as an assistant and an offensive coordinator, he feels prepared to take the reins at West Point.

"For me at the end of the day it's not a lot different. My philosophy is that my job is to set these kids up to be successful. As a head coach now, my job is to set up my assistants to be successful as well, that would probably be the biggest difference," McCravy said. "There's a little more paperwork and all that but I'm very fortunate to have worked for John Ritter and Jere Adcock and Joey Burch who were all really good with that kind of stuff. I latched onto them to see how they did things, and they all did it the same, so it hasn't been a big learning curve or anything like that."

McCravy was pleased with the work his players put in this offseason and was happy to see the older guys step up into leadership roles and start to take ownership of the team.

"You could tell a lot about their character because of how quickly you could see them step into those roles. They brought up a lot of the younger players with them, there's been a lot of buying in and we've probably had 90-95% of the team there for most if not all our workouts," McCravy said. "So, these older guys have done a great job of understanding what I'm preaching when I talk about being committed and showing character. So, they've done a great job of embracing those roles and bringing the younger guys along with them."



NICK GRIFFIN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

The West Point Warriors will kick off the 2024 season against Haleyville on Aug. 23.

The Warriors will be looking for players to step up in skill positions on offense and linebacker spots on defense during fall camp but McCravy and his staff like the experience they have returning in the offensive backfield and both sides of the line of scrimmage.

"I feel really good about our offensive and defensive lines. I feel good about quarterback play and running back play and we feel good about the secondary," McCravy said. "We'll probably have some competition at a few linebacker spots and a couple receiver spots but I've been the most pleased with our offensive and defensive lines for sure."

Returning quarterback Hunter Hensley wants to see the team improve each week throughout this season. One of his goals is to help the Warriors get back to the playoffs and do what he can to execute every play.

"One of the goals that I have for myself for this season is mainly just to be successful and help the team win. I want to do everything I can to help us execute each play. As far as team goals that I have for us this season I want us to make the playoffs again and go on a better run," Hensley said. "I feel like getting off the field on third downs is big defensively and mainly on the offensive side we want to score at least three or four times a game. The main thing will just be to compete and have everyone doing their job because if everyone does their job we'll be in pretty good shape in each game."

McCravy spent many nights in the stands at West Point games when he was younger and with all the support he's received since arriving as the head coach earlier this year, he's even more excited for his first night on the sidelines.

"I'm excited. This place has a special meaning to me because my whole family went to school here. Even my grandmother went to school at West Point so I can remember going to games back in the 80s and into the 90s until I started playing high school ball myself," McCravy said. "It's kind of like a homecoming so I'm super excited. The community has been very supportive, the parents have been very supportive, the QB Club has been very supportive, the administration has been very supportive, and everyone has been excited so far. So, I'm ready to hit the ground running."

2024 West Point Warriors Football Schedule

- Aug. 23 – vs. Haleyville
- Aug. 30 – vs. Good Hope
- Sept. 6 - @ Fairview*
- Sept. 13 – vs. Lawrence County*
- Sept. 27 - @ Hayden
- Oct. 4 – vs. Priceville*
- Oct. 11 - @ East Limestone*
- Oct. 18 – vs. Russellville*
- Oct. 25 - @ Ardmore*
- Nov. 1 - @ Brewer

*region game



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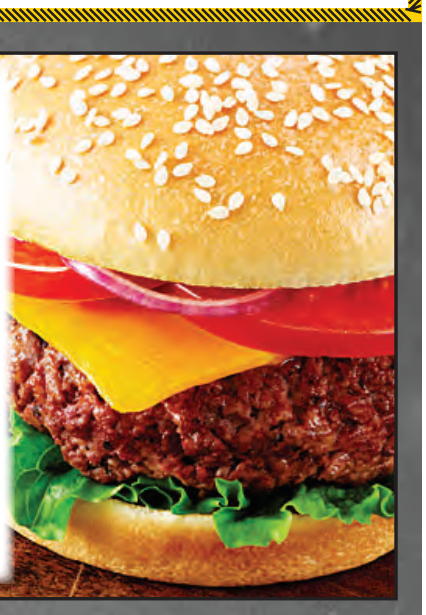
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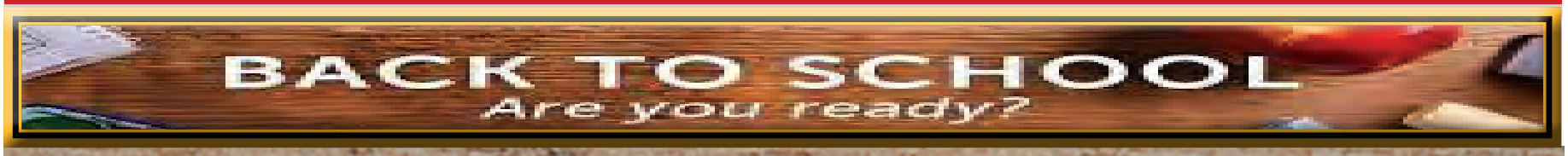
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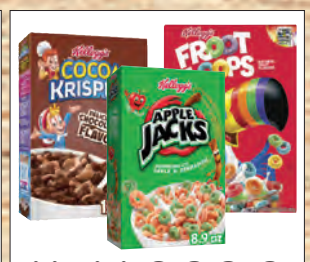
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$6.99 EA.

West Point Back-to-School Bash a slam dunk

Cheyenne Sharp
cheyenne@cullmantribune.com

WEST POINT, Ala. — The town of West Point helped the community's students run away from the back-to-school blues on Saturday, Aug. 10. The town held its annual Back-to-School Bash at West Point Municipal Park from 10 a.m.-4 p.m., allowing a full day of fun in the sun.

Bubble machines, sidewalk chalk stations and face-painting tables lined the covered pavilion at the park, as local musical duo Justin and Tab added to the excitement of the event with live performances of popular songs. Temple Baptist Church fed the hungry masses with hotdogs and chips, showing support for the community and its students.

Children of all ages, grade levels and schools were invited out to the day in the park to slide down either of the two massive water slides or take a round inside the blow-up boxing ring to name the champion of the outing. Town officials hoped youngsters would test their inner American Ninja Warrior skills in the inflatable obstacle course or sharpen their aiming skills with any of the number of other inflatable target and throwing games set up on the far side of the park.

The students in attendance weren't the only group to have the opportunity to cool off in the hot Alabama sun.

The event also hosted a dunking booth, complete with a steady lineup of West Point community members and officials hoping to add to the laughs and good times. Blake Thompson, principal of West Point Middle School, and Michael Lindsey, principal of West Point Elementary School, even took their turns in the game of aim during the bash in an effort to give the entrance to the school year a memorable beginning.



CHEYENNE SHARP/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Children line up to shoot their shot at the dunking booth at West Point's Back to School Bash on Saturday, Aug. 10, 2024.

Fame (from Front)

as a breast cancer survivor. The group also brings joy to nursing home residents with their lively performances.

Reflecting on her induction, Boatright expressed, "To be selected along with the group of people that were also in this group was so overwhelming. I feel undeserving, but I am very grateful and I love what I do."

Celebrating Barbara Whitehead

Whitehead, a dedicated volunteer from Cullman, has devoted over 30 years to serving older adults. Her passion for music led her to offer lessons to seniors, culminating in a weekly jam session at the Active Adult Center. This gathering has become a cherished tradition, fostering community among over 100 seniors.

Whitehead also volunteers as a DJ for fundraising events and shares her musical talents at local nursing homes. Since 2005, she has been a pianist at Harvest Temple Church and Andrews Chapel Church.

Whitehead humbly shared her feelings about the honor, stating, "I love people and I love doing what I do. I'm a nobody and the fact that I have people who want to listen to me is unreal. The goal was not an award, I'm just doing what I love. I don't feel deserving, but I'm very honored."

The Alabama Senior Citizens Hall of Fame recognizes and honors the outstanding contributions of senior citizens across the state. Inductees are celebrated for their dedication to improving the lives of others and their significant impact on their communities.

Learn more at www.alabamaageline.gov/senior-hall-of-fame.



CITY OF CULLMAN

Sherry Boatright



CITY OF CULLMAN

Barbara Whitehead



COLUMN

Cowboys and channel changers

Joe Hobby
Contributor

I'm sitting in my favorite chair, TV remote in hand, shaking my head in disbelief. There's nothing good to watch on television. Unless, of course, you're into UFOs, the location of the Ark of the Covenant, Hitler's super weapon or how to survive in the woods without any clothes. This is why even though I get over a hundred channels, I'll usually end up looking at "Gunsmoke" or "Tales of Wells Fargo."

Times have changed. I remember when I was a kid there were only two VHF channels – three if you counted public TV (which I watched if the "Soupy Sales Show" was on). Sadly, back then you only had one chance to catch your favorite show.

For example, if I missed "Lassie," it would be months before that episode would appeared as a rerun – if it even aired at all.

This was the reason I pitched a fit whenever the president gave a speech.

It was on both networks, so my entire night was ruined. No TV – I had to read a book! I don't think children in this day and age could handle that kind of pressure.

In the early days of television almost every adventure show seemed to be a western.

The list was quite impressive: "Wagon Train," "Gunsmoke," "Have Gun Will Travel," "Cheyanne," "Laramie," "Anne Oakley," "Tales of Wells Fargo," "Maverick," "Wyatt Earp," "Bat Masterson," "The Lone Ranger," "The Rifleman," "Roy Rogers" and, of course, "Bonanza."

Besides "The Lone Ranger," my favorite was "Tales of Wells Fargo," starring an actor named Dale Robertson as Special Agent Jim Hardie.

Hardie's job was to investigate the weekly stage coach robbery and catch the bad guys – all in 30 minutes.

Now I watch reruns of "Wells Fargo" almost every night at 10. It's a nice way to turn back the clock.

And as you might expect, there are things about the show I notice now that I never noticed then.

For example, I can look at my watch at 10:26 and pretty much guarantee you that someone's about to get shot. That gave Hardie enough time to fill the bad guy full of lead, step over the body and have a lighthearted ending while he rode out of town.

Also, the bad guys were notoriously bad shots, especially when it came to Jim Hardie.

There could be an ambush set up to get ol 'Jim, and the bad guy would take careful aim with his rifle... and completely miss.

But Hardie would pull his gun from his holster, return fire while his horse was at full gallop and kill the baddie with a single shot from a hundred yards. You didn't mess with Jim Hardie.

Early westerns also had plenty of bad acting and dialog, which I find hilarious now.

Predictably, "Tales of Wells Fargo" always dispensed some kind of moral lesson, like Hardie proving to the judgmental townsfolk that a wrongly accused man was innocent.

He was kind of a cowboy Dr. Phil, except he could shoot you dead with a pistol, or beat you to a pulp with his fists.

I'm amazed by the number of A-List actors who had bit parts in the early westerns.

I've seen Jack Nicholson, Steve McQueen, Leonard Nimoy (without pointed ears), Michael Landon, Carroll O' Connor and Burt Reynolds just to name a few. Many of them became big movie stars, or gained fame and fortune on long-running TV shows.

But back then, they were just working stiffs in Hollywood trying to make a paycheck, and thankful for any part they could get.

I suppose most famous example is "Rawhide." "Rawhide" gave us the gift that keeps on giving – a breakout role for Clint Eastwood. If Clint never was cowboy Rowdy Yates, Chuck Connors may have ended up in all those spaghetti westerns. Even worse, someone like Samuel L. Jackson could've played Dirty Harry.

Then the most famous line in the movie would have been, "Go ahead mutha' –, make my day!" That doesn't sound right to me.

Eventually, the black-and-white westerns gave way to color.

The acting got better, and the plots became more sophisticated.

But to me, they lost some of their simple charm that I find so appealing now. It's a lot like "The Andy Griffith Show" – I never watch a color episode – only black and white. That's probably a good rule to follow with vintage TV westerns.

And never get up when it's 10:26. Things are about to really get good.

Joe Hobby is a barbecue-loving comedian from Alabama who wrote for Jay Leno for many years. Find more of Joe's stories on his blog: https://mylifeasahobby.blogspot.com. Follow him on Facebook at Joe Hobby Comedian-Writer.

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2017 Dodge Journey	Vin.# 3C4PDCAB1HT529296
2005 Kia Sedona	Vin. #kndup132756747776
2010 Kia Optima	Vin.#KNAGG4A80A5398561
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Party (from Front)

Cheyenne Sharp
cheyenne@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. — With the success of its 2023 event, the West Elementary School Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is bringing back the Community Block Party on Aug. 29, at the West Elementary School playground. The event will be packed full of activities and games for attendees of all ages and will also include area resource vendors.

PTA President Jessica Stewart said, "This has been such a hard year financially for everyone, so we wanted to help in a way that not only was fun for all kids, but also made it easy to get resources and information to the families in our community that may not know who to turn to for help."

Cullman's own Good Samaritan Health Clinic will be on-site, administering health screenings for adult attendees free of charge. Other area nonprofits will offer information on assistance with food, clothing, necessities and other household needs.

Local food trucks, inflatable bounce houses, face painting and more will be available for children and teens.

The Community Block Party is not a West Elementary- or Cullman City Schools-exclusive event. Stewart enthusiastically extended an open invitation to the community.

"We had so much fun last year and had such a good turnout. We hope this year is even better," shared Stewart. "This is in no way a fundraiser for our PTA, and you do not have to attend West Elementary to come to this event. This event is for everyone."

The block party kicks off at 5:30 p.m. and runs until 7:30.

The West Elementary PTA is still seeking vendors, food trucks and resource organizations to attend the event.

For more information, contact the PTA at westelementarypta303@gmail.com. To become a vendor, contact Jessica Stewart at 256-339-8531 or Tonya Marsh at 256-708-0003.

West Elementary School is located at 303 Rosemont Ave. SW in Cullman.



Obituary Announcements: Aug. 10-12

Leonard Sewell, 83 Funeral services for Leonard Sewell, 83 of Morris, will be 11 a.m., Friday Aug. 16 at Hanceville Funeral Home Chapel. Burial will follow the service at Duck River Cemetery. Visitation will be Thursday, Aug. 15 from 6-8 p.m. at Hanceville Funeral Home. Mr. Sewell was born Oct. 8, 1940, in Clay County, Alabama to the late Lon and Ruth Sewell. He passed away at his residence on Aug. 11, 2024, in Morris, Alabama. Mr. Sewell is survived by his wife, Betty Mikel Sewell; children, Roger Sewell (Erica), Steven Sewell, Jeffery Sewell (Dalana), Lisa Hardy (Ray); grandchildren, Brittany Sewell, John Quick, Sarah Sewell, Amber Sewell, Jason Sewell, Draven Meads, David Sewell, Blake Sewell, Luke Sewell; great grandchildren, Gabriella Dake, Hunter Sewell, Danielle Maddox; siblings, Brenda Widen, and Phillip Sewell. Mr. Sewell was preceded in death by his parents, Lon and Ruth Sewell; two brothers; two sisters; and his daughter, Nita Willis.

Kenneth Bill Glover, 72 Kenneth Bill Glover, age 72 of Vinemont, Alabama passed away on Sunday, Aug. 11, 2024. A visitation for Kenneth will be held Tuesday, Aug. 13, 2024 from 5-8 p.m. at Moss-Service Funeral Home Chapel. A funeral service will occur in the Chapel on Wednesday, Aug. 14, 2024, at 2 p.m., with the interment to follow at Cullman City Cemetery.

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Alabama State Parks marks progress in major renovations

David Rainer
Ala. Dept. of Conservation and Nat. Resources

With more than $150 million available for renovations, repairs and construction, the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' (ADCNR) State Parks System is in the middle of major upgrades and enhancements to help State Parks' guests embrace and enjoy Alabama's natural beauty.

State Parks Director Greg Lein said those projects span the entire state, with upgrades planned at many of the 21 Alabama State Parks. Lein gave updates on the projects from south to north, starting with the Gulf State Park Pier damaged during Hurricane Sally. The repairs and construction are progressing on schedule.

"The Pier project is almost done and should be completed in September, and that's on track with what we expected the whole time," Lein said. "Also at Gulf State Park, the Beach Pavilion's bathrooms are being redone with a new HVAC system. That's very important down at the beach. That's the public's primary access to the beach, and it's heavily utilized from Memorial Day through Labor Day."

On the north side of Gulf State Park, the old golf course will become an additional campground with plenty of amenities, including a pool, clubhouse, putting green, splash pad and playground. The construction will be done in two phases with about 118 sites in phase I and an additional 145 sites in phase II.

Both phases will provide 60-foot by 20-foot sites with 50-amp electrical service, water and sewer, and both back-in and pull-through sites. Other unique features will be included. The current campground at Gulf State Park has 496 improved sites that are often completely booked during peak seasons.

Moving to the head of Mobile Bay on the Battleship Parkway (Causeway), Meaher State Park is receiving a major expansion of accommodations with a new campground area with 45 sites, a new bathhouse, six cabins similar to the ones already available at the park, as well as a new camp store and office.

At Lakepoint State Park on Lake Eufaula, the half of the lodge closest to the water is under renovation, and that project is expected to be completed later this fall in time for the Christmas season.

Chewacla State Park near Auburn is getting a feature new to the State Parks System.

"At Chewacla, we've got a nice barndominium design that we are bidding out this month," Lein said. "This design will be utilized for parks like Chewacla and Lake Lurleen. It's a real nice pavilion with bathrooms and roll-up doors. You can have meetings and special events there. At Chewacla, we've got that big upper field at the back of the park, so the barndominium is designed to go in there. We'll also replace one of the bathhouses in the campground and other improvements."

At Wind Creek State Park on the banks of Lake Martin, new cottages and campground renovations are under construction.

"They're putting the roofs on the cottages right now," Lein said. "They will be really nice. The campground renovations and the cottages should be finished this winter. We're really excited about those. Most of the campground did not have 50-amp (electrical) service, so we really couldn't provide hospitality to the new, large, modern RVs, because we didn't have the modern power. That's going to be a big improvement for that park. There will be bigger sites, and wider sites, and a lot of them will be on the waterfront. I think this will be a big boon for that park."

Lake Lurleen, located just northwest of Tuscaloosa, will undergo an almost complete renovation.

"We will redo all the campground sites and probably put a barndominium there," Lein said.

"We're also building cabins. That park has never had any cabins. They will be tiny house cabins, like at Meaher State Park. That will be a big improvement for the park. That bidding will happen in the next couple of months, and the renovations should be complete in the fall of 2025."

Cheaha State Park provides panoramic views of the Oxford-Munford area as it sits atop the highest point in Alabama. The state's oldest park, Cheaha is about to undergo significant renovations with a completely new lodge and lodging facilities.

The lodge construction will use a design that blends materials found or sourced in the area and showcase how to sustainably build with locally available natural materials.

"We just bid for the new lodge," Lein said.

"We will demolish the old hotel. We're building an entirely new lodge right beside the restaurant, so it will all be on the edge of the mountain.

"All the rooms will overlook the valley. In the old hotel, half the rooms looked over the parking lot. The new lodge will have fantastic views from every room.

"And the lodge will use mass timber construction, which is an interesting architectural effort. That will start pretty quickly. That should come online in fall of 2025."


BILLY POPE

The view from the Gulf State Park Pier's observation platform allows visitors to watch the fishing action when the pier reopens.

At Rickwood Caverns State Park, bids will soon go out on a new bathhouse and playground project, while a bid has recently been awarded for a new pool house at DeSoto State Park with completion expected in the spring. At Lake Guntersville State Park, a new cart path on the golf course should be completed in September.

Near Huntsville, renovations of the cabins at Monte Sano State Park are underway, as well as the addition of a new bathhouse and sites in the campground. A new bathroom and pathway will be built in the day use area.

At Joe Wheeler State Park near Rogersville, renovations are underway at the lodge with new railings and other exterior work as well as new windows in the dining room. The Joe Wheeler pool has also been upgraded.

One project that has been completed is the Oak Mountain State Park Campground, which was completely renovated and opened to the public at the end of May. The camping facilities were completely overhauled with new water and sewer lines and upgraded electrical service. The camping sites were enlarged, and a meeting pavilion and restroom facility was constructed.

"We've received rave reviews on the new bathrooms at Oak Mountain," Lein said. "People just love the new family style bathrooms. That's been extremely popular."

Lein also highlighted the new feature that allows Alabama residents a month-long advantage to book reservations at the Alabama State Parks.


BILLY POPE

The final repairs are being made to make the Gulf State Park Pier whole again.

Starting last week, Alabama residents can make online reservations 13 months in advance, a month before out-of-state residents. The Alabama Residents Advanced Reservation Window will give Alabama residents greater flexibility in pricing, location and date options.

"In the past, we've always let people book 12 months out," Lein said. "Now if you're an Alabama resident and you're using the online reservation system, you can go in and make your reservations 13 months out."

Reservations can be made online through the Plan Your Adventure Online portal at alapark.com. The zip code attached to your credit card will determine which booking window will apply.

"This will give Alabamians an advantage for booking and also gives them some advantages in pricing," Lein said.

"We're really excited to be able to provide that new opportunity to the citizens of our state. Our new reservations system came online last fall, and it was through this new technology that we were able to provide this new option for Alabama residents.

"We're always looking for opportunities to reward our customers, especially the citizens of Alabama. We're proud to serve our state and provide the best hospitality we can through our State Parks.

"We're always striving to make the State Parks better and more modern. With all these physical improvements that people can see and enjoy, we're also making improvements in the infrastructure like water, sewer, electrical upgrades and Wi-Fi. All of these efforts will help modernize our State Parks and make them more user-friendly and enjoyable to our customers."

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